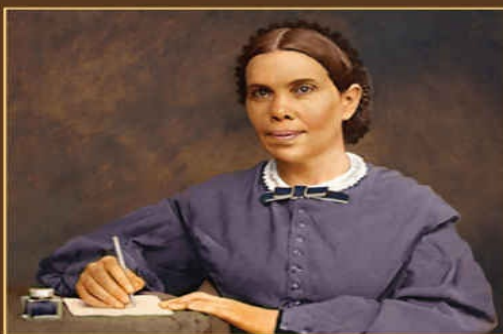


A Companion to the Adult Bible Study Guide

Ellen White Notes on Ephesians

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E. G. White
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Adult Bible Study Guide

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Ephesians

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Lesson 1

Paul and the Ephesians

Sabbath Afternoon, June 24

Paul was a living example of what every true Christian should be. He lived for God's glory. His words come sounding down the line to our time: "For to me to live is Christ." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He who was once a persecutor of Christ in the person of His saints now holds up before the world the cross of Christ. Paul's heart burned with a love for souls, and he gave all his energies for the conversion of men. There never lived a more self-denying, earnest, persevering worker. His life was Christ; he worked the works of Christ. All the blessings he received were prized as so many advantages to be used in blessing others.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1112.

In the council of heaven, provision was made that men, though transgressors, should not perish in their disobedience, but, through faith in Christ as their substitute and surety, might become the elect of God, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving His only-begotten Son to pay man's ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus.

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

offered.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1114.

All the favors He has shown to His Son in His acceptance of the great atonement, are shown to His people. Those who have united their interests in love with Christ are accepted in the Beloved. They suffered with Christ in His deepest humiliation, and His glorification is of great interest to them, because they are accepted in Him. God loves them as He loves His Son. Christ, Emmanuel, stands between God and the believer, revealing the glory of God to His chosen ones, and covering their defects and transgressions with the garments of His own spotless righteousness.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1115.

Sunday, June 25: Paul, Evangelist to Ephesus

As Paul was brought in direct contact with the idolatrous inhabitants of Ephesus, the power of God was strikingly displayed through him. The apostles were not always able to work miracles at will. The Lord granted His servants this special power as the progress of His cause or the honor of His name required. Like Moses and Aaron at the court of Pharaoh, the apostle had now to maintain the truth against the lying wonders of the magicians; hence the miracles he wrought were of a different character from those which he had heretofore performed. . . . So the Scripture declares that the Lord wrought miracles by the hand of Paul, and that the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, and not the name of Paul.—*Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p. 135.

By burning their books on magic, the Ephesian converts showed that the things in which they had once delighted they now abhorred. It was by and through magic that they had especially offended God and imperiled their souls; and it was against magic that they showed such indignation. Thus they gave evidence of true conversion.

These treatises on divination contained rules and forms of communication with evil spirits. They were the regulations of the worship of Satan—directions for soliciting his help and obtaining information from him. By retaining these books the disciples would have exposed themselves to temptation; by selling them they would have placed temptation in the way of others. They had renounced the kingdom of darkness, and to destroy its power they did not hesitate at any sacrifice. Thus truth triumphed over men's prejudices and their love of money.

By this manifestation of the power of Christ, a mighty victory for Christianity was gained in the very stronghold of superstition. The influence of what had taken place was more widespread than even Paul realized. From Ephesus the news was widely circulated, and a strong impetus was given to the cause of Christ. Long after the apostle himself had finished his course, these scenes lived in the memory of men and were the means of winning converts to the gospel.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 288, 289.

We may have an influence, a powerful influence, in the world. We are to have an eye single to the glory of God. We are to work with all the intelligence that God has given us, placing ourselves in the channel of light, that the grace of God can come upon us to mold and fashion us to the divine similitude. Heaven is waiting to bestow its richest blessings upon those who will consecrate themselves to do the work of God in these last days of the world's history.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 272.

Monday, June 26: A Riot in the Amphitheater

In his speech Demetrius had said, “This our craft is in danger.” These words reveal the real cause of the tumult at Ephesus, and also the cause of much of the persecution which followed the apostles in their work. Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen saw that by the teaching and spread of the gospel the business of image making was endangered. The income of pagan priests and artisans was at stake, and for this reason they aroused against Paul the most bitter opposition.

The decision of the recorder and of others holding honorable offices in the city had set Paul before the people as one innocent of any unlawful act. This was another triumph of Christianity over error and superstition. God had raised up a great magistrate to vindicate His apostle and hold the tumultuous mob in check. Paul’s heart was filled with gratitude to God that his life had been preserved and that Christianity had not been brought into disrepute by the tumult at Ephesus.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 295.

Paul, as well as laboring publicly, went from house to house preaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He met with men at their homes, and besought them with tears, declaring unto them the whole counsel of God. Jesus came in personal contact with men. He did not stand aloof and apart from those who needed His help. We must come close to the hearts of those who need our ministry. We must open the Bible to the understanding, present the claims of God’s law, read the promises to the hesitating, urge the backward, arouse the careless, strengthen the weak.

Do not neglect speaking to your neighbors, and doing them all the kindness in your power. We need to seek for the spirit that constrained the apostle Paul to go from house to house, pleading with tears, and teaching “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 245.

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.

Satan is constantly at work; but few have any idea of his activity and subtlety. The people of God must be prepared to withstand the wily foe. It is this resistance that Satan dreads. He knows better than we do the limit of his power and how easily he can be overcome if we resist and face him. Through divine strength the weakest saint is more than a match for him and all his angels, and if brought to the test he would be able to prove his superior power. Therefore Satan's step is noiseless, his movements stealthy, and his batteries masked. He does not venture to show himself openly, lest he arouse the Christian's dormant energies and send him to God in prayer. —*Maranatha*, p. 60.

Tuesday, June 27: Hearing the Letter to the Ephesians

The apostle [Paul] continues: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith . . . that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” While this divine fullness has been placed within our reach, how easily we are satisfied. We have accustomed ourselves to think that it is enough to have a knowledge of the truth without its sanctifying power. Just a little sip at the fountain of life quenches our thirst. We do not come again and again to drink. But this is not in accordance with the mind of God. Our souls should be continually athirst for the water of life. Our hearts should ever go out after Christ, longing for communion with Him. It is hungering and thirsting after righteousness that will bring us the full measure of His grace.

How did [Enoch] gain this sweet intimacy? It was by having thoughts of God continually before him. As he went out and as he came in, his meditations were upon the goodness, the perfection, and the loveliness of the divine character. And as he was thus engaged, he became changed in the glorious image of his Lord; for it is by beholding that we become changed.—*The Signs of the Times*, August 18, 1887.

It is not only the privilege but the duty of every Christian to maintain a close union with Christ and to have a rich experience in the things of God. Then his life will be fruitful in good works. Said Christ, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit” (John 15:8). When we read the lives of men who have been eminent for their piety we often regard their experiences and attainments as far beyond our reach. But this is not the case. Christ died for all; and we are assured in His word that He is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. The prophets and apostles did not perfect Christian character by a miracle. They used the means which God had placed within their reach; and all who will put forth the same effort will secure the same results.

In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul sets before them the “mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:19), the “unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8), and then assures them of his earnest prayers for their spiritual prosperity.—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 83, 84.

Wednesday, June 28: Ephesians in Its Time

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Ephesians 6:24.

Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. They have not believed and loved it, therefore they have not received the power and grace that come through sanctification of the truth. Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly-minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a curse to the world.

The world needs evidences of sincere Christianity. Professed Christianity may be seen everywhere; but when the power of God's grace is seen in our churches, the members will work the works of Christ. Natural and hereditary traits of character will be transformed. The indwelling of His Spirit will enable them to reveal Christ's likeness, and in proportion to the purity of their piety will be the success of their work.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 263.

At times the difficulties that we shall meet will be most disheartening. The very greatness of the task will appall us. And yet, with God's help, His servants will finally triumph. 'Wherefore,' my brethren, 'I desire that ye faint not' because of the trying experiences that are before you. Jesus will be with you; He will go before you by His Holy Spirit, preparing the way; and He will be your helper in every emergency.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.—*Life Sketches*, p. 439.

For the believers at Ephesus the apostle prayed, "That the God of our

Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe.” Ephesians 1:17-19. The ministry of the divine Spirit in enlightening the understanding and opening to the mind the deep things of God’s holy word, was the blessing which Paul thus besought for the Ephesian church. —*The Great Controversy*, p. 9.

Thursday, June 29: Ephesians: A Christ-Saturated Letter

The Saviour longed to unfold to His disciples the truth regarding the breaking down of the “middle wall of partition” between Israel and the other nations—the truth that “the Gentiles should be fellow heirs” with the Jews and “partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.” Ephesians 2:14; 3:6. . . .

Christ sought to teach the disciples the truth that in God’s kingdom there are no territorial lines, no caste, no aristocracy; that they must go to all nations, bearing to them the message of a Saviour’s love. But not until later did they realize in all its fullness that God “hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us.” Acts 17:26, 27.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 19, 20.

“This is life eternal,” Christ said, “that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Why is it that we do not realize the value of this knowledge? Why are not these glorious truths glowing in our hearts, trembling upon our lips, and pervading our whole being?

In giving us His Word, God has put us in possession of every truth essential for our salvation. Thousands have drawn water from these wells of life, yet there is no diminishing of the supply. Thousands have set the Lord before them, and by beholding have been changed into the same image. Their spirit burns within them as they speak of His character, telling what Christ is to them, and what they are to Christ. But these searchers have not exhausted these grand and holy themes. Thousands more may engage in the work of searching out the mysteries of salvation. As the life of Christ and the character of His mission are dwelt upon, rays of light will shine forth more distinctly at every attempt to discover truth. Each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 378.

“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,” the apostle Paul writes, “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,” 2 Thessalonians 2:13. In this text the two agencies in the work of salvation are revealed—the divine influence, and the strong, living faith of those who follow Christ. It is through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth that we become laborers together with God. Christ waits for the co-operation of His church. He does not design to add a new element of efficiency to His word; He has done His great work in giving His inspiration to the word. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the divine word, are ours. The object of all this provision of heaven is before us—the salvation of the souls for whom Christ died; and it depends upon us to lay hold on the promises God has given, and become laborers together with Him. Divine and human agencies must co-operate in the work.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 22.

Friday, June 30: For Further Reading

God's Amazing Grace, "Source of Right Influence," p. 272;

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, "Pray for the Latter Rain," p. 508.

Lesson 2

God's Grand, Christ-Centered Plan

Sabbath Afternoon, July 1

In the gracious blessings which our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us we may discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite, and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child. When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. In the language of John we exclaim: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God and God to man. Matchless mercy reveals to us a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance which threatened only misery and despair, in the reflected light from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent and believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 461.

The Lord Jesus . . . loves you. If you doubt His love, look to Calvary. The light reflected from the cross shows you the magnitude of that love which no tongue can tell.

The mercies of God surround you every moment; and it would be profitable for you to consider how and whence your blessings come every day. Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you, and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be sensible of daily refreshment, of the protection and love of Jesus; you will be guided in the way of peace.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 340.

The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit's working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 189.

Sunday, July 2: Chosen and Accepted in Christ

At his creation Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. “Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. When man became Satan’s captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became “the god of this world.” 2 Corinthians 4:4. He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam. But Christ, by His sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, would not only redeem man, but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second. . . . [T]he apostle Paul points forward to the “redemption of the purchased possession.” Ephesians 1:14. . . . That purpose will be fulfilled, when, renewed by the power of God, and freed from sin and sorrow, it shall become the eternal abode of the redeemed.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 67.

We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity. [Ephesians 2:1-6 quoted.]

As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we cooperate with God in overcoming Satan’s temptations. God works, and man works, that man may be one with Christ as Christ is one with God. Then we sit together with Christ in heavenly places. The mind rests with peace and assurance in Jesus.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 943.

By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan’s purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. . . .

The exaltation of the redeemed will be an eternal testimony to God's mercy. "In the ages to come," He will "show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." "To the intent that . . . unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known . . . the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Ephesians 2:7; 3:10, 11, R. V.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 25, 26.

Monday, July 3: Costly Redemption: Lavish Forgiveness

Our heavenly Father. . . . hates sin, but He loves the sinner, and He gave Himself in the person of Christ, that all who would might be saved and have eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. What stronger or more tender language could have been employed than He has chosen in which to express His love toward us? He declares, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” Isaiah 49:15. . . .

As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of Infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. “We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Ephesians 1:7. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 54, 55.

The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy. This is a precious promise, given to fallen man to encourage him to trust in the God of love and to seek for eternal life in His kingdom.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 635.

I wish I could present this matter before our people just as I view it—the great offering made in behalf of man. Justice asked for the sufferings of a man. Christ, equal with God, gave the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement Himself. It was for man—all for man. His depth of agony was proportionate to the dignity and grandeur of His character. Never shall we see and comprehend the intense anguish of the sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God until we feel how deep is the pit from which we have been delivered, how grievous the sin of which humanity is guilty, and by faith grasp the full and entire pardon.

Here is where thousands are failing. They do not really believe that Jesus pardons them individually. They fail to take God at His word. He has assured us that He is faithful that hath promised to forgive us and be just to His own law. His mercy is not wanting in anything. Were there one defective link in the chain, then we are hopelessly ruined in our sins. There is not one flaw in it, not one missing link. Oh, precious redemption! Why do we not bring this great truth more fully into our lives? How broad it is, that God for Christ's sake forgives us—me, even me—the moment we ask Him to, in living faith, believing that He is fully able to do this.—*The Upward Look*, p. 219.

Tuesday, July 4: God's Grand, Christ-Centered Plan

Never can the cost of our redemption be realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer before the throne of God. Then as the glories of the eternal home burst upon our enraptured senses we shall remember that Jesus left all this for us, that He not only became an exile from the heavenly courts, but for us took the risk of failure and eternal loss. Then we shall cast our crowns at His feet, and raise the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Revelation 5:12.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 131.

Study this chapter [John 15]. You will see from it that the man who is truly united with Christ will never act as though he were a complete whole in himself.

The perfection of the church depends not on each member being fashioned exactly alike. God calls for each one to take his proper place, to stand in his lot to do his appointed work according to the ability which has been given him.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1090.

Only in the light that shines from Calvary can nature's teaching be read aright. Through the story of Bethlehem and the cross let it be shown how good is to conquer evil, and how every blessing that comes to us is a gift of redemption.

In brier and thorn, in thistle and tare, is represented the evil that blights and mars. In singing bird and opening blossom, in rain and sunshine, in summer breeze and gentle dew, in ten thousand objects in nature, from the oak of the forest to the violet that blossoms at its root, is seen the love that restores. And nature still speaks to us of God's goodness.

"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Jeremiah 29:11. This is the message that, in the light from the cross, may be read upon all the face of nature. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth is full of His riches.—*Education*, p. 101.

Wednesday, July 5: Living in Praise of His Glory

Christ should never be out of the mind. The angels said concerning Him, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Jesus, precious Saviour! Assurance, helpfulness, security, and peace are all in Him. He is the dispeller of all our doubts, the earnest of all our hopes. How precious is the thought that we may indeed become partakers of the divine nature, whereby we may overcome as Christ overcame! Jesus is the fullness of our expectation. He is the melody of our songs, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He is living water to the thirsty soul. He is our refuge in the storm. He is our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. When Christ is our personal Saviour, we shall show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 21.

By and by the gates of heaven will be thrown open to admit God’s children, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall on their ears like richest music, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34.

Then the redeemed will be welcomed to the home that Jesus is preparing for them. There . . . they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and through divine grace have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection, that afflicts them here has been removed by the blood of Christ, and the excellence and brightness of His glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, is imparted to them. . . .

In view of the glorious inheritance that may be his, “what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Matthew 16:26. . . . The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 125, 126.

Christians sometimes think they have a hard time . . . that the road seems hard and that they have many sacrifices to make, when in reality they make

no sacrifice at all. If in reality they are adopted into the family of God, what sacrifice have they made? Their following Christ may have broken some friendship with their world-loving relatives, but look at the exchange—their names written in the Lamb's book of life, elevated, yes, greatly exalted, to be partakers of salvation, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to an imperishable inheritance. . . .

If there is any one who should be continually grateful, it is the follower of Christ. . . . If we appreciate or have any sense of how dearly our salvation was purchased, anything which we may call sacrifice will sink away into insignificance.—*Our High Calling*, p. 201.

Thursday, July 6: The Holy Spirit: Seal and Down Payment

We are to be distinguished from the world because God has placed His seal upon us, because He manifests in us His own character of love. Our Redeemer covers us with His righteousness.

