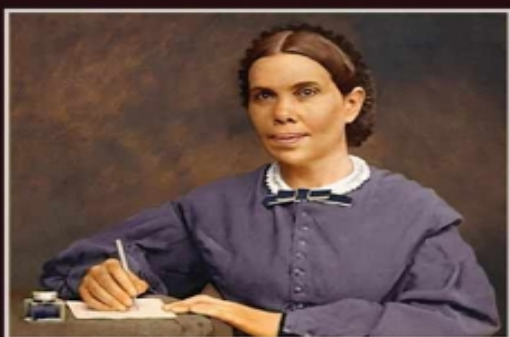


# A Companion to the Adult Bible Study Guide

## Ellen White Notes on God's Mission, My Mission

October | November | December 2023

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daily study with the adult Bible study guides

**E. G. White**  
**Notes for the**  
**Adult Bible Study Guide**

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# **God's Mission, My Mission**

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## **Lesson 1**

# God's Mission to Us: Part 1

**Sabbath Afternoon, September 30**

As the wheellike complications [shown to Ezekiel] were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth.

The history of nations speaks to us today. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Today men and nations are being tested by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.

The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are today in the procession of the ages and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order. —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 536.

The eternal plans of God are about to be fulfilled, and the end of all things is at hand. This is a time when those who have a knowledge of the truth of God should be ranging themselves on the side of the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. They should stand forth as defenders of the faith delivered to the saints. They should make manifest to the world what it is to keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. They should let their light shine forth in clear, strong rays upon the pathway of those who walk in darkness. The soldiers of Christ should stand shoulder to shoulder, loyal to truth, vindicators of the law of Jehovah.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p 269.

As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. . . .

It is thus that God's purpose in calling His people, from Abraham on the

plains of Mesopotamia to us in this age, is to reach its fulfillment. He says, “I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing.” Genesis 12:2. . . . If upon your spirit the glory of the Lord is risen, if you have beheld His beauty who is “the chiefest among ten thousand” and the One “altogether lovely,” if your soul has become radiant in the presence of His glory, to you is this word from the Master sent. Have you stood with Christ on the mount of transfiguration? Down in the plain there are souls enslaved by Satan; they are waiting for the word of faith and prayer to set them free.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 42, 43.

## **Sunday, October 1: The God Who Reaches Out to Us**

The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God it would ever have continued to enshroud them. But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig leaves for a covering.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 310.

Since the Fall the Lord has wrought out His will in the plan of redemption, a plan by which He is seeking to restore man to his original perfection. Christ's death on the cross has made it possible for God to receive and pardon every repentant soul. . . .

The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 76.

The love of Jesus for souls cannot be measured. Christ died to save not only the few who accept Him; no, He came to our world to save every son and daughter of Adam. He came not to seek and save those who were faultless and lovely, but He came to seek and to save them that are lost. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He is the true Shepherd, ever ready to leave the flock which is in the fold and to go into the wilderness to seek for the lost sheep.—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 330.

As you see the enormity of sin, as you see yourself as you really are, do not give up to despair. It was sinners that Christ came to save. We have not to reconcile God to us, but—O wondrous love!—God in Christ is "reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. He is wooing by His tender love



the hearts of His erring children. No earthly parent could be as patient with the faults and mistakes of his children, as is God with those He seeks to save. No one could plead more tenderly with the transgressor. No human lips ever poured out more tender entreaties to the wanderer than does He. All His promises, His warnings, are but the breathing of unutterable love.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 35.

## Monday, October 2: The God Who Longs to Be With Us

The all-merciful God shrouded His glory . . . that Moses could look upon it and live. So in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, God communicated with Israel, revealing to men His will, and imparting to them His grace. God's glory was subdued, and His majesty veiled, that the weak vision of finite men might behold it. So Christ was to come in "the body of our humiliation" (Philippians 3:21, R. V.), "in the likeness of men." In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled, His greatness and majesty were hidden, that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted men.

God commanded Moses for Israel, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life. "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14, R. V., margin.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 23.

The marked prosperity which attended everything placed under Joseph's care was not the result of a direct miracle; but his industry, care, and energy were crowned with the divine blessing. Joseph attributed his success to the favor of God and even his idolatrous master accepted this as the secret of his unparalleled prosperity. Without steadfast, well-directed effort, however, success could never have been attained. God was glorified by the faithfulness of His servant. It was His purpose that in purity and uprightness the believer in God should appear in marked contrast to the worshipers of idols—that thus the light of heavenly grace might shine forth amid the darkness of heathenism.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 74.

To His children today the Lord declares, "Be strong, . . . and work: for I am with you." The Christian always has a strong helper in the Lord. The way

of the Lord's helping we may not know; but this we do know: He will never fail those who put their trust in Him. Could Christians realize how many times the Lord has ordered their way, that the purposes of the enemy concerning them might not be accomplished, they would not stumble along complainingly. Their faith would be stayed on God, and no trial would have power to move them. They would acknowledge Him as their wisdom and efficiency, and He would bring to pass that which He desires to work out through them.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 576.

## **Tuesday, October 3: The God Who Became One With Us**

From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was “the image of God,” the image of His greatness and majesty, “the outshining of his glory.” It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God’s love—to be “God with us.” Therefore it was prophesied of Him, “His name shall be called Immanuel.”

By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God—God’s thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, “I have declared unto them thy name”—“merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth”—“that the love wherewith Thou has loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 15.

[Christ’s] life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father’s heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God “manifest in the flesh.” 1 Timothy 3:16. . . .

But [Christ’s] great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father’s heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.” John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 12, 13.

It is now time to take a decided stand on the side of truth; and as God has given to everyone his measure of influence, he should exert it to the glory of

God and for the good of his associates. Not one of the faithful stewards of Christ will be idle in such a time as this, or will be content to live simply for self. Those who are in communion with Christ will realize that there are souls on every side who may be benefited by their help, example, and influence. They will realize that they may be agents through whom Jesus will work to save those for whom He died.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 269.

### **Wednesday, October 4: The God Who Continues to Be With Us**

Jesus looked upon the world in its fallen state with infinite pity. He took humanity upon Himself that He might touch and elevate humanity. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He reached to the very depth of human misery and woe, to take man as He found him, a being tainted with corruption, degraded with vice, depraved by sin, and united with Satan in apostasy, and elevate him to a seat upon His throne. But it was written of Him that “He shall not fail nor be discouraged,” and He went forth in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice, giving us an example that we should follow in His steps.

We should work as did Jesus, departing from our own pleasure, turning away from Satan’s bribes, despising ease, and abhorring selfishness, that we may seek and save that which is lost, bringing souls from darkness into light, into the sunshine of God’s love. We have been commissioned to go forth and preach the gospel to every creature. We are to bring to the lost the tidings that Christ can forgive sin, can renew the nature, can clothe the soul in the garments of His righteousness, bring the sinner to His right mind, and