In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess worldly wealth, learning, or eloquence. He asks, “Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?”

God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image. His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 37.

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

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

God desires to refresh His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, baptizing them anew in His love. There is no need for a dearth of the Spirit in the church. After Christ’s ascension the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting, praying, believing disciples with a fullness and power that reached every heart. In the future the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified

through the truth. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to men.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 40.

Friday, July 7: For Further Reading

Our High Calling, “Take God Into Your Counsel,” p. 44;

Reflecting Christ, “By Faith All Things Are Ours,” p. 124.

Lesson 3

The Power of the Exalted Jesus

Sabbath Afternoon, July 8

The Saviour longs to give us a greater blessing than we ask; and He delays the answer to our request that He may show us the evil of our own hearts, and our deep need of His grace. He desires us to renounce the selfishness that leads us to seek Him. Confessing our helplessness and bitter need, we are to trust ourselves wholly to His love. . . .

Not because we see or feel that God hears us are we to believe. We are to trust in His promises. When we come to Him in faith, every petition enters the heart of God. When we have asked for His blessing, we should believe that we receive it, and thank Him that we have received it. Then we are to go about our duties, assured that the blessing will be realized when we need it most. When we have learned to do this, we shall know that our prayers are answered. God will do for us “exceeding abundantly,” “according to the riches of His glory,” and “the working of His mighty power.” Ephesians 3:20, 16; 1:19.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 200.

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, “I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.” . . .

All who are one with Christ through faith in Him gain an experience which is life unto eternal life. “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

Christ became one with humanity, that humanity might become one in Spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life.—*My Life Today*, p. 295.

The power of godliness has almost ceased to be in our churches. And why is this? The Lord is still waiting to be gracious; He has not closed the

windows of heaven. We have separated ourselves from Him. We need to fix the eye of faith upon the cross and believe that Jesus is our strength, our salvation. . . .

It is faith that is lacking. God has an abundance of grace and power awaiting our demand. But the reason we do not feel our great need of it is because we look to ourselves and not to Jesus. We do not exalt Jesus and rely wholly upon His merits.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 166, 167.

Sunday, July 9: Praying and Thanksgiving

Have we not reason to talk of God's goodness and to tell of His power? When friends are kind to us we esteem it a privilege to thank them for their kindness. How much more should we count it a joy to return thanks to the Friend who has given us every good and perfect gift. Then let us, in every church, cultivate thanksgiving to God. Let us educate our lips to praise God in the family circle. Let our gifts and offerings declare our gratitude for the favors we daily receive. In everything we should show forth the joy of the Lord and make known the message of God's saving grace.

The hearts of those who reveal the attributes of Christ glow with divine love. They are imbued with the spirit of gratitude. Lift up Jesus. Lift Him up, the man of Calvary, with the voice of song and prayer.—*My Life Today*, p. 170.

In the work of heart-keeping we must be instant in prayer, unwearied in petitioning the throne of grace for assistance. Those who take the name of Christian should come to God in earnestness and humility, pleading for help. The Saviour has told us to pray without ceasing. The Christian cannot always be in the position of prayer, but his thoughts and desires can always be upward. Our self-confidence would vanish, did we talk less and pray more.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate His greatness, His mercy and excellences. Let His goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart. Converse upon His divine charms, and the heavenly mansions He is preparing for the faithful. He whose conversation is in heaven, is the most profitable Christian to all around him. His words are useful and refreshing. They have a transforming power upon those who hear them, and will melt and subdue the soul.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1157.

To praise God in fullness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show to the world and to all the heavenly intelligences that we appreciate the wonderful love of God for fallen humanity and that we are expecting larger and yet larger blessings from His infinite fullness.

Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service would be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children.

These exercises drive back the power of Satan. They expel the spirit of murmuring and complaint, and the tempter loses ground. They cultivate those attributes of character which will fit the dwellers on earth for the heavenly mansions.

Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. No more effective means can be employed for winning souls to Christ.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 299, 300.

Monday, July 10: Experiencing Insight From the Holy Spirit

Here are revealed the heights of attainment that we may reach through faith in the promises of our heavenly Father, when we fulfill His requirements. Through the merits of Christ, we have access to the throne of infinite power. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32. . . .

It is the mystery of God in the flesh, God in Christ, divinity in humanity. Christ bowed down in unparalleled humility, that in His exaltation to the throne of God He might also exalt those who believe in Him to a seat with Him upon His throne. “Exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,” will be given unto us “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him” (Ephesians 1:17), that we may be able to “comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,” that we may be “filled with all the fulness of God.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 366.

What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. We must search the Scriptures diligently, prayerfully; our understanding must be quickened by the Holy Spirit, and our hearts must be uplifted to God in faith and hope and continual praise.

Through the merits of Christ, through His righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. Our daily and hourly work is set forth in the words of the apostle: “Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith.” While doing this our minds become clearer and our faith stronger, and our hope is confirmed; we are so engrossed with the view of His purity and loveliness, and the sacrifice He has made to bring us into agreement with God, that we have no disposition to speak of doubts and discouragements.

The manifestation of God’s love, His mercy and His goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ that, having a clear conception of His character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions

of Satan. Looking unto Jesus and trusting in His merits we appropriate the blessings of light, of peace, of joy in the Holy Ghost. And in view of the great things which Christ has done for us, we are ready to exclaim: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 743, 744.

Tuesday, July 11: Participating in Resurrection Power

The Saviour came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself. Now was proved the truth of His words, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Now was fulfilled the prophecy He had spoken to the priests and rulers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John 10:17, 18; 2:19.

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

Go to Christ for relief. Cling to Him. Stay long enough to yield up your will to the will of God. Many are in too great a hurry to pray. With hurried steps they pass through the shadow of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps for a few moments within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to sit down, no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens, they return to their work.

Fix your thoughts upon the Saviour. Go apart from the bustle of the world, and sit down under Christ's shadow. This you must do if you receive the rich blessings He is waiting to bestow on you. Give your thoughts to high and holy things. Then, amidst the din of the daily toil and conflict, your spiritual strength will be renewed.—*This Day With God*, p. 154.

There is no man living that has any power or ability which he has not received from God, and the source from whence it came is open to the weakest human being. If he will draw near to God, the unfailing source of strength, he will realize that God fulfills His promise. . . . "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." . . .

The Holy Spirit waits to give aid to every believing soul, and Jesus

declares, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Let those who believe in Jesus be strong, prayerful, and full of trust in Christ’s power to save. “Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 379, 380.

Wednesday, July 12: Christ Above All Powers

“The head of every man is Christ.” God, who put all things under the Saviour’s feet, “gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22, 23. The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man. Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 414.

The early Christians were often called to meet the powers of darkness face to face. By sophistry and by persecution the enemy endeavored to turn them from the true faith. At the present time, when the end of all things earthly is rapidly approaching, Satan is putting forth desperate efforts to ensnare the world. He is devising many plans to occupy minds and to divert attention from the truths essential to salvation. In every city his agencies are busily organizing into parties those who are opposed to the law of God. The archdeceiver is at work to introduce elements of confusion and rebellion, and men are being fired with a zeal that is not according to knowledge.

Wickedness is reaching a height never before attained, and yet many ministers of the gospel are crying, “Peace and safety.” But God’s faithful messengers are to go steadily forward with their work. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, they are to advance fearlessly and victoriously, never ceasing their warfare until every soul within their reach shall have received the message of truth for this time.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 219, 220.

[In the] hour of utmost extremity David, instead of permitting his mind to dwell upon . . . circumstances, looked earnestly to God for help. He “encouraged himself in the Lord.” He reviewed his past eventful life. Wherein had the Lord ever forsaken him? His soul was refreshed in recalling the many evidences of God’s favor. . . . “What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee” (Psalm 56:3), was the language of his heart. Though he himself could not discern a way out of the difficulty, God could see it, and

would teach him what to do. . . .

All earthly powers are under the control of the Infinite One. To the mightiest ruler, to the most cruel oppressor, He says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." Job 38:11. God's power is constantly exercised to counteract the agencies of evil; He is ever at work among men, not for their destruction, but for their correction and preservation.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 692, 694.

Thursday, July 13: Jesus, All Things, and His Church

We expect too little, and we receive according to our faith. We are not to cling to our own ways, our own plans, our own ideas; we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Besetting sins are to be conquered, and evil habits overcome. Wrong dispositions and feelings are to be rooted out, and holy tempers and emotions begotten in us by the Spirit of God. . . .

Then let us lay hold of this mighty power by living faith, praying and believing, trusting and working. Then God will do that which only God can do. . . .

Hand yourself over to Jesus, to be molded and fashioned by Him, that you may be made vessels unto honor. Your temptations, your ideas, your feelings, must all be laid at the foot of the cross. Then the soul is ready to listen to words of divine instruction. Jesus will give you to drink of the water which flows from the river of God. Under the softening and subduing influence of His Spirit your coldness and listlessness will disappear. Christ will be in you a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.—*The Upward Look*, p. 218.

The prayer of faith is the great strength of the Christian and will assuredly prevail against Satan. This is why he insinuates that we have no need of prayer. The name of Jesus, our Advocate, he detests; and when we earnestly come to Him for help, Satan's host is alarmed. It serves his purpose well if we neglect the exercise of prayer, for then his lying wonders are more readily received. That which he failed to accomplish in tempting Christ, he accomplishes by setting his deceitful temptations before man.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 296.

Prayer is the breath of the soul. It is the secret of spiritual power. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the health of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and strengthens the sinew and muscle of the religious experience. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer

spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor.

It is only at the altar of God that we can kindle our tapers with divine fire. It is only the divine light that will reveal the littleness, the incompetence, of human ability, and give clear views of the perfection and purity of Christ. It is only as we behold Jesus that we desire to be like Him, only as we view His righteousness that we hunger and thirst to possess it; and it is only as we ask in earnest prayer, that God will grant us our heart's desire.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 254, 255.

Friday, July 14: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "Thanksgiving and Praise," p. 171;

That I May Know Him, "On the Threshold of Eternity," p. 362.

Lesson 4

How God Rescues Us

Sabbath Afternoon, July 15

By accepting Christ as his personal Saviour, man is brought into the same close relation to God, and enjoys His special favor as does His own beloved Son. He is honored and glorified and intimately associated with God, his life being hid with Christ in God. O what love, what wondrous love! . . .

The purity of Christ has revealed to him his own impurity in its odious colors. He turns from the defiling sin; he looks to Jesus and lives.

He finds an all-absorbing, commanding, attractive character in Jesus Christ, the one who died to deliver him from the deformity of sin, and with quivering lip and tearful eye he declares, “He shall not have died for me in vain.” “Thy gentleness hath made me great.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 297.

O Precious, loving, long-suffering, long-forbearing Jesus, how my soul adores Thee! That a poor, unworthy, sin-polluted soul can stand before the Holy God, complete in the righteousness of our Substitute and Surety! Wonder, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth, that fallen man is the object of His infinite love and delight. He rejoices over them with celestial songs, and man defiled with sin, having become cleansed through the righteousness of Christ, is presented to the Father free from every spot and stain of sin, “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing” (Ephesians 5:27). “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (Romans 8:33).—*The Upward Look*, p. 377.

Oh, when shall we ever realize the full value of our Saviour’s work and intercession? When shall we rely upon Him with full confidence, and live a noble, pure, and devoted life? To what heights may the imagination reach when sanctified and inspired by the virtue of Christ! We may take in the glories of the future, eternal world. We may live as seeing Him who is invisible. Walk by faith and not by sight.

Through searching the Scriptures we may come to understand what we are to Christ, and what He is to us. By beholding Him we are to become changed into His image, becoming colaborers with Him, representatives of Him in life and character. We must learn to realize that we are to live as the sons and daughters of God, loving God supremely, and our neighbors as ourselves. We are to live a pure, perfect life for Christ's sake. We are to love perfection because Jesus is the embodiment of perfection, the great center of attraction. The life we now live we must live by faith in the Son of God. —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 318.

Sunday, July 16: Once Dead and Deceived by Satan

The same spirit that prompted rebellion in heaven still inspires rebellion on earth. Satan has continued with men the same policy which he pursued with the angels. His spirit now reigns in the children of disobedience. Like him they seek to break down the restraints of the law of God and promise men liberty through transgression of its precepts. . . . When God's messages of warning are brought home to the conscience, Satan leads men to justify themselves and to seek the sympathy of others in their course of sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprover, as if he were the sole cause of difficulty. From the days of righteous Abel to our own time such is the spirit which has been displayed toward those who dare to condemn sin.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 500.

Satan will accuse and seek permission to destroy, but it is God that opens the door of refuge. It is God that justifieth him that entereth that door. Then if God be for us, who can be against us? Oh, the bright glorious truth. Why do not men discern it? Why not walk in its bright beams? Why do not all who believe talk of Christ's matchless love?—*The Upward Look*, p. 377.

The Christian's life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. Truly spoke God's servant Nehemiah: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10. And Paul says: "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 477.

By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. . . . In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through co-operation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God's assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.

Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like

Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God's word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 531, 532.

Monday, July 17: Once Deluded by Our Own Desires

Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. The prevalence of a sinful desire shows the delusion of the soul. Every indulgence of that desire strengthens the soul's aversion to God. The pains of duty and the pleasures of sin are the cords with which Satan binds men in his snares. Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful. . . .

The testimony borne to you by the Spirit of God is: Parley not with the enemy. Kill the thorns, or they will kill you. Break up the fallow ground of the heart. Let the work go deep and thorough. Let the plowshare of truth tear out the weeds and briers.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 53.

[The poor publican] felt his need, and with his burden of guilt and shame he came before God, asking for His mercy. His heart was open for the Spirit of God to do its gracious work and set him free from the power of sin. The Pharisee's boastful, self-righteous prayer showed that his heart was closed against the influence of the Holy Spirit. Because of his distance from God, he had no sense of his own defilement, in contrast with the perfection of the divine holiness. He felt no need, and he received nothing.

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

—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 30, 31.

The Lord Jesus . . . is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine

similitude, to be sons and daughters of God. . . .

The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 282.

Tuesday, July 18: Now Resurrected, Ascended, and Exalted With Christ

Christ gave Himself for the redemption of the race, that all who believe in Him may have everlasting life. Those who appreciate this great sacrifice receive from the Saviour that most precious of all gifts—a clean heart. They gain an experience that is more valuable than gold or silver or precious stones. They sit together in heavenly places in Christ, enjoying in communion with Him the joy and peace that He alone can give. They love Him with heart and mind and soul and strength, realizing that they are His blood-bought heritage. Their spiritual eyesight is not dimmed by worldly policy or worldly aims. They are one with Christ as He is one with the Father.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 7.

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? . . . It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?

Even now, “unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places” is “made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.” And He “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places: . . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 3:10, R.V.; 2:6, 7.—*Education*, p. 308.

Satan cannot hold the dead in his grasp when the Son of God bids them live. . . . It is all offered us in His word. If we receive the word, we have the deliverance.

And “if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal

bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Romans 8:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This is the word of comfort wherewith He bids us comfort one another.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 320.

Wednesday, July 19: Now Blessed Forever by Grace

Not because we first loved Him did Christ love us; but “while we were yet sinners” He died for us. He does not treat us according to our desert. Although our sins have merited condemnation, He does not condemn us. Year after year He has borne with our weakness and ignorance, with our ingratitude and waywardness. Notwithstanding our wanderings, our hardness of heart, our neglect of His Holy Word, His hand is stretched out still.

Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need. . . .

Every human being is the object of loving interest to Him who gave His life that He might bring men back to God. Souls guilty and helpless, liable to be destroyed by the arts and snares of Satan, are cared for as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his flock.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 161, 162.

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven’s chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. By this means faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him.—*The*

Ministry of Healing, p. 100.

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 68.

Thursday, July 20: Now Saved by God

Such is the grace of God, such the love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, enemies in our minds by wicked works, serving divers lusts and pleasures, the slaves of debase appetites and passion, servants of sin and Satan. What depth of love is manifested in Christ, as He becomes the propitiation for our sins. Through the ministration of the Holy Spirit souls are led to find forgiveness of sins.

The purity, the holiness, of the life of Jesus as presented from the Word of God possess more power to reform and transform the character than do all the efforts put forth in picturing sins and crimes of men and the sure results. One steadfast look to the Saviour uplifted upon the cross will do more to purify the mind and heart from every defilement than will all the scientific explanations by the ablest tongue.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 297.

In His Word God reveals what He can do for human beings. He molds and fashions after the divine similitude the characters of those who will wear His yoke. Through His grace they are made partakers of the divine nature, and are thus enabled to overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is God who gives us power to overcome. Those who hear His voice and obey His commandments are enabled to form righteous characters. Those who disregard His expressed commands will form characters like the propensities that they indulge.

It is a knowledge of the perfection of the divine character, manifested to us in Jesus Christ, that opens up to us communion with God. It is by appropriating the great and precious promises that we are to become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 943.

Our acceptance with God is sure only through his beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of his sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God's free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ's sake alone. The troubled

soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.

But are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 199.

Friday, July 21: For Further Reading

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, “The Victorious Life,” pp. 515–520;

My Life Today, “The Exceeding Riches of His Grace,” p. 100.

Lesson 5

Horizontal Atonement: The Cross and the Church

Sabbath Afternoon, July 22

God chose Israel to reveal His character to men. He desired them to be as wells of salvation in the world. To them were committed the oracles of heaven, the revelation of God's will. . . .

But the people of Israel lost sight of their high privileges as God's representatives. They forgot God and failed to fulfill their holy mission. The blessings they received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages they appropriated for their own glorification. They shut themselves away from the world in order to escape temptation. The restrictions that God had placed upon their association with idolaters as a means of preventing them from conforming to the practices of the heathen, they used to build up a wall of separation between themselves and all other nations. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 14.

Advancing in faith, Paul labored unceasingly for the upbuilding of God's kingdom among those who had been neglected by the teachers in Israel. Constantly he exalted Christ Jesus as "the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Timothy 6:15), and exhorted the believers to be "rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith." Colossians 2:7.

To those who believe, Christ is a sure foundation. Upon this living stone, Jews and Gentiles alike may build. It is broad enough for all and strong enough to sustain the weight and burden of the whole world. This is a fact plainly recognized by Paul himself. In the closing days of his ministry, when addressing a group of Gentile believers who had remained steadfast in their love of the gospel truth, the apostle wrote, "Ye . . . are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the

chief cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:19, 20.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 175.

I heard so many say that the different nationalities of Europe were peculiar and had to be reached in a certain way. But the wisdom of God is promised to those who feel their need and who ask for it. God can bring the people where they will receive the truth. Let the Lord take possession of the mind and mold it as the clay is molded in the hands of the potter, and these differences will not exist. . . . I warn you, brethren and sisters, not to build up a wall of partition between different nationalities. On the contrary, seek to break it down wherever it exists. We should endeavor to bring all into the harmony that there is in Jesus, laboring for the one object, the salvation of our fellow men.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 181.

Sunday, July 23: Brought Near in Christ

In turning to the Gentiles in Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas did not cease laboring for the Jews elsewhere, wherever there was a favorable opportunity to gain a hearing.

Later, in Thessalonica, in Corinth, in Ephesus, and in other important centers, Paul and his companions in labor preached the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. But their chief energies were henceforth directed toward the building up of the kingdom of God in heathen territory, among peoples who had but little or no knowledge of the true God and of His Son.

The hearts of Paul and his associate workers were drawn out in behalf of those who were “without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” Through the untiring ministrations of the apostles to the Gentiles, the “strangers and foreigners,” who “sometimes were far off,” learned that they had been “made nigh by the blood of Christ,” and that through faith in His atoning sacrifice they might become “fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:12, 13, 19.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 174, 175.

We are commanded to love one another as Christ has loved us. He has manifested His love by laying down His life to redeem us. The beloved disciple says that we should be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. For “everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him” (verse 1). If we love Christ, we shall love those who resemble Him in life and character. And not only so, but we shall love those who have “no hope,” and are “without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12). It was to save sinners that Christ left His home in heaven and came to earth to suffer and to die. For this He toiled and agonized and prayed, until, heartbroken and deserted by those He came to save, He poured out His life on Calvary.—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 82.

We must gather about the cross. Christ and Him crucified must be the theme of contemplation, of conversation, and of our most joyful emotion. We should have special praise services for the purpose of keeping fresh in

our thoughts everything that we receive from God, and of expressing our gratitude for His great love, and our willingness to trust everything to the hand that was nailed to the cross for us. We should learn to talk the language of Canaan, to sing the songs of Zion.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 249.

Monday, July 24: Reconciliation: God's Gift From the Cross

These [Greek] men came from the West to find the Saviour at the close of His life, as the wise men had come from the East at the beginning. At the time of Christ's birth the Jewish people were so engrossed with their own ambitious plans that they knew not of His advent. The magi from a heathen land came to the manger with their gifts, to worship the Saviour. So these Greeks, representing the nations, tribes, and peoples of the world, came to see Jesus. So the people of all lands and all ages would be drawn by the Saviour's cross. So shall many "come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 8:11.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 621.

The cross is invested with a power that language cannot express. . . .

The work of the sons and daughters of God must be of a different character than has yet been manifested by a large number. If they love Jesus, they will have enlarged ideas of the love that has been expressed for fallen man, which required the provision of so expensive an offering to save the human race. Our Saviour asks the cooperation of every son and daughter of Adam who has become a son or daughter of God. Our Saviour declares that He brought from heaven as a donation eternal life. He was to be lifted up upon the cross of Calvary to draw all men unto Him. How then shall we treat the purchased inheritance of Christ? Tenderness, appreciation, kindness, sympathy, and love should be shown to them. Then we may work to help and bless one another. In this work we have more than human brotherhood. We have the exalted companionship of heavenly angels. They cooperate with us in the work of enlightening high and low. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 229.

John declares: "Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." 1 John 2:3-5.

One of Christ's last commands to His disciples was "Love one another as I have loved you." John 13:34. Do we obey this command, or are we

indulging sharp, unchristlike traits of character? If we have in any way grieved or wounded others, it is our duty to confess our fault and seek for reconciliation. This is an essential preparation that we may come before God in faith, to ask His blessing.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 144.

Tuesday, July 25: Breaking Down the Dividing Wall

In the days of Christ, selfishness and pride and prejudice had built strong and high the wall of partition between the appointed guardians of the sacred oracles and every other nation on the globe. But the Saviour had come to change all this. The words which the people were hearing from His lips were unlike anything to which they had ever listened from priest or rabbi. Christ tears away the wall of partition, the self-love, the dividing prejudice of nationality, and teaches a love for all the human family. He lifts men from the narrow circle that their selfishness prescribes; He abolishes all territorial lines and artificial distinctions of society. He makes no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. He teaches us to look upon every needy soul as our neighbor and the world as our field. —*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 42.

The early church was made up of many classes of people, of various nationalities. . . .

The hearts of those who had been converted under the labors of the apostles, were softened and united by Christian love. Despite former prejudices, all were in harmony with one another. Satan knew that so long as this union continued to exist, he would be powerless to check the progress of gospel truth; and he sought to take advantage of former habits of thought, in the hope that thereby he might be able to introduce into the church elements of disunion.

Thus it came to pass that as disciples were multiplied, the enemy succeeded in arousing the suspicions of some who had formerly been in the habit of looking with jealousy on their brethren in the faith and of finding fault with their spiritual leaders, and so “there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 87, 88.

However large may be a man’s claim to knowledge and wisdom, unless he is under the teaching of the Holy Spirit he is exceedingly ignorant of spiritual things. He needs to realize his danger and his inefficiency, and to place entire dependence upon the One who alone is able to keep the souls committed to His trust, able to imbue them with His Spirit, and to fill them

with unselfish love for one another, thus enabling them to bear witness that God has sent His Son into the world to save sinners. Those who are truly converted will press together in Christian unity. Let there be no division in the church of God, no unwise authority exercised over those who accept the truth. The meekness of Christ is to appear in all that is said and done. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 146.

Wednesday, July 26: Jesus, Preacher of Peace

The peace spoken of by the great Teacher is larger and fuller than we have imagined. Christ is ready to do large things for us, to restore our natures by making us partakers of His divine nature. He waits to link our hearts with His heart of infinite love, in order that we may be fully reconciled to God; but it is our privilege to understand that God loves us as He loves His Son. When we believe in Christ as our personal Saviour, the peace of Christ is ours. The reconciliation provided for us in the atonement of Christ is the foundation of our peace; but gloomy feelings are no evidence that the promises of God are of no effect. You look at your feelings, and because your outlook is not all brightness, you begin to draw more closely the garment of heaviness about your soul. You look within yourself, and think that God is forsaking you. You are to look to Christ. In me, Christ says, ye shall have peace. Entering into communion with our Saviour, we enter the region of peace.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 332.

Christ is “the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6), and it is His mission to restore to earth and heaven the peace that sin has broken. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1. Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace.

There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ received into the heart, subdues enmity; it allays strife and fills the soul with love. He who is at peace with God and his fellow men cannot be made miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil surmisings will find no room there; hatred cannot exist. The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around. The spirit of peace will rest like dew upon hearts weary and troubled with worldly strife.

Christ’s followers are sent to the world with the message of peace. Whoever, by the quiet, unconscious influence of a holy life, shall reveal the love of Christ; whoever, by word or deed, shall lead another to renounce sin and yield his heart to God, is a peacemaker.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 27, 28.

Thursday, July 27: The Church, a Holy Temple

The Jewish temple was built of hewn stones quarried out of the mountains; and every stone was fitted for its place in the temple, hewed, polished, and tested before it was brought to Jerusalem. And when all were brought to the ground, the building went together without the sound of ax or hammer. This building represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation, and tongue, and people, of all grades, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. These are not dead substances to be fitted by hammer and chisel. They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its parts, the admiration of angels and of men; for its Builder and Maker is God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 180.

Upon the foundation that Christ Himself had laid, the apostles built the church of God. In the Scriptures the figure of the erection of a temple is frequently used to illustrate the building of the church. Zechariah refers to Christ as the Branch that should build the temple of the Lord. He speaks of the Gentiles as helping in the work: "They that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord;" and Isaiah declares, "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls." Zechariah 6:12, 15; Isaiah 60:10.

Writing of the building of this temple, Peter says, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:4, 5.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 595.

In the quarry of the Jewish and the Gentile world the apostles labored, bringing out stones to lay upon the foundation. In his letter to the believers at Ephesus, Paul said, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are 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.” Ephesians 2:19-22.

And to the Corinthians he wrote: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” 1 Corinthians 3:10-13.
—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 596.

Friday, July 28: For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, “How to Settle Your Troubles,” p. 181;
Our High Calling, “All Honor to the Peace Makers!” p. 179.

Lesson 6

The Mystery of the Gospel

Sabbath Afternoon, July 29

Jesus longed to unfold the deep mysteries of the truth which had been hid for ages, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs with the Jews, and “partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.” Ephesians 3:6. This truth the disciples were slow to learn, and the divine Teacher gave them lesson upon lesson. In rewarding the faith of the centurion at Capernaum, and preaching the gospel to the inhabitants of Sychar, He had already given evidence that He did not share the intolerance of the Jews. But the Samaritans had some knowledge of God; and the centurion had shown kindness to Israel. Now Jesus brought the disciples in contact with a heathen, whom they regarded as having no reason above any of her people, to expect favor from Him. He would give an example of how such a one should be treated. The disciples had thought that He dispensed too freely the gifts of His grace. He would show that His love was not to be circumscribed to race or nation. . . .

. . . [T]he minds of the disciples [opened] more fully to the labor that lay before them among the Gentiles. They saw a wide field of usefulness outside of Judea. They saw souls bearing sorrows unknown to those more highly favored. Among those whom they had been taught to despise were souls longing for help from the mighty Healer, hungering for the light of truth, which had been so abundantly given to the Jews.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 402.

God’s servants receive no honor or recognition from the world. Stephen was stoned because he preached Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten, stoned, and finally put to death, because he was a faithful messenger of God to the Gentiles. The apostle John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, “for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” [Revelation 1:9.] These examples of human steadfastness in the

might of divine power, are a witness to the world of the faithfulness of God's promises, of His abiding presence and sustaining grace. . . .

God's heroes of faith are heirs to an inheritance of greater value than any earthly riches,—an inheritance that will satisfy the longings of the soul. By the world they may be unknown and unacknowledged, but in the record books above they are enrolled as citizens of heaven, and an exalted greatness, an eternal weight of glory, will be theirs.

The greatest work, the noblest effort, in which men can engage, is to point sinners to the Lamb of God.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 18.

Sunday, July 30: Paul: Imprisoned Apostle to the Gentiles

“The love of Christ,” said Paul, “constraineth us.” It was the actuating principle of his conduct; it was his motive power. If ever his ardor in the path of duty for a moment flagged, one glance at the cross and the amazing love of Christ revealed in His unparalleled sacrifice was enough to cause him to gird up anew the loins of his mind and press forward in the path of self-denial. In his labors for his brethren he relied much upon the exhibition of infinite love in the wonderful condescension of Christ, with all its subduing, constraining power.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 457.

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, “Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.” He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge. His prayer for His disciples was, “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” “In the world,” He says, “ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” John 17:15; 16:33.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught His disciples precious lessons in regard to the necessity of trusting in God. These lessons were designed to encourage the children of God through all ages, and they have come down to our time full of instruction and comfort. . . .

The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Jesus says, “My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” “These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” John 14:27; 15:11.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 122, 124.

God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning, and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as co-workers with Him. Not Enoch, who was translated to heaven, not Elijah, who ascended in a chariot of fire,

was greater or more honored than John the Baptist, who perished alone in the dungeon. “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Philippians 1:29. And of all the gifts that Heaven can bestow upon men, fellowship with Christ in His sufferings is the most weighty trust and the highest honor.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 224.

Monday, July 31: The Long-Hidden Mystery of the Gospel

Paul's heart burned with a love for sinners, and he put all his energies into the work of soul winning. There never lived a more self-denying, persevering worker. The blessings he received he prized as so many advantages to be used in blessing others. He lost no opportunity of speaking of the Saviour or of helping those in trouble. From place to place he went, preaching the gospel of Christ and establishing churches. Wherever he could find a hearing, he sought to counteract wrong, and to turn the feet of men and women into the path of righteousness.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 367.

The Lord would not have His people exclusive. Christ's delegated messengers are to proclaim the gospel of His grace to all nations, tongues, and people. We are to make it known that the Great Advocate is giving audience to the whole world. The Jewish church was called to be God's representative to an apostate world, and in order to fulfill this mission the Jewish people were to maintain their own existence as a nation distinct from all the idolatrous nations upon the earth. They were to stand in the world maintaining their peculiar and holy character . . . representing God's mercy, goodness, compassion, and love. Thus in excellence of character they could stand above every other nation; for through a pure and obedient people the Lord would manifest His rich blessings.

Thus the principles of the laws governing His kingdom were to be exalted throughout the world. Just as surely as they responded to the mercy, the light, the grace given, they would become the light of the world. They would be constantly directing attention to God, as a wise, faultless, Supreme Ruler, and the praise of God would be in all the earth. The Lord is our God, and He has the same purpose in regard to His believing, loyal people today. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 44.

There is no example in the life of Christ for . . . self-righteous bigotry; His character was genial and beneficent. . . . In every religious denomination, and in almost every church, are to be found [those] who would have blamed Him for His liberal mercies. They would have found

fault with Him because He ate with publicans and sinners. . . .

Those with whom God has entrusted His truth, must possess the same beneficent spirit that Christ manifested. They must adopt the same broad plans of action. They should have a kind, generous spirit toward the poor, and in a special sense feel that they are God's stewards. . . . Like Christ, they should not shun the society of their fellow-men, but should seek it with the purpose of bestowing upon others the heavenly benefits they have received from God.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 334, 335.

Tuesday, August 1: The Church: Revealer of God's Wisdom

Paul was deeply anxious that the humiliation of Christ should be seen and realized. He was convinced that if men could be led to consider the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, selfishness would be banished from their hearts. The apostle lingers over point after point, that we may in some measure comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in behalf of sinners. He directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying aside His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to the humbling conditions of man's life, assuming the responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that the most ignominious and revolting, the most agonizing—the death of the cross. Can we contemplate this wonderful manifestation of the love of God without gratitude and love, and a deep sense of the fact that we are not our own? Such a Master should not be served from grudging, selfish motives.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 501.

The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will re-create the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine. . . .

“For this cause,” Paul says, “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ephesians 3:14-19.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 289.

Let each one who claims to follow Christ esteem himself less and others more. Press together, press together! In union there is strength and victory; in discord and division there is weakness and defeat. These words have

been spoken to me from heaven. As God's ambassador I speak them to you.

Let everyone seek to answer the prayer of Christ: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee." Oh, what unity is this! and says Christ: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 488.

Wednesday, August 2: Christ, Dwelling in Your Heart

Paul's was a life of intense and varied activities. From city to city, from country to country, he journeyed, telling the story of the cross, winning converts to the gospel, and establishing churches. . . . But in all the busy activity of his life, he never lost sight of the one great purpose,—to press toward the mark of his high calling.

Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of the truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 58, 59.

It is Christ dwelling in the soul that gives us spiritual power, and makes us channels of light. The more light we have, the more we can impart to others around us. The more closely we live to Jesus, the clearer views shall we have of His loveliness. As we behold Him in His purity, we discern more clearly our own faults of character. We yearn after Him, and for that fullness that is in Him, and that shines out in the perfection of His heavenly character; and by beholding we become changed into His image. . . .

Our hearts may be filled with all the fullness of God. . . .
[L]et us take the key of faith, and unlock the storehouse of God's rich blessings. There is an infinite fullness to draw from; and we have the promise of our divine Lord, "According to your faith be it unto you."—*Lift Him Up*, p. 266.

[You] may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. . . . Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding more and more. And it will be ours to realize the blessing which Paul

desired for the Ephesian church when he prayed “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him*; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what *the riches of the glory* of His inheritance in the saints, and what is *the exceeding greatness of His power* to usward who believe.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 740.

Thursday, August 3: Glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus

We have been called to the knowledge of Christ, and that is to the knowledge of glory and virtue. It is a knowledge of the perfection of the divine character, manifested to us in Jesus Christ, that opens up to us communion with God. Scarcely can the human mind comprehend what is the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments that can be reached by becoming partakers of the divine nature. . . .

We are living in days of peril. Christ alone can help us and give us the victory. Christ must be all in all to us; He must dwell in the heart; His life must circulate through us, as the blood circulates through the veins. His Spirit must be a vitalizing power that will cause us to influence others to become Christlike and holy.—*Our High Calling*, p. 60.

There are many who think that it is impossible to escape from the power of sin, but the promise is that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. We aim too low. The mark is much higher. Our minds need expansion, that we may comprehend the significance of the provision of God. We are to reflect the highest attributes of the character of God. We should be thankful that we are not to be left to ourselves. . . .

It is privilege of the children of God to be filled with all the fullness of God. “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end” (Ephesians 3:20, 21).—*That I May Know Him*, p. 302.

In everything we should show forth the joy of the Lord.

David declares, “I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live” (Psalm 116:1, 2). God’s goodness in hearing and answering prayer places us under heavy obligation to express our thanksgiving for the favors bestowed upon us. We should praise God much more than we do. The blessings received in answer to prayer should be promptly acknowledged. . . .

Let the peace of God reign in your soul. Then you will have strength to

bear all suffering, and you will rejoice that you have grace to endure. Praise the Lord; talk of His goodness; tell of His power. Sweeten the atmosphere that surrounds your soul. Praise with heart and soul and voice, Him who is the health of your countenance, your Saviour, and your God.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 325.

Friday, August 4: For Further Reading

In Heavenly Places, “Our Glorious Work,” p. 248;
My Life Today, “God Is My Father,” p. 289.

Lesson 7

The Unified Body of Christ

Sabbath Afternoon, August 5

The members of the church of God on this earth are as the different parts of a machine, all closely related to one another, and all closely related to and dependent on one great center. There is to be unity in diversity. No member of the Lord's firm can work successfully in independence, detached from the others. All are to use their entrusted capabilities in His service, that each may minister to the perfection of the whole. Each is to work under the supervision of God.

By Christ's wonderful union of divinity with humanity, we are assured that even in this world we may be partakers of the divine nature. Christ has pledged Himself to cooperate with those to whom He has entrusted talents. He has pledged Himself to train us to be His co-laborers. He will help us to follow His example, doing good and refusing to do evil. We are to be consecrated channels through whom the love of Christ flows to those in need of help.—*Our High Calling*, p. 182.

The Lord has need of all kinds of skillful workmen. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11, 12). Each worker in every branch of work in the Lord's vineyard must have a head and a heart sanctified through the truth to enable him to see not merely the part of the work which is under his supervision, but its relation to the great whole. When the workers are consecrated to God they will reveal the love of God for their brethren who work under the unseen, divine Master Worker. "We are labourers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9).

We are all part of the great web of humanity, thread packed against thread to bring out the pattern of the fabric and make it a complete whole. Be God's thread to work out His design.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 323.

There can be no growth or fruitfulness in the life that is centered in self. . . . Talk of the love of Christ, tell of His goodness. Do every duty that presents itself. Carry the burden of souls upon your heart, and by every means in your power seek to save the lost. As you receive the Spirit of Christ—the Spirit of unselfish love and labor for others—you will grow and bring forth fruit. The graces of the Spirit will ripen in your character. Your faith will increase, your convictions deepen, your love be made perfect. More and more you will reflect the likeness of Christ in all that is pure, noble, and lovely.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 67.

Sunday, August 6: The Unity of the Spirit

Paul urges the Ephesians to preserve unity and love: “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, 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; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” . . . [Ephesians 4:1-3](#)

By meekness and gentleness, forbearance and love, they were to exemplify the character of Christ and the blessings of His salvation. There is but one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith. As members of the body of Christ all believers are animated by the same spirit and the same hope. Divisions in the church dishonor the religion of Christ before the world and give occasion to the enemies of truth to justify their course. Paul’s instructions were not written alone for the church in his day. God designed that they should be sent down to us. What are we doing to preserve unity in the bonds of peace?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 239.

A union of believers with Christ will as a natural result lead to a union with one another, which bond of union is the most enduring upon earth. We are one in Christ, as Christ is one with the Father. It is only by personal union with Christ, by communion with Him daily, hourly, that we can bear the fruits of the Holy Spirit. . . .

The vine has many branches, but though all the branches are different, they do not quarrel. In diversity there is unity. All the branches obtain their nourishment from one source. This is an illustration of the unity that is to exist among Christ’s followers. In their different lines of work they all have but one Head. The same Spirit, in different ways, works through them. There is harmonious action, though the gifts differ.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 211.

Many of those who profess to love the Saviour neglect to love those who are united with them in Christian fellowship. . . .

It is not the opposition of the world that endangers us the most; it is the evil cherished in the hearts of professed believers that works our most grievous disaster and most retards the progress of God’s cause. There is no

surer way of weakening our spirituality than by being envious, suspicious of one another, full of faultfinding and evil surmising. . . .

Harmony and union existing among men of varied dispositions is the strongest witness that can be borne that God has sent His Son into the world to save sinners. It is our privilege to bear this witness. But, in order to do this, we must place ourselves under Christ's command.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 242.

Monday, August 7: Together As One in the One

God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. . . .

Though we have an individual work and an individual responsibility before God, we are not to follow our own independent judgment, regardless of the opinions and feelings of our brethren; for this course would lead to disorder in the church. . . . [I]f hearts are teachable, there will be no divisions among us.—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 29, 30.

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*, p. 169.

In [the first angel's] message, God has sent to the church a warning, which, had it been accepted, would have corrected the evils that were shutting them away from Him. Had they received the message from heaven, humbling their hearts before the Lord and seeking in sincerity a preparation to stand in His presence, the Spirit and power of God would have been manifested among them. The church would again have reached that blessed state of unity, faith, and love which existed in apostolic days, when the believers "were of one heart and of one soul." Acts 4:32.

If God's professed people would receive the light as it shines upon them

from His word, they would reach that unity for which Christ prayed, that which the apostle describes, “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” “There is,” he says, “one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Ephesians 4:3-5.
—*The Great Controversy*, p. 379.

Tuesday, August 8: The Exalted Christ, Giver of Gifts

It was to the glory of God that the Prince of life should be the first fruits, the antitype of the wave sheaf. . . . This very scene, the resurrection of Christ from the dead, had been celebrated in type by the Jews. When the first heads of grain ripened in the field, they were carefully gathered; and when the people went up to Jerusalem, these were presented to the Lord as a thank offering. The people waved the ripened sheaf before God, acknowledging Him as the Lord of the harvest. After this ceremony the sickle could be put to the wheat, and the harvest gathered.

So those who had been raised were to be presented to the universe as a pledge of the resurrection of all who believe in Christ as their personal Saviour. The same power that raised Christ from the dead will raise His church, and glorify it with Christ, as His bride, above all principalities, above all powers, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the heavenly courts, the world above.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 305.

Before He left His disciples, Christ “breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” John 20:22. Again He said, “Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you.” Luke 24:49. But not until after the ascension was the gift received in its fullness. Not until through faith and prayer the disciples had surrendered themselves fully for His working was the outpouring of the Spirit received. Then in a special sense the goods of heaven were committed to the followers of Christ. “When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” Ephesians 4:8. . . . The gifts are already ours in Christ, but their actual possession depends upon our reception of the Spirit of God.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 327.

The promised Holy Spirit, that He would send after He ascended to His Father, is constantly at work to draw the attention to the great official sacrifice upon the cross of Calvary, and to unfold to the world the love of God to man, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things in the Scriptures, and to open to darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of

Righteousness, the truths that make their hearts burn within them with the awakened intelligence of the truths of eternity. . . .

The life of Christ is to be carefully meditated upon, and to be constantly studied with a desire to understand the reason why He had to come at all. We can only form our conclusions by searching the Scriptures as Christ has enjoined upon us to do, for He says, “They testify of me.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 132.

Wednesday, August 9: Gifts of the Exalted Jesus

The fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians contains lessons given us by God. In this chapter one speaks under the inspiration of God, one to whom in holy vision God had given instruction. He describes the distribution of God's gifts to His workers, saying: "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-13. Here we are shown that God gives to every man his work, and in doing this work man is fulfilling his part of God's great plan. . . .

God established His instrumentalities among a people who recognize the laws of the divine government. . . . Every gift, every power, that Christ promised His disciples He bestows upon those who will serve Him faithfully. And He who gives mental capabilities, and who entrusts talents to the men and women who are His by creation and redemption, expects that these talents and capabilities will be increased by use. Every talent must be employed in blessing others and thus bringing honor to God. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 243.

In sending forth His ministers our Saviour gave gifts unto men, for through them He communicates to the world the words of eternal life. This is the means which God has ordained for the perfecting of the saints in knowledge and true holiness. The work of Christ's servants is not merely to preach the truth; they are to watch for souls as they that must render account to God. They are to reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine.

All who have been benefited by the labors of God's servant should, according to their ability, unite with him in working for the salvation of souls. This is the work of all true believers, ministers and people. They should keep the grand object ever in view, each seeking to fill his proper position in the church, and all working together in order, harmony, and love.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 237, 238.

There are some in these last days who will cry: “Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits.” But this is not my work. . . . In the name and strength of my Redeemer I shall do what I can. I shall warn and counsel and reprove and encourage as the Spirit of God dictates, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. My duty is not to please myself, but to do the will of my heavenly Father, who has given me my work.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 231.

Thursday, August 10: Growing Up Into Christ

After the great disappointment in 1844, Satan and his angels were busily engaged in laying snares to unsettle the faith of the body. He affected the minds of persons who had had an experience in the messages, and who had an appearance of humility. Some pointed to the future for the fulfillment of the first and second messages, while others pointed far back into the past, declaring that they had been there fulfilled. These were gaining an influence over the minds of the inexperienced and unsettling their faith. Some were searching the Bible to build up a faith of their own, independent of the body. Satan exulted in all this; for he knew that those who broke loose from the anchor he could affect by different errors and drive about with divers winds of doctrine. . . . [T]here was division and confusion throughout the body.—*Early Writings*, p. 256.

Our Lord designed that His church should reflect to the world the fullness and sufficiency that we find in Him. We are constantly receiving of God's bounty, and by imparting of the same we are to represent to the world the love and beneficence of Christ. While all heaven is astir, dispatching messengers to every part of the earth to carry forward the work of redemption, the church of the living God are also to be co-laborers with Christ. We are members of His mystical body. He is the head, controlling all the members of the body. Jesus Himself, in His infinite mercy, is working on human hearts, effecting spiritual transformations so amazing that angels look on with astonishment and joy. The same unselfish love that characterizes the Master is seen in the character and life of His true followers.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 731.

Many know so little about their Bibles that they are unsettled in the faith. They remove the old landmarks, and fallacies and winds of doctrine blow them hither and thither. Science, falsely so-called, is wearing away the foundation of Christian principle; and those who once were in the faith drift away from the Bible landmarks, and divorce themselves from God, while still claiming to be His children.

The church needs to awake to an understanding of the subtle powers of

satanic agencies that must be met. If they will keep on the whole armor, they will be able to conquer all the foes they meet, some of which are not yet developed. . . .

The apostasy will increase. "Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." Men and women have confederated to oppose the Lord God of heaven, and the church is only half awake to the situation. There needs to be much more prayer, much more of earnest effort, among professed believers.—*Evangelism*, pp. 362, 363.

Friday, August 11: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, “Stewards of God’s Grace,” p. 379;

Testimony Treasures, “Steadfastness Needed,” vol. 1, pp. 462, 463.

Lesson 8

Christ-Shaped Lives and Spirit-Inspired Speech

Sabbath Afternoon, August 12

[Let] us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18.

It was thus that the early disciples gained their likeness to the dear Saviour. . . . Those disciples were men “subject to like passions as we are.” James 5:17. They had the same battle with sin to fight. They needed the same grace, in order to live a holy life.

Even John, the beloved disciple, the one who most fully reflected the likeness of the Saviour, did not naturally possess that loveliness of character. He was not only self-assertive and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injuries. But as the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love.

Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. His resentful, ambitious temper was yielded to the molding power of Christ. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. The power of the love of Christ wrought a transformation of character. This is the sure result of union with Jesus. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Christ’s Spirit, His love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raises the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 72, 73.

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17. Through the

power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476.

Sunday, August 13: The Downward Spiral of Sin

It was when the Israelites were in a condition of outward ease and security that they were led into sin. They failed to keep God ever before them, they neglected prayer and cherished a spirit of self-confidence. Ease and self-indulgence left the citadel of the soul unguarded, and debasing thoughts found entrance. It was the traitors within the walls that overthrew the strongholds of principle and betrayed Israel into the power of Satan. It is thus that Satan still seeks to compass the ruin of the soul. A long preparatory process, unknown to the world, goes on in the heart before the Christian commits open sin. The mind does not come down at once from purity and holiness to depravity, corruption, and crime. It takes time to degrade those formed in the image of God to the brutal or the satanic. By beholding we become changed. By the indulgence of impure thoughts man can so educate his mind that sin which he once loathed will become pleasant to him. . . .

The mind is educated to familiarity with sin . . . that the once tender conscience . . . becomes hardened, and they dwell upon these things with greedy interest.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 459.

To hate and reprove sin, and at the same time to show pity and tenderness for the sinner, is a difficult attainment. The more earnest our own efforts to attain to holiness of heart and life, the more acute will be our perception of sin and the more decided our disapproval of any deviation from the right. We must guard against undue severity toward the wrongdoer, but we must also be careful not to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There is need of showing Christlike patience and love for the erring one, but there is also danger of showing so great toleration for his error that he will look upon himself as undeserving of reproof, and will reject it as uncalled for and unjust. . . .

He who has blunted his spiritual perceptions by sinful leniency toward those whom God condemns, will ere long commit a greater sin by severity and harshness toward those whom God approves.

By the pride of human wisdom, by contempt for the influence of the Holy Spirit, and by disrelish for the truths of God's word, many who profess

to be Christians, and who feel competent to teach others, will be led to turn away from the requirements of God. Paul declared to Timothy, “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 503, 504.

Monday, August 14: A Dramatic Change of Clothing

The apostle admonishes his brethren, in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus, that after having professed the gospel they should not conduct themselves as did the Gentiles, but should show by their daily deportment that they had been truly converted.

“Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Once they were corrupt, degraded, enslaved by lustful passions; they were drugged by worldly opiates, blinded, bewildered, and betrayed by Satan’s devices. Now that they had been taught the truth as it is in Jesus, there must be a decided change in their life and character.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 171, 172.

It is by the renewing of the heart that the grace of God works to transform the life. No mere external change is sufficient to bring us into harmony with God. There are many who try to reform by correcting this bad habit or that bad habit and they hope in this way to become Christians, but they are beginning in the wrong place. Our first work is with the heart. . . .

If studied and obeyed, the Word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute. The Holy Spirit comes to convict of sin, and the faith that springs up in the heart works by love to Christ, conforming us, body, soul, and spirit, to His will.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 223.

We are to accept of Christ as our personal Saviour, or we shall fail in our attempt to be overcomers. It will not answer for us to hold ourselves aloof from Him, to believe that our friend or our neighbor may have Him for a personal Saviour, but that we may not experience His pardoning love. We are to believe that we are chosen of God, to be saved by the exercise of faith, through the grace of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit; and we are to praise and glorify God for such a marvelous manifestation of His unmerited favor. It is the love of God that draws the soul to Christ, to be graciously received, and presented to the Father. Through the work of the Spirit the

divine relationship between God and the sinner is renewed. The Father says: "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. I will exercise forgiving love toward them, and bestow upon them my joy. They shall be to me a peculiar treasure; for this people whom I have formed for myself shall show forth my praise."—*Our High Calling*, p. 77.

Tuesday, August 15: Unity-Building, Grace-Filled Speech

[Jesus] is our example, not only in His spotless purity, but in His patience, gentleness, and winsomeness of disposition. His life is an illustration of true courtesy. He had ever a kind look and a word of comfort for the needy and the oppressed. . . . As He saw men weary, and compelled to bear heavy burdens, He shared their burdens, and repeated to them the lessons He had learned from nature, of the love, the kindness, the goodness of God. He sought to inspire with hope the most rough and unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might attain such a character as would make them manifest as children of God.—*Gospels Workers*, p. 121.

The religion of Jesus softens whatever is hard and rough in the temper, and smooths whatever is rugged and sharp in the manners. It makes the words gentle and the demeanor winning. Let us learn from Christ how to combine a high sense of purity and integrity with sunniness of disposition. A kind, courteous Christian is the most powerful argument that can be produced in favor of Christianity.

Kind words are as dew and gentle showers to the soul. The Scripture says of Christ, that grace was poured into His lips, that He might “know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.” [Isaiah 50:4.] And the Lord bids us, “Let your speech be alway with grace” “that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” [Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:29.]—*Gospel Workers*, p. 122.

The apostle, seeing the inclination to abuse the gift of speech, gives direction concerning its use. “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth,” he says, “but that which is good to the use of edifying.” The word “corrupt” means here any word that would make an impression detrimental to holy principles and undefiled religion, any communication that would eclipse the view of Christ, and blot from the mind true sympathy and love. It includes impure hints, which, unless instantly resisted, lead to great sin. . . .

In all His teaching Christ presented pure, unadulterated principles. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Constantly there flowed

from His lips holy, ennobling truths. He spoke as never man spoke, with a pathos that touched the heart. . . .

Cultivate a prayerful frame of mind and educate the tongue to speak right words, that will bless in the place of discouraging. Talk of the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God. Put away all unbelieving words and all that is cheap and common. Let the words be sound words, that cannot be condemned, and the peace of God will surely come to the soul.
—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 175.

Wednesday, August 16: The Holy Spirit in the Believer's Life

The Holy Spirit was promised to be with those who were wrestling for victory, in demonstration of all mightiness, endowing the human agent with supernatural powers, and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. That the Holy Spirit is to be the grand helper, is a wonderful promise. Of what avail would it have been to us that the only begotten Son of God had humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and wrestled with him during his entire life on earth, and died the Just for the unjust that humanity might not perish, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent to make effectual in our cases what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer?

The imparted Holy Spirit enabled his disciples, the apostles, to stand firmly against every species of idolatry and to exalt the Lord and Him alone. Who, but Jesus Christ by his Spirit and divine power, guided the pens of the sacred historians that to the world might be presented the precious record of the sayings and works of Jesus Christ?—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 137.

In the work that was accomplished on the day of Pentecost, we may see what can be done by the exercise of faith. Those who believed in Christ were sealed by the Holy Spirit. As the disciples were assembled together, “there came a sound . . . as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” And Peter stood up among them and spoke with mighty power. Among those who listened to him were devout Jews, who were sincere in their belief. But the power that accompanied the words of the speaker convinced them that Christ was indeed the Messiah. What a mighty work was accomplished! Three thousand were converted in one day. . . .

More were converted by one sermon on the day of Pentecost than were converted during all the years of Christ's ministry. So mightily will God work when men give themselves to the control of the Spirit.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1055.

The promised Holy Spirit, whom he would send after he ascended to his Father, is constantly at work to draw the attention to the great official sacrifice upon the cross of Calvary, and to unfold to the world the love of God to man, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things in the Scriptures, and to open to darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, the truths that make their hearts burn within them with the awakened intelligence of the truths of eternity.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 137.

Thursday, August 17: Kindness (Not Bitterness)

Satan claims the world. He claims us as his. Then shall we give him that which he claims? No. I am somebody else's property. I have been bought with a price, and my business is to glorify God in my body and spirit. I have no time to talk unbelief. It is faith that I must talk. I must strengthen faith by exercise. And then my faith grows as I venture upon the promises of God, and I can grasp more and more. . . .

One word of doubt, one word of evil thinking and evil speaking, makes room for more of the same kind. It is seed-sowing that will prepare for a harvest that few will care to garner.

Those who are troubled with doubts and have difficulties which they cannot solve should not throw other weak minds into the same perplexity. Some have hinted or talked their unbelief and have passed on, little dreaming of the effect produced. In some instances the seeds of unbelief have taken immediate effect, while in others they have lain buried quite a length of time, until the individual has taken a wrong course and given place to the enemy, and the light of God has been withdrawn from him and he has fallen under the powerful temptations of Satan. Then the seeds of infidelity which were sown so long ago spring up. Satan nourishes them, and they bear fruit.

—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 676.

Remember that your brethren are fallible creatures like yourself, and regard their mistakes and errors with the same mercy and forbearance that you wish them to exercise toward you. They should not be watched and their defects paraded to the front for the world to exult over. Those who dare to do this have climbed upon the judgment seat and made themselves judges, while they have neglected the garden of their own hearts and have allowed poisonous weeds to obtain a rank growth.

We individually have a case pending in the court of heaven. Character is being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and it should be the earnest desire of all to walk humbly and carefully, lest, neglecting to let their light shine forth to the world, they fail of the grace of God and lose everything that is valuable. All dissension, all differences and faultfinding, should be

put away, with all evil speaking and bitterness; kindness, love, and compassion for one another should be cherished, that the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He is one with the Father may be answered. The harmony and unity of the church are the credentials that they present to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Genuine conversion will ever lead to genuine love for Jesus and for all those for whom He died. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 278, 279.

Friday, August 18: For Further Reading

In Heavenly Places, “Don’t Retaliate!” p. 176;
The Upward Look, “Light Versus Darkness,” p. 20.

Lesson 9

Living Wisely

Sabbath Afternoon, August 19

The apostle [Paul's] desire for those to whom he addressed his letters of counsel and admonition was that . . . for those who were followers of Jesus in heathen communities not to walk “as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God . . . because of the blindness of their heart,” but “circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.” Ephesians 4:14, 13, 17, 18; 5:15, 16. He encouraged the believers to look forward to the time when Christ, who “loved the church, and gave Himself for it,” would “present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing”—a church “holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25, 27.

These messages, written with a power not of man but of God, contain lessons which should be studied by all and which may with profit be often repeated. In them practical godliness is outlined, principles are laid down that should be followed in every church, and the way that leads to life eternal is made plain.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 470.

Christ had foretold that deceivers would arise, through whose influence “iniquity” should “abound,” and “the love of many” should “wax cold.” Matthew 24:12. He had warned the disciples that the church would be in more danger from this evil than from the persecution of her enemies. Again and again Paul warned the believers against these false teachers. This peril, above all others, they must guard against; for by receiving false teachers, they would open the door to errors by which the enemy would dim the spiritual perceptions and shake the confidence of those newly come to the faith of the gospel. Christ was the standard by which they were to test the doctrines presented. All that was not in harmony with His teachings they were to reject. Christ crucified for sin, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high—this was the science of salvation that they were to learn

and teach.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 473.

The apostle Paul describes the fruit which the Christian is to bear. He says that it “is in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Ephesians 5:9). And again, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Galatians 5:22, 23). These precious graces are but the principles of God’s law carried out in the life. . . .

As we look into the divine mirror, the law of God, we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and our own lost condition as transgressors. But by repentance and faith we are justified before God, and through divine grace enabled to render obedience to His commandments.—*The Sanctified Life*, p. 80.

Sunday, August 20: “Instead Let There Be Thanksgiving”

In his letter to “the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse,” written while he was a prisoner in Rome, Paul makes mention of his joy over their steadfastness in the faith, tidings of which had been brought him by Epaphras, who, the apostle wrote, “declared unto us your love in the Spirit. For this cause,” he continued, “we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.”

Thus Paul put into words his desire for the Colossian believers. How high the ideal that these words hold before the follower of Christ! They show the wonderful possibilities of the Christian life and make it plain that there is no limit to the blessings that the children of God may receive. Constantly increasing in a knowledge of God, they may go on from strength to strength, from height to height in Christian experience, until by “His glorious power” they are made “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 471.

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.” Christians must be like Christ. They should have the same spirit, exert the same influence, and have the same moral excellence that He possessed. The idolatrous and corrupt in heart must repent and turn to God. Those who are proud and self-righteous must abase self and become penitent and meek and lowly in heart. The worldly-minded must have the tendrils of the heart removed from the rubbish of the world, around which they are clinging, and entwined about God; they must become spiritually minded. The dishonest and untruthful must become just and true. The ambitious and covetous must be hid in Jesus and seek His glory, not their own. They must despise their own holiness and lay up their treasure above. The prayerless must feel the need of both secret and family prayer, and must make their supplications to God with great earnestness.

As the worshipers of the true and living God we should bear fruit corresponding to the light and privileges we enjoy. Many are worshiping idols instead of the Lord of heaven and earth. Anything that men love and trust in instead of loving the Lord and trusting wholly in Him becomes an idol and is thus registered in the books of heaven.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 249, 250.

Monday, August 21: Walking As Children of Light

Surrounded by the practices and influences of heathenism, the . . . believers were in danger of being drawn away from the simplicity of the gospel, and Paul, in warning them against this, pointed them to Christ as the only safe guide. . . .

“And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. . . . As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 473.

To walk in the light means to resolve, to exercise thought, to exert will-power, in an earnest endeavor to represent Christ in sweetness of character. It means to put away all gloom. You are not to rest satisfied simply in saying, “I am a child of God.” Are you beholding Jesus, and, by beholding, becoming changed into His likeness? To walk in the light means advancement and progress in spiritual attainments. . . .

When the light of heaven shines upon the human agent, his countenance will express the joy of the Lord within. It is the absence of Christ from the soul that makes people sad and of a doubtful mind. It is the want of Christ that makes the countenance sad, and the life is a pilgrimage of sighs. Rejoicing is the very keynote of the Word of God for all who receive Him. Why? Because they have the Light of life. Light brings gladness and joy, and that joy is expressed in the life and the character.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 200.

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. Ephesians 5:2.

This is the oblation of a life-gift in our behalf, that we may be all that He desires us to be—representatives of Him, expressing the fragrance of His

character, His own pure thoughts, His divine attributes as manifested in His sanctified human life, in order that others may behold Him in His human form, and . . . be led to desire to be like Christ.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 174.

Tuesday, August 22: “Awake, O Sleeper!”

Many are deceived as to their true condition before God. They congratulate themselves upon the wrong acts which they do not commit, and forget to enumerate the good and noble deeds which God requires of them, but which they have neglected to perform. It is not enough that they are trees in the garden of God. They are to answer His expectation by bearing fruit. He holds them accountable for their failure to accomplish all the good which they could have done, through His grace strengthening them. In the books of heaven they are registered as cumberers of the ground. Yet the case of even this class is not utterly hopeless. With those who have slighted God's mercy and abused His grace, the heart of long-suffering love yet pleads. “Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, . . . redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Ephesians 5:14-16.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 601.

Immorality of every kind and degree is striving for the mastery, working against the manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit. The commonest of conversation, and low, perverted ideas are woven into the texture of character and defile the soul.

The low, common pleasure parties, gatherings for eating and drinking, singing and playing on instruments of music, are inspired by a spirit that is from beneath. They are an oblation unto Satan. . . . For in these gratifications the mind becomes besotted, even as in liquor drinking. The door is opened to vulgar associations. The thoughts, allowed to run in a low channel, soon pervert all the powers of the being. . . . All these things are having their effect upon the character.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 367.

When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. Purity and love shine forth in the character, meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within. We drink in the love of Christ, as the

branch draws nourishment from the vine. If we are grafted in Christ, if fiber by fiber we have been united with the Living Vine, we shall give evidence of the fact by bearing rich clusters of living fruit. If we are connected with the Light, we shall be channels of light, and in our words and works we shall reflect light to the world. Those who are truly Christians are bound with the chain of love which links earth to heaven, which binds finite man to the infinite God. The light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ shines in the hearts of His followers, to the glory of God.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 337.

Wednesday, August 23: Snapping Up the Bargains

Christ came to our world to engage in singlehanded combat with this enemy of man, and thus to wrest the race from Satan's grasp. In the accomplishment of this object He withheld not His own life. And now, in the strength that Christ will give, man must stand for himself, a faithful sentinel against the wily, plotting foe. Says the great apostle, "Walk circumspectly"—guard every avenue of the soul, look constantly to Jesus, the true and perfect Pattern, and seek to imitate His example, not in one or two points merely, but in all things. We shall then be prepared for any and every emergency. He whose mind loves to dwell upon God has a strong defense. He will be quick to perceive the dangers that threaten his spiritual life, and a sense of danger will lead him to call upon God for help and protection.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 240.

If we mistake the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God we are led astray by the foolishness of man's wisdom. Here is the great danger of many. . . . They have not an experience for themselves. They have not been in the habit of prayerfully considering for themselves, with unprejudiced, unbiased judgment, questions and subjects that are new and that are ever liable to arise. They wait to see what others will think. If these dissent, that is all that is needed to convince them that the subject under consideration is of no account whatever. . . . Unless these become sensible of their wavering character and correct it, they will all fail of everlasting life; they will be unable to cope with the perils of the last days. . . . They are not wise in those things which relate to the kingdom of God. . . . A noble self-reliance is needed in the Christian experience and warfare.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 129.

Mere intellectual knowledge, aside from the great truths that center in Christ, is as nothingness. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom: . . . but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth." Jeremiah 9:23, 24. . . .

Before men can be truly wise, they must realize their dependence upon

God, and be filled with His wisdom. God is the source of intellectual as well as spiritual power. The greatest men who have reached what the world regards as wonderful heights in science are not to be compared with the beloved John or the apostle Paul. It is when intellectual and spiritual power are combined that the highest standard of manhood is attained. Those who do this, God will accept as workers together with Him.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 66.

Thursday, August 24: Spirit-Filled Worship

God is glorified by songs of praise from a pure heart filled with love and devotion to Him. When consecrated believers assemble, their conversation will not be upon the imperfections of others or savor of murmuring or complaint; charity, or love, the bond of perfectness, will encircle them. Love to God and their fellow men flows out naturally in words of affection, sympathy, and esteem for their brethren. The peace of God rules in their hearts; their words are not vain, empty, and frivolous, but to the comfort and edification of one another. . . . The gratitude which they feel, and the peace of God ruling within, cause them to make melody in their hearts unto the Lord and by words to make mention of the debt of love and thankfulness due the dear Saviour, who so loved them as to die that they might have life. No one who has an indwelling Saviour will dishonor Him before others by producing strains from a musical instrument which call the mind from God and heaven to light and trifling things.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 509.

The followers of Christ were instructed not to pray for the purpose of being heard of men. . . . Christ [showed] that He did not regard with approval that kind of piety so prevalent among the Pharisees. His teachings upon the mount show that deeds of benevolence assume a noble form and acts of religious worship shed a most precious fragrance when performed in an unpretending manner, in penitence and humility. The pure motive sanctifies the act.

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They are not bigoted or self-righteousness; but they are jealous of self, ever fearing lest, a promise being left them, they should come short of complying with the conditions upon which the promises are based.—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 8, 9.

We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. We are the constant recipients of God's mercies, and yet how little gratitude

we express, how little we praise Him for what He has done for us. . . .

The soul may ascend nearer heaven on the wings of praise. God is worshiped with song and music in the courts above, and as we express our gratitude we are approximating to the worship of the heavenly hosts. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth” God. Psalm 50:23. Let us with reverent joy come before our Creator, with “thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:3.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 102, 104.

Friday, August 25: For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, “Steadfast unto the End,” p. 355;
This Day With God, “A Thankful Heart,” p. 45.

Lesson 10

Husbands and Wives: Together at the Cross

Sabbath Afternoon, August 26

God made from the man a woman, to be a companion and helpmeet for him, to be one with him, to cheer, encourage, and bless him, he in his turn to be her strong helper. All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman’s heart, the wife to soften and improve her husband’s character and give it completeness—fulfill God’s purpose for them.

Christ came not to destroy this institution, but to restore it to its original sanctity and elevation. He came to restore the moral image of God in man, and He began His work by sanctioning the marriage relation.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 99.

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

Christ honored the marriage relation by making it also a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones. He Himself is the Bridegroom; the bride is the church, of which, as His chosen one, He says, “Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.” Song of Solomon 4:7. . . .

The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind. And it is a blessing wherever the marriage covenant is entered into intelligently, in the fear of God, and with due consideration for its responsibilities.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 356.

Marriage, a union for life, is a symbol of the union between Christ and

His church. The spirit that Christ manifests toward His church is the spirit that the husband and wife are to manifest toward each other. If they love God supremely, they will love each other in the Lord, ever treating each other courteously, drawing in even cords. In their mutual self-denial and self-sacrifice they will be a blessing to each other. . . .

Men and women may reach a high standard, if they will but acknowledge Christ as their personal Saviour. Watch and pray, making a surrender of all to God. The knowledge that you are striving for eternal life will strengthen and comfort you both. In thought, in word, in action, you are to be lights in the world. . . . Take Christ as your pattern. Hold Him up as the One who can give you power to overcome. Utterly destroy the root of selfishness. Magnify God, for you are His children.—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 95, 96.

Sunday, August 27: Counsel to Christian Wives

How much trouble and what a tide of woe and unhappiness would be saved if men, and women also, would continue to cultivate the regard, attention, and kind words of appreciation and little courtesies of life which kept love alive, and which they felt were necessary in gaining the companions of their choice. If the husband and wife would only continue to cultivate these attentions which nourish love, they would be happy in each other's society and would have a sanctifying influence upon their families. They would have in themselves a little world of happiness.—*This Day With God*, p. 335.

The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church. . . .

Neither the husband nor the wife should attempt to exercise over the other an arbitrary control. Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes. You cannot do this and retain each other's love. Be kind, patient, and forbearing, considerate, and courteous. By the grace of God you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage vow you promised to do.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 259.

The Hebrews were not willing to submit to the directions and restrictions of the Lord. They simply wanted their own way, to follow the leadings of their own mind, and be controlled by their own judgment. Could they have been left free to do this, no complaints would have been made of Moses; but they were restless under restraint.

God would have His people disciplined and brought into harmony of action, that they may see eye to eye and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. In order to bring about this state of things, there is much to be done. The carnal heart must be subdued and transformed. . . . The Lord

would not have us yield up our individuality. But what man is a proper judge of how far this matter of individual independence should be carried? . . .

[The apostle Paul] exhorts his brethren: “Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.” In writing to the Ephesians he says: “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 360. [Romans 12:9-10](#)

Monday, August 28: The Church As the Bride of Christ: Part 1

We are living in the closing scenes of these perilous times. The Lord foresaw the unbelief that now prevails respecting His coming; and again and again He has given warning in His word that this event will be unexpected. The great day will come as a snare “on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.” Luke 21:35. But there are two classes. . . . Some will be ready when the Bridegroom comes, and will go in with Him to the marriage. How precious is this thought to those who are waiting and watching for His appearing! Christ “loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5:25–27. Those whom God loves enjoy this favor because they are lovely in character.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 129.

In His intercessory prayer for His disciples [Christ] declared: “The glory [character] 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” (John 17:22, 23).

Today it is still His purpose to sanctify and cleanse His church “. . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing” . . . (Ephesians 5:26, 27). No greater gift than the character that He revealed, can Christ ask His Father to bestow upon those who believe on Him. What largeness there is in His request! What fullness of grace every follower of Christ has the privilege of receiving! O that we might more fully appreciate the honor Christ confers upon us! By wearing His yoke and learning of Him, we become like Him in aspiration, in meekness and lowliness, in fragrance of character.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 322.

Very close and sacred is the relation between Christ and His church—He the bridegroom, and the church the bride; He the head, and the church the

body. Connection with Christ, then, involves connection with His church.

The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties. This is an important part of one's training; and in a church imbued with the Master's life, it will lead directly to effort for the world without.—*Education*, p. 268.

Tuesday, August 29: The Church As the Bride of Christ: Part 2

In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall bring home His bride to the Father's house, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. . . .

When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: "I heard . . . the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Revelation 19:6, 7, 9.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 151.

Paul pleaded with those who had once known in their lives the power of God, to return to their first love of gospel truth. With unanswerable arguments he set before them their privilege of becoming free men and women in Christ, through whose atoning grace all who make full surrender are clothed with the robe of His righteousness. He took the position that every soul who would be saved must have a genuine, personal experience in the things of God.

The apostle's earnest words of entreaty were not fruitless. The Holy Spirit wrought with mighty power, and many whose feet had wandered into strange paths, returned to their former faith in the gospel. . . . The name of God was glorified, and many were added to the number of believers throughout that region.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 388.

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

With uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth to meet the Bridegroom.

A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. Then by innumerable voices will be sung the song, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 358.

Wednesday, August 30: Love Your Wife as You Do Yourself

God Himself gave Adam a companion. He provided “an help meet for him”—a helper corresponding to him—one who was fitted to be his companion, and who could be one with him in love and sympathy. Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self, showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation. “For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it.” Ephesians 5:29. . . .

God celebrated the first marriage. Thus the institution has for its originator the Creator of the universe. “Marriage is honorable” (Hebrews 13:4); it was one of the first gifts of God to man, and it is one of the two institutions that, after the Fall, Adam brought with him beyond the gates of Paradise. When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man’s social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 46.

The husband violates the marriage vow, and the duties enjoined upon him in the word of God, when he disregards the health and happiness of the wife, by increasing her burdens and cares by numerous offspring. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.” “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church” (Ephesians 5:25, 28, 29).

We see this holy injunction almost wholly disregarded, even by professed Christians.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 425.

From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in every act. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes

where this principle is carried out—homes where God is worshiped and truest love reigns. From these homes morning and evening prayer ascends to God as sweet incense, and His mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliants like morning dew.—*My Life Today*, p. 33.

Thursday, August 31: The “One Flesh” Model of Marriage

If the hearts were kept tender in our families, if there were a noble, generous deference to each other's tastes and opinions, if the wife were seeking opportunities to express her love by actions in her courtesies to her husband, and the husband manifesting the same consideration and kindly regard for the wife, the children would partake of the same spirit. The influence would pervade the household, and what a tide of misery would be saved in families! Men would not go from home to find happiness; and women would not pine for love, and lose courage and self-respect, and become lifelong invalids. Only one life lease is granted us, and with care, painstaking, and self-control it can be made endurable, pleasant, and even happy.—*This Day With God*, p. 335.

True love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. On the contrary, it is calm and deep in its nature. It looks beyond mere externals, and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding.

Hearts that are filled with the love of Christ can never get very far apart. Religion is love, and a Christian home is one where love reigns and finds expression in words and acts of thoughtful kindness and gentle courtesy. . . .

Jesus wants to see happy marriages, happy firesides.

Men and women can reach God's ideal for them if they will take Christ as their helper. What human wisdom cannot do, His grace will accomplish for those who give themselves to Him in loving trust. His providence can unite hearts in bonds that are of heavenly origin. Love will not be a mere exchange of soft and flattering words. The loom of heaven weaves with warp and woof finer, yet more firm, than can be woven by the looms of earth. The result is not a tissue fabric, but a texture that will bear test and trial. Heart will be bound to heart in the golden bonds of a love that is enduring.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 255.

The two who unite their interest in life will have distinct characteristics and individual responsibilities. . . . The wife is to grace the family circle as a wife and companion to a wise husband. At every step she should inquire

. . .“How shall I make my influence Christlike in my home?” The husband should let his wife know that he appreciates her work.

The wife is to respect her husband. The husband is to love and cherish his wife; and as their marriage vow unites them as one, so their belief in Christ should make them one in Him. What can be more pleasing to God than to see those who enter into the marriage relation seek together to learn of Jesus and to become more and more imbued with His Spirit?—*The Adventist Home*, p. 114.

Friday, September 1: For Further Reading

In Heavenly Places, “Would You Be Ready?” p. 356;

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “Is It Lawful for a Man to Put Away His Wife?” pp. 63–65.

Lesson 11

Practicing Supreme Loyalty to Christ

Sabbath Afternoon, September 2

The requirements of the parents should always be reasonable; kindness should be expressed, not by foolish indulgence, but by wise direction. Parents are to teach their children pleasantly, without scolding or faultfinding, seeking to bind the hearts of the little ones to them by silken cords of love.

The combined influence of authority and love will make it possible to hold firmly and kindly the reins of family government. An eye single to the glory of God and to what our children owe Him will keep us from looseness and from sanctioning evil.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 266.

God sees men's hearts and characters when they do not see their own state correctly. He sees that His work and cause will suffer if wrongs are not corrected that exist in themselves unobserved and therefore uncorrected. Christ calls us His servants, if we do what He commands us. There is to every man assigned his particular sphere, place, and work, and God asks no more and no less from the lowliest, as well as the greatest, than that they fulfill their calling. We are not our own property. We have become servants of Christ by grace. We are the purchase of the blood of the Son of God.—*This Day With God*, p. 166.

The Lord is acquainted with us individually. Everyone born into the world is given his or her work to do for the purpose of making the world better. Each one has his sphere, and if the human agent makes God his counselor then there will be no working at cross purposes with God. He allots to everyone a place and a work, and if we individually submit ourselves to be worked by the Lord, however confused and tangled life may seem to our eyes, God has a purpose in it all, and the human machinery, obedient under the hand of divine wisdom, will accomplish the purposes of God. As in a well-disciplined army every soldier has his allotted position

and is required to act his part in contributing to the strength and perfection of the whole, so the worker for God must do his allotted part in the great work of God. . . .

Our heavenly Father is our ruler, and we must submit to His discipline. We are members of His family. He has a right to our service; and if one of the members of His family would persist in having his own way, persist in doing just that which he pleases, that spirit would bring about a disordered and perplexing state of things. We must not study to have our own way, but God's way and God's will.

Let God speak, and we will say, "Not my will, but Thy will, O God, be done."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 228.

Sunday, September 3: Advice to Children

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise. Ephesians 6:1, 2.

Children are admonished by the apostle to obey their parents in the Lord, to be helpful and submissive. Those who truly love God will not strive for their own way and thus bring unhappiness to themselves and to others. They will strive to represent Christ in character. How precious is the thought that the youth who strive against sin, who believe, and wait and watch for Christ's appearing, who submit to parental authority, and who love the Lord Jesus, will be among those who love His appearing and who meet Him in peace.

These will stand without spot or wrinkle before the throne of God and enjoy His favor forever. They have formed lovely characters; they have guarded their speech; they have not spoken falsely; they have guarded their actions that they should not do any evil thing, and they are crowned with everlasting life.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 216.

Remember that children have rights which must be respected.

Children have claims which their parents should acknowledge and respect. They have a right to such an education and training as will make them useful, respected, and beloved members of society here, and give them a moral fitness for the society of the pure and holy hereafter. The young should be taught that both their present and their future well-being depend to a great degree on the habits they form in childhood and youth. They should be early accustomed to submission, self-denial, and a regard for others' happiness. They should be taught to subdue the hasty temper, to withhold the passionate word, to manifest unvarying kindness, courtesy, and self-control.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 306.

Those who cultivate love in the home life will form characters after Christ's likeness, and they will be constrained to exert a helpful influence beyond the family circle, in order that they may bless others by kind,

thoughtful ministrations, by pleasant words, by Christlike sympathy, by acts of benevolence. They will be quick to discern those who have hungry hearts, and will make a feast for those who are needy and afflicted. Those who have heavenly discernment, who exercise tender regard for every member of the family, will, in doing their whole duty, fit themselves to do a work that will brighten other homes and will teach others by precept and example what it is that will make home happy.

By their wisdom and justice, by the purity and benevolence of their daily life, by their devotion to the interests of the people—and they, idolaters—Joseph and Daniel proved themselves true to the principles of their early training, true to Him whose representatives they were.—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 299.

Monday, September 4: Advice to Parents

A Christian father is the house-band of his family, binding them close to the throne of God. Never is his interest in his children to flag. The father who has a family of boys should not leave these restless boys wholly to the care of the mother. He should make himself their companion and friend. He should exert himself to keep them from evil associates. He should take more of the burden upon himself, doing all in his power to lead his boys to God.

When children lose their self-control and speak passionate words, the parents should for a time keep silent. Silence is golden, and will do more to bring repentance than any words that can be uttered. Satan is well pleased when parents irritate their children by speaking harsh, angry words. "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Colossians 3:21. Let your calmness help to restore them to a proper frame of mind.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 265.

Some parents raise many a storm by their lack of self-control. Instead of kindly asking the children to do this or that, they order them in a scolding tone, and at the same time a censure or reproof is on their lips which the children have not merited. Parents, this course pursued toward your children destroys their cheerfulness and ambition. They do your bidding, not from love, but because they dare not do otherwise. Their heart is not in the matter. It is a drudgery instead of a pleasure, and this often leads them to forget to follow out all your directions, which increases your irritation and makes it still worse for the children. The faultfinding is repeated, their bad conduct arrayed before them in glowing colors, until discouragement comes over them, and they are not particular whether they please or not. A spirit of "I don't care" seizes them, and they seek that pleasure and enjoyment away from home, away from their parents.—*Child Guidance*, p. 281.

Gentle manners, cheerful conversation, and loving acts will bind the hearts of children to their parents by the silken cords of affection and will do more to make home attractive than the rarest ornaments that can be bought for gold.

Tender affection should ever be cherished between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Every hasty word should be checked, and there should not be even the appearance of the lack of love one for another. . . . Children are to respect and reverence their parents, and parents are to manifest patience, kindness, and affection for their children. Each one should seek in every possible way to please and make happy the members of the family circle.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 267.

Tuesday, September 5: Slavery in Paul's Day

Among those who gave their hearts to God through the labors of Paul in Rome was Onesimus, a pagan slave who had wronged his master, Philemon, a Christian believer in Colosse, and had escaped to Rome. In the kindness of his heart, Paul sought to relieve the poverty and distress of the wretched fugitive and then endeavored to shed the light of truth into his darkened mind. Onesimus listened to the words of life, confessed his sins, and was converted to the faith of Christ. . . .

Paul made Onesimus the bearer of a letter to Philemon, in which, with his usual tact and kindness, the apostle pleaded the cause of the repentant slave. . . .

Paul might have urged upon Philemon his duty as a Christian; but he chose rather the language of entreaty. . . .

The apostle asked Philemon, in view of the conversion of Onesimus, to receive the repentant slave as his own child, showing him such affection that he would choose to dwell with his former master, "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved." . . .

The apostle well knew the severity which masters exercised toward their slaves, and he knew also that Philemon was greatly incensed because of the conduct of his servant. He tried to write to him in a way that would arouse his deepest and tenderest feelings as a Christian. The conversion of Onesimus had made him a brother in the faith, and any punishment inflicted on this new convert would be regarded by Paul as inflicted on himself.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 456, 457.

Some masters, more humane than others, were more indulgent toward their servants; but the vast majority of the wealthy and noble, given up without restraint to the indulgence of lust, passion, and appetite, made their slaves the wretched victims of caprice and tyranny. The tendency of the whole system was hopelessly degrading.

It was not the apostle [Paul's] work to overturn arbitrarily or suddenly the established order of society. To attempt this would be to prevent the success of the gospel. But he taught principles which struck at the very foundation of slavery and which, if carried into effect, would surely

undermine the whole system. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,” he declared. 2 Corinthians 3:17. When converted, the slave became a member of the body of Christ, and as such was to be loved and treated as a brother, a fellow heir with his master to the blessings of God and the privileges of the gospel. On the other hand, servants were to perform their duties, “not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.” Ephesians 6:6.

Christianity makes a strong bond of union between master and slave, king and subject, the gospel minister and the degraded sinner who has found in Christ cleansing from sin. They have been washed in the same blood, quickened by the same Spirit; and they are made one in Christ Jesus. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 459, 460.

Wednesday, September 6: Slaves of Christ

True conversion makes us strictly honest in our dealings with our fellow men. It makes us faithful in our everyday work. Every sincere follower of Christ will show that the religion of the Bible qualifies him to use his talents in the Master's service.

"Not slothful in business." These words will be fulfilled in the life of every Christian. Even though your work may seem to be a drudgery, you may ennoble it by the way in which you do it. Do it as unto the Lord. Do it cheerfully, and with heaven-born dignity. It is the noble principles which are brought into the work that make it wholly acceptable in the Lord's sight. True service links the lowliest of God's servants on earth with the highest of His servants in the courts above.—*Messages to Young People*, p. 72.

Is it the disposition generally among servants to do as much as possible? Is it not rather the prevalent fashion to slide through the work as quickly, as easily, as possible, and obtain the wages at as little cost to themselves as they can? The object is not to be as thorough as possible but to get the remuneration. Those who profess to be the servants of Christ should not forget the injunction of the apostle Paul, "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

Those who enter the work as "eye-servants," will find that their work cannot bear the inspection of men or of angels. The thing essential for successful work is a knowledge of Christ; for this knowledge will give sound principles of right, impart a noble, unselfish spirit, like that of our Saviour whom we profess to serve. Faithfulness, economy, care-taking, thoroughness, should characterize all our work, wherever we may be, whether in the kitchen, in the workshop, in the office of publication, in the sanitarium, in the college, or wherever we are stationed in the vineyard of the Lord. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."—*The Review and Herald*, September 22, 1891.

Whatever the hand finds to do should be done with thoroughness and dispatch. Faithfulness and integrity in little things, the performance of little duties and little deeds of kindness, will cheer and gladden the pathway of life; and when our work on earth is ended, every one of the little duties performed with fidelity will be treasured as a precious gem before God.
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 591.

Thursday, September 7: Masters Who Are Slaves

The people [of Athens] were carried away with admiration for Paul's earnest and logical presentation of the attributes of the true God—of His creative power and the existence of His overruling providence. With earnest and fervid eloquence the apostle declared, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." The heavens were not large enough to contain God, how much less were the temples made by human hands!

In that age of caste, when the rights of men were often unrecognized, Paul set forth the great truth of human brotherhood, declaring that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." In the sight of God all are on an equality, and to the Creator every human being owes supreme allegiance. Then the apostle showed how, through all God's dealings with man, His purpose of grace and mercy runs like a thread of gold. He "hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 237, 238.

When Christ left heaven to come to its aid [. . .] He saw humanity sunken in wretchedness and sinfulness. He knew that men and women were depraved and degraded, and that they cherished the most loathsome vices. Angels marveled that Christ should undertake what seemed to them a hopeless task. They marveled that God could tolerate a race so sinful. They could see no room for love. But "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, black and white, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God. The Saviour has a boundless love for every human being. In each one He sees capacity for improvement. With

divine energy and hope He greets those for whom He has given His life. In His strength they can live a life rich in good works, filled with the power of the Spirit.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 225.

Friday, September 8: For Further Reading

Maranatha, “Unexpected Recompense,” p. 359;
Gospel Workers, “A Season of Trust and Privilege,” pp. 267, 268.

Lesson 12

The Call to Stand

Sabbath Afternoon, September 9

“Fear not . . . for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.” And then, that the servant might know this for himself, “Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see.” “The Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” Between the servant of God and the hosts of armed foemen was an encircling band of heavenly angels. They had come down in mighty power, not to destroy, not to exact homage, but to encamp round about and minister to the Lord’s weak and helpless ones.

When the people of God are brought into strait places, and apparently there is no escape for them, the Lord alone must be their dependence. —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 256, 257.

The church of Christ is God’s agency for the proclamation of truth; she is empowered by Him to do a special work; and if she is loyal to God, obedient to His commandments, there will dwell within her the excellency of divine power. If she will be true to her allegiance, there is no power that can stand against her. The forces of the enemy will be no more able to overwhelm her than is the chaff to resist the whirlwind.

There is before the church the dawn of a bright, glorious day, if she will put on the robe of Christ’s righteousness, withdrawing from all allegiance to the world.

God calls upon His faithful ones, who believe in Him, to talk courage to those who are unbelieving and hopeless. Turn to the Lord, ye prisoners of hope. Seek strength from God, the living God. Show an unwavering, humble faith in His power and His willingness to save. When in faith we take hold of His strength, He will change, wonderfully change, the most hopeless, discouraging outlook. He will do this for the glory of His name.—*Prophets*

and Kings, pp. 259, 260.

Satan watches eagerly to find Christians off their guard. O that the followers of Christ would remember that eternal vigilance is the price of eternal life. Many have a slumbering faith. Unless they are invigorated, revived, quickened into action, their souls will be lost.

Self must die, and Christ must be enthroned in the heart as all and in all. The thoughts must be stayed on Him. Then the life will be an honor to His name. The soul will receive power from on high to resist Satan's specious devisings.

Have Seventh-day Adventists forgotten the warning given in the sixth chapter of Ephesians? We are engaged in a warfare against the hosts of darkness. Unless we follow our Leader closely, Satan will obtain the victory over us.—*The Upward Look*, p. 200.

Sunday, September 10: Battle Speech

Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. They would have to fight “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” Ephesians 6:12. But they would not be left to fight alone. He assured them that He would be with them; and that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks—the General of the armies of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29.

All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ, must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats, or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God. The consecration of Christ’s follower must be complete. Father, mother, wife, children, houses, lands, everything, must be held secondary to the work and cause of God. He must be willing to bear patiently, cheerfully, joyfully, whatever in God’s providence he may be called to suffer. His final reward will be to share with Christ the throne of immortal glory [Judges 7:4 quoted].

The Lord is willing to do great things for us. We shall not gain the victory through numbers, but through the full surrender of the soul to Jesus. We are to go forward in His strength, trusting in the mighty God of Israel. . . .

The Lord is just as willing to work through human efforts now, and to accomplish great things through weak instrumentalities. It is essential to have an intelligent knowledge of the truth; for how else could we meet its wily opponents? The Bible must be studied, not alone for the doctrines it teaches, but for its practical lessons. You should never be surprised, you should never be without your armor on. Be prepared for any emergency, for any call of duty. Be waiting, watching for every opportunity to present the

truth, familiar with the prophecies, familiar with the lessons of Christ. But do not trust in well-prepared arguments. Argument alone is not enough. God must be sought on your knees; you must go forth to meet the people through the power and influence of His Spirit.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1003.

Monday, September 11: Finding Strength in Christ

Without the enlightenment of the Spirit of God we shall not be able to discern truth from error and shall fall under the masterful temptations and deceptions that Satan will bring upon the world. We are near the close of the controversy between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness, and soon the delusions of the enemy will try our faith, of what sort it is.

If ever there was a time when we needed faith and spiritual enlightenment, it is now. Those who are watching unto prayer and are searching the Scriptures daily with an earnest desire to know and do the will of God, will not be led astray by any of the deceptions of Satan. . . . We want the truth on every point. We want it unadulterated with error and unpolluted by the maxims, customs, and opinions of the world. We want the truth with all its inconvenience. The acceptance of truth ever involves a cross. But Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice for us, and shall we not give Him our best affections, our holiest aspirations, our fullest service?—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 350.

From the days of Adam to our own time, our great enemy has been exercising his power to oppress and destroy. He is now preparing for his last campaign against the church. All who seek to follow Jesus will be brought into conflict with this relentless foe. The more nearly the Christian imitates the divine Pattern, the more surely will he make himself a mark for the attacks of Satan. All who are actively engaged in the cause of God, seeking to unveil the deceptions of the evil one and to present Christ before the people, will be able to join in the testimony of Paul, in which he speaks of serving the Lord with all humility of mind, with many tears and temptations.

Satan assailed Christ with his fiercest and most subtle temptations, but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those battles were fought in our behalf; those victories make it possible for us to conquer. Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or to force the soul to sin. He may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His

followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan.
—*The Great Controversy*, p. 510.

The children of God are wise when they trust in that wisdom alone which comes from above, and when they have no strength but that which is from God. Separation from the friendship and spirit of the world is needful for us if we would be united to the Lord and abide in him. Our strength and our prosperity consist in our being connected with the Lord, chosen and accepted of Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 689.

Tuesday, September 12: The Great Controversy in Paul's Letters

The Lord will work with every sincere, devoted soldier of the cross. But no man can be a good soldier who thinks he must work independently of his fellow worker, who regards his own judgment as the best. God's workers must blend together, one supplying what the other lacks.

Do we make the preparation it is our privilege to make to stand against the wiles of the enemy? Do we realize the sacred character of God's work and the necessity of watching for souls as they that must give account? We must be vigilant, "knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Romans 13:11, 12).—*This Day With God*, p. 125.

The people of God must be prepared to withstand the wily foe. It is this resistance that Satan dreads. He knows better than we do the limit of his power and how easily he can be overcome if we resist and face him. Through divine strength the weakest saint is more than a match for him and all his angels, and if brought to the test he [the weakest saint] would be able to prove his superior power. Therefore Satan's step is noiseless, his movements stealthy, and his batteries masked. . . .

[Man] has in himself no power to oppose effectual resistance to evil. It is only as Christ abides in him by living faith, influencing his desires and strengthening him with strength from above, that man may venture to face so terrible a foe. Every other means of defense is utterly vain.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 318.

Satan frequently appears as an angel of light, arrayed in the livery of heaven; he assumes friendly airs, manifesting great sanctity of character and high regard for his victims, the souls whom he means to deceive and destroy. Perils lie in the path which he invites souls to travel, but he succeeds in concealing these and presents the attractions only. The great Captain of our salvation has conquered in our behalf, that through Him we might conquer, if we would, in our own behalf. . . .

But in order to be saved you must accept the yoke of Christ and lay off the yoke which you have fashioned for your neck. The victory that Jesus gained in the wilderness is a pledge to you of the victory that you may gain through His name. Your only hope and salvation is in overcoming as Christ overcame.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 456, 457.

Wednesday, September 13: Standing on the Ancient Battlefield

In every age since the fall of Adam the opposition of evil agencies has made the lives of those who would be loyal and true to God's commandments a continual warfare. Those who would at last be victorious must meet and conquer the forces of Satan, who with fierce determination opposes every step of advance. They must meet a vigilant foe, a crafty enemy who never sleeps and who tries untiringly to undermine the faith of God's servants. . . .

I wish that I could trace words which would present this matter as it is. God expects His soldiers to be ever on duty. Never are they to yield to temptation, never to be unjust. They are neither to yield nor flee. Relying on the strength of God, they are to maintain their integrity. With a firmness that will not yield an inch, they are to hold fast to the word, "It is written."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 260.

The Christian is to be "rooted and grounded" in the truth, that he may stand firm against the temptations of the enemy. He must have a continual renewal of strength, and he must hold firmly to Bible truth. Fables of every kind will be brought in to seduce the believer from his allegiance to God, but he is to look up, believe in God, and stand firmly rooted and grounded in the truth.

Keep a firm hold upon the Lord Jesus, and never let go. Have firm convictions as to what you believe. Let the truths of God's Word lead you to devote heart, mind, soul, and strength to the doing of His will. Lay hold resolutely upon a plain "Thus saith the Lord." Let your only argument be, "It is written." Thus we are to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. That faith has not lost any of its sacred, holy character, however objectionable its opposers may think it to be.

Those who follow their own mind and walk in their own way will form crooked characters. Vain doctrines and subtle sentiments will be introduced with plausible presentations, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Are church members building upon the Rock? The storm is coming, the storm that will try every man's faith, of what sort it is. Believers must now be firmly rooted in Christ, or else they will be led astray by some phase of

error. Let your faith be substantiated by the Word of God. Grasp firmly the living testimony of truth. Have faith in Christ as a personal Saviour. He has been and ever will be our Rock of Ages. The testimony of the Spirit of God is true. Change not your faith for any phase of doctrine, however pleasing it may appear, that will seduce the soul.—*Evangelism*, p. 361.

Thursday, September 14: Wrestling Against Evil Powers

Till the close of time there will be a conflict between the church of God and those who are under the control of evil angels.

The early Christians were often called to meet the powers of darkness face to face. By sophistry and by persecution the enemy endeavored to turn them from the true faith. At the present time, when the end of all things earthly is rapidly approaching, Satan is putting forth desperate efforts to ensnare the world. He is devising many plans to occupy minds and to divert attention from the truths essential to salvation. In every city his agencies are busily organizing into parties those who are opposed to the law of God. The archdeceiver is at work to introduce elements of confusion and rebellion, and men are being fired with a zeal that is not according to knowledge. . . .

But God's faithful messengers are to go steadily forward with their work. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, they are to advance fearlessly and victoriously, never ceasing their warfare until every soul within their reach shall have received the message of truth for this time.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 219, 220.

The connection of the visible with the invisible world, the ministration of angels of God, and the agency of evil spirits, are plainly revealed in the Scriptures, and inseparably interwoven with human history. There is a growing tendency to disbelief in the existence of evil spirits, while the holy angels that “minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Hebrews 1:14) are regarded by many as spirits of the dead. But the Scriptures not only teach the existence of angels, both good and evil, but present unquestionable proof that these are not disembodied spirits of dead men.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 511.

The power and malice of Satan and his host might justly alarm us were it not that we may find shelter and deliverance in the superior power of our Redeemer. We carefully secure our houses with bolts and locks to protect our property and our lives from evil men; but we seldom think of the evil angels who are constantly seeking access to us, and against whose attacks

we have, in our own strength, no method of defense. If permitted, they can distract our minds, disorder and torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and our lives. Their only delight is in misery and destruction. Fearful is the condition of those who resist the divine claims and yield to Satan's temptations, until God gives them up to the control of evil spirits. But those who follow Christ are ever safe under His watchcare. Angels that excel in strength are sent from heaven to protect them. The wicked one cannot break through the guard which God has stationed about His people. —*The Great Controversy*, p. 517.

Friday, September 15: For Further Reading

This Day With God, “Complete Commitment,” p. 128;
That I May Know Him, “Fortress of the Soul,” p. 346.

Lesson 13

Waging Peace

Sabbath Afternoon, September 16

When the servants of Christ take the shield of faith for their defense, and the sword of the Spirit for war, there is danger in the enemy's camp, and something must be done. Persecution and reproach only wait for those who are endowed with power from on high to call them into action. When the truth in its simplicity and strength prevails among believers, and is brought to bear against the spirit of the world, it will be evident that there is no concord between Christ and Belial. The disciples of Christ must be living examples of the life and spirit of their Master.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 407.

“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.” God has provided abundant means for successful warfare against the evil that is in the world. The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The shield of faith must be in our hand, the helmet of salvation on our brow; and with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, we are to cut our way through the obstructions and entanglements of sin.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 502.

Having sought the Lord in the days of prosperity, the king could now rely upon Him in the day of adversity. His petitions showed that he was not a stranger to God's wonderful power. “It is nothing with Thee to help,” he pleaded, “whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee.”

The prayer of Asa is one that every Christian believer may fittingly offer. We fight in a warfare, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities

and powers, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. See Ephesians 6:12. In life's conflict we must meet evil agencies that have arrayed themselves against the right. Our hope is not in man, but in the living God. With full assurance of faith we may expect that He will unite His omnipotence with the efforts of human instrumentalities, for the glory of His name. Clad with the armor of His righteousness, we may gain the victory over every foe.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 111.

Sunday, September 17: The Church: A Unified Army

[The] Saviour's eye penetrates the future; He beholds the broader fields in which, after His death, the disciples are to be witnesses for Him. His prophetic glance takes in the experience of His servants through all the ages till He shall come the second time. He shows His followers the conflicts they must meet; He reveals the character and plan of the battle. He lays open before them the perils they must encounter, the self-denial that will be required. He desires them to count the cost, that they may not be taken unawares by the enemy. Their warfare is not to be waged against flesh and blood, but "against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12, R. V. They are to contend with supernatural forces, but they are assured of supernatural help. All the intelligences of heaven are in this army. And more than angels are in the ranks. The Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord's host, comes down to direct the battle. Our infirmities may be many, our sins and mistakes grievous; but the grace of God is for all who seek it with contrition. The power of Omnipotence is enlisted in behalf of those who trust in God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 352.

The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger. On every hand are vigilant foes, led on by the prince of the powers of darkness, who never slumbers and never deserts his post. Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent attack. Unless the members of the church are active and vigilant, they will be overcome by his devices. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 394.

The Master calls for gospel workers. Who will respond? All who enter the army are not to be generals, captains, sergeants, or even corporals. All have not the care and responsibility of leaders. There is hard work of other kinds to be done. Some must dig trenches and build fortifications; some are to stand as sentinels, some to carry messages. While there are but few officers, it requires many soldiers to form the rank and file of the army; yet

its success depends upon the fidelity of every soldier. One man's cowardice or treachery may bring disaster upon the entire army.

There is earnest work to be done by us individually if we would fight the good fight of faith. Eternal interests are at stake. We must put on the whole armor of righteousness, we must resist the devil, and we have the sure promise that he will be put to flight. The church is to conduct an aggressive warfare, to make conquests for Christ, to rescue souls from the power of the enemy. God and holy angels are engaged in this warfare. Let us please Him who has called us to be soldiers.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 394, 395.

Monday, September 18: Belt and Breastplate

[After Christ's ascension] Satan again counseled with his angels, and with bitter hatred against God's government told them that while he retained his power and authority upon earth their efforts must be tenfold stronger against the followers of Jesus. They had prevailed nothing against Christ but must overthrow His followers, if possible. In every generation they must seek to ensnare those who would believe in Jesus. He related to his angels that Jesus had given His disciples power to rebuke them and cast them out, and to heal those whom they should afflict. Then Satan's angels went forth like roaring lions, seeking to destroy the followers of Jesus. —*Early Writings*, p. 191.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth. Ephesians 6:14. There is absolutely no safeguard against evil but truth. No man can stand firm for right in whose heart the truth does not abide. There is only one power that can make and keep us steadfast—the power of God, imparted to us through the grace of Christ.

There are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe; but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth.

The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 30.

We must put on every piece of the armor, and then stand firm. The Lord has honored us by choosing us as His soldiers. Let us fight bravely for Him, maintaining the right in every transaction. Put on as your breastplate that divinely protected righteousness which it is the privilege of all to wear. This will protect your spiritual life. . . .

All who have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of the Saviour. Not one soul who in penitence and faith has

claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power.

Each one will have a close struggle to overcome sin in his own heart. This is at times a very painful and discouraging work; because, as we see the deformities in our character, we keep looking at them, when we should look to Jesus and put on the robe of His righteousness. Everyone who enters the pearly gates of the city of God will enter there as a conqueror, and his greatest conquest will have been the conquest of self.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 31.

Tuesday, September 19: Shoes: The Church Wages Peace

The gospel is a message of peace. Christianity is a system, which, received and obeyed, would spread peace, harmony, and happiness throughout the earth. The religion of Christ will unite in close brotherhood all who accept its teachings. . . .

Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension.

The faces of men and women who walk and work with God express the peace of heaven. They are surrounded with the atmosphere of heaven. For these souls the kingdom of God has begun. The Lord is soon coming. Talk it, pray it, believe it. Make it a part of the life. Gird on the Christian armor, and be sure that your feet are “shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 32.

Brethren and sisters, will you put on the Christian armor? “Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” you will be prepared to walk from house to house, carrying the truth to the people. Sometimes you will find it trying to do this kind of work; but if you go forth in faith, the Lord will go before you, and will let His light shine upon your pathway. Entering the homes of your neighbors to sell or to give away our literature, and in humility to teach them the truth, you will be accompanied by the light of heaven, which will abide in these homes.—*The Review and Herald*, May 24, 1906.

He who is shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace will walk as Christ walked. He will be able to speak right words, and to speak them in love. He will not try to drive home God’s message of truth. He will deal tenderly with every heart, realizing that the Spirit will impress the truth on those who are susceptible to divine impressions. Never will he be vehement in his manner. Every word spoken will have a softening, subduing influence.—*Evangelism*, p. 174.

There are many souls to be saved. . . . In word and deed . . . represent Christ to all with whom you come in contact. Let all see that your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace and good will to men. Wonderful are the results we shall see if we enter into the work imbued with the Spirit of Christ. Help will come in our necessity if we carry the work forward in righteousness, mercy, and love. Truth will triumph, and bear away the victory.—*Evangelism*, p. 563.

Wednesday, September 20: Shield, Helmet, and Sword

All who range themselves under the blood-stained banner of the Prince of Life will henceforth count Satan as a foe, and will in God's strength oppose him as a deadly enemy. They will take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And what will they do in order to hold vantage ground? "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance" (Ephesians 6:18).

We should be quick to discern danger. We should see the hateful character of sin and should expel it from the soul. The doers of the Word know that in Jesus there is strength, which becomes their own by faith. They are clothed with righteousness that God will accept, for it is the righteousness of Christ. Clad in this armor of God, the panoply of heaven, they successfully resist the serpent's wiles.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 48.

I asked the angel why there was no more faith and power in Israel. He said, "Ye let go of the arm of the Lord too soon. Press your petitions to the throne, and hold on by strong faith. The promises are sure. Believe ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them." I was then pointed to Elijah. He was subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly. His faith endured the trial. Seven times he prayed before the Lord, and at last the cloud was seen. I saw that we had doubted the sure promises, and wounded the Saviour by our lack of faith. Said the angel, "Gird the armor about thee, and above all take the shield of faith; for that will guard the heart, the very life, from the fiery darts of the wicked."

If the enemy can lead the desponding to take their eyes off from Jesus, and look to themselves, and dwell upon their own unworthiness, instead of dwelling upon the worthiness of Jesus, His love, His merits, and His great mercy, he will get away their shield of faith and gain his object; they will be exposed to his fiery temptations. The weak should therefore look to Jesus, and believe in Him; they then exercise faith.—*Early Writings*, p. 73.

A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers, and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan. The Bible is the

sword of the Spirit, which will never fail to vanquish the adversary. It is the only true guide in all matters of faith and practice. The reason why Satan has so great control over the minds and hearts of men is that they have not made the Word of God the man of their counsel, and all their ways have not been tried by the true test. The Bible will show us what course we must pursue to become heirs of glory.—*Our High Calling*, p. 31.

Thursday, September 21: Practicing Battlefield Prayer

True faith lays hold of and claims the promised blessing before it is realized and felt. We must send up our petitions in faith within the second veil and let our faith take hold of the promised blessing and claim it as ours. We are then to believe that we receive the blessing, because our faith has hold of it, and according to the Word it is ours. “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:24. Here is faith, naked faith, to believe that we receive the blessing, even before we realize it. When the promised blessing is realized and enjoyed, faith is swallowed up.

But many suppose they have much faith when sharing largely of the Holy Spirit and that they cannot have faith unless they feel the power of the Spirit. Such confound faith with the blessing that comes through faith. The very time to exercise faith is when we feel destitute of the Spirit. When thick clouds of darkness seem to hover over the mind, then is the time to let living faith pierce the darkness and scatter the clouds. True faith rests on the promises contained in the Word of God, and those only who obey that Word can claim its glorious promises. “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” John 15:7.

—*Early Writings*, p. 72.

We have a soldier’s duty to perform, victories to gain, for we must not be ignorant of Satan’s devices. We pray and then watch lest Satan shall steal upon us and make us forget our need of prayer, our need of vigilance and watching thereunto.

In the Christian warfare, unless there is a sharp eye on the adversary and a sharp eye on ourselves, we shall be led into Satan’s snare. Our security depends on the state of our heart. God help us to take heed to ourselves or we shall certainly lose heaven. Little departures from right, little indulgences, seem a trifling thing at present, but Satan will lead us on a track that will separate us from righteousness and from God. We want not our ways but God’s ways. We want to strive with all the powers of being to bruise Satan under our feet and be sure that we are right with God, that we

have a clear title to our immortal inheritance.—*This Day With God*, p. 27.

Our prayers are to be as earnest and persistent as was the petition of the needy friend who asked for the loaves at midnight. The more earnestly and steadfastly we ask, the closer will be our spiritual union with Christ. We shall receive increased blessings because we have increased faith.

Our part is to pray and believe. Watch unto prayer. Watch, and co-operate with the prayer-hearing God. Bear in mind that “we are labourers together with God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 146.

Friday, September 22: For Further Reading

My Life Today, “O God! Help Me to Higher Levels,” p. 105;

My Life Today, “Paul’s Shout of Victory,” p. 326.

Lesson 14

Ephesians in the Heart

Sabbath Afternoon, September 23

In every soul two powers are struggling earnestly for the victory. Unbelief marshals its forces, led by Satan, to cut us off from the Source of our strength. Faith marshals its forces, led by Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Hour by hour, in the sight of the heavenly universe, the conflict goes forward. This is a hand-to-hand fight, and the great question is, Which shall obtain the mastery? This question each must decide for himself. In this warfare all must take a part, fighting on one side or the other. From the conflict there is no release. We are urged to prepare for this conflict. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” . . . [Ephesians 6:10-11](#)

He to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given, will come to the help of those who trust in Him.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 328.

The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ’s day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life. The darkest chapters of history are burdened with the record of crimes committed by bigoted religionists. . . .

The same danger still exists. Many take it for granted that they are Christians, simply because they subscribe to certain theological tenets. But they have not brought the truth into practical life. They have not believed and loved it, therefore they have not received the power and grace that come through sanctification of the truth. Men may profess faith in the truth; but if it does not make them sincere, kind, patient, forbearing, heavenly-minded, it is a curse to its possessors, and through their influence it is a

curse to the world.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 309.

[Psalm 51:10](#)

Let the prayer go up to God, “Create in me a clean heart;” for a pure, cleansed soul has Christ abiding therein, and out of the abundance of the heart are the issues of life. The human will is to be yielded to Christ. Instead of passing on, closing the heart in selfishness, there is need of opening the heart to the sweet influences of the Spirit of God. Practical religion breathes its fragrance everywhere. It is a savor of life unto life.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1157.

Sunday, September 24: We Are Blessed in Christ

The dangers that would assail the church at Ephesus were revealed to the apostle. “I know this,” he said, “that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Paul trembled for the church as, looking into the future, he saw the attacks which she must suffer from both external and internal foes. With solemn earnestness he bade his brethren guard vigilantly their sacred trusts. . . . Acts 20:29-30

“And now, brethren,” he continued, “I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” . . . Acts 20:32

“And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul’s neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 395, 396. Acts 20:36-38

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Ephesians 1:4, 5.

In the council of heaven, provision was made that men, though transgressors, should not perish in their disobedience, but, through faith in Christ as their substitute and surety, might become the elect of God. God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving His only begotten Son to pay man’s ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus. . . . That which will make a man acceptable to God is the imparted grace of Christ through faith in His name. . . . [For] the elect are chosen through Christ.—*Our High Calling*, p. 78.

Our sanctification is God’s object in all his dealing with us. He has chosen us from eternity that we may be holy. Christ gave Himself for our

redemption, that through our faith in his power to save from sin, we might be made complete in Him. In giving us his Word, he has given us bread from heaven. . . .

Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ; yea, long—
hunger and thirst—after righteousness. The promise is, “Ye shall be filled.” [Luke 6:21](#)
Let your heart be filled with an intense longing for this righteousness, the work of which God’s Word declares is peace, and its effect quietness and assurance forever.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 202.

Monday, September 25: We Are Redeemed for Community

Our Lord says, Under conviction of sin, remember that I died for you. . . . When your heart shrinks from the trying ordeal, remember that your Redeemer liveth to make intercession for you. . . .

These are the things we are never to forget. The love of Jesus, with its constraining power, is to be kept fresh in our memory. . . . There can be no union between our souls and God except through Christ. The union and love between brother and brother must be cemented and rendered eternal by the love of Jesus. And nothing less than the death of Christ could make His love efficacious for us. It is only because of His death that we can look with joy to His second coming. His sacrifice is the center of our hope. Upon this we must fix our faith.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 659, 660.

Unity with Christ establishes a bond of unity with one another. This unity is the most convincing proof to the world of the majesty and virtue of Christ, and of His power to take away sin.

The powers of darkness stand a poor chance against believers who love one another as Christ has loved them, who refuse to create alienation and strife, who stand together, who are kind, courteous, and tender-hearted, cherishing the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. We must have the Spirit of Christ, or we are none of His. . . .

The closer our union with Christ, the closer will be our union with one another.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 286.

The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God's forgiving grace. . . .

The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God, which through Christ

are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption. And if he follows Jesus, he will walk humbly in the light, rejoicing in the light and diffusing that light to others. Being justified by faith, he carries cheerfulness with him in his obedience in all his life. Peace with God is the result of what Christ is to him.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1071.

Tuesday, September 26: We Are the Church of the Living God

God has instructed me to say to His people, ministers and lay members, “Take your stand on higher ground. Move steadily onward and upward in the path that Jesus trod. Do not trust in your own opinions. Sanctification through the truth is your only safety.” The Lord God of Israel would have His people stand in His strength, and in His might, receiving to impart. He will uphold and sustain those who serve Him with mind and heart and strength. . . .

Speaking of the mystery “which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,” Paul says, “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery. . . . Not only to those living in this world, but to the principalities and powers in heavenly places is the church on this earth to reveal the glory of God.

God chose from among the Gentiles a people for Himself, and gave to them the name of Christian. This is a royal name, given to those who join themselves to Christ.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 291.

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth. The Lord has His eye upon every one of His people; He has His plans concerning each. It is His purpose that those who practice His holy precepts shall be a distinguished people. To the people of God today as well as to ancient Israel belong the words written by Moses through the Spirit of Inspiration: “Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.” Deuteronomy 7:6. . . .

Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God’s

purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 12, 13.

Wednesday, September 27: The Unity of Faith

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians the plan of God is so plainly and simply revealed that all His children may lay hold upon the truth. Here the means which He has appointed to keep unity in His church, that its members may reveal to the world a healthy religious experience, is plainly declared. . . .

Holiness is the gift of God through Christ. Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. They are His spiritual children, born again, renewed in righteousness and true holiness. Their minds are changed. With clearer vision they behold eternal realities. . . .

It should be our aim to bring all the pleasantness possible into our lives, and to do all the kindness possible to those around us. Kind words are never lost. Jesus records them as if spoken to Himself. Sow the seeds of kindness, of love, and of tenderness, and they will blossom and bear fruit.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, pp. 1117, 1118.

It is not a small matter to transform an earthly, sin-loving mind and bring it to understand the unspeakable love of Christ, the charms of His grace, and the excellency of God, so that the soul shall be imbued with divine love and captivated with the heavenly mysteries. . . . He has a new mind, new affections, new interest, new will; his sorrows, and desires, and love are all new. Heaven, which once possessed no charms, is now viewed in its riches and glory; and he contemplates it as his future home, where he shall see, love, and praise the One who hath redeemed him by His precious blood.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 139.

Christian unity is a mighty agency. It tells in a powerful manner that those who possess it are children of God. It has an irresistible influence upon the world, showing that man in his humanity may be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are to be one with our fellow men and with Christ, and in Christ one with God. Then of us can be spoken the words, “Ye are complete in Him.”

. . . [E]ach one is to take the place assigned him and do the work appointed him. God calls upon the members of His church to receive the Holy Spirit, to come together in unity and brotherly sympathy, to bind their interests together in love.

Nothing so manifestly weakens a church as disunion and strife. Nothing so wars against Christ and the truth as this spirit.—*My Life Today*, p. 276.

Thursday, September 28: We Are Recipients and Givers of Grace

It is not earthly rank, nor birth, nor nationality, nor religious privilege, which proves that we are members of the family of God; it is love, a love that embraces all humanity. Even sinners whose hearts are not utterly closed to God's Spirit will respond to kindness; while they may give hate for hate, they will also give love for love. But it is only the Spirit of God that gives love for hatred. To be kind to the unthankful and to the evil, to do good hoping for nothing again, is the insignia of the royalty of heaven, the sure token by which the children of the Highest reveal their high estate. —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 75.

The conduct of Christians is like that of their Lord. He erected the standard, and it is left for us to say whether or not we will rally around it. Our Lord and Saviour laid aside His dominion, His riches and glory, and sought after us, that He might save us from misery and make us like Himself. He humbled Himself and took our nature that we might be able to learn of Him and, imitating His life of benevolence and self-denial, follow Him step by step to heaven. You cannot equal the copy; but you can resemble it and, according to your ability, do likewise. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." [Mark 12:30-31](#) Such love must dwell in your hearts, that you will be ready to give the treasures and honors of this world if thereby you may influence one soul to engage in the service of Christ.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 169.

Who of us is faithfully following the Pattern? Who of us has instituted and continued the warfare against pride of heart? Who of us has, in good earnest, brought himself to wrestle with selfishness until it should no longer dwell in the heart and be revealed in the life? Would to God the lessons given us, as we view the cross of Christ and see the signs fulfilling which bring us near to the judgment, might be so impressed upon our hearts as to render us more humble, more self-denying, more kind to one another, less self-caring, less critical, and more willing to bear one another's burdens than we are today.

I have been shown that, as a people, we are departing from the simplicity of the faith and from the purity of the gospel. Many are in great peril. Unless they change their course, they will be severed from the True Vine as useless branches. Brethren and sisters, I have been shown that we are standing upon the threshold of the eternal world. We need now to gain victories at every step.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 18.

Friday, September 29: For Further Reading

Our High Calling, “Which Captain?” p. 80;

Sons and Daughters of God, “To Resist Temptation,” p. 79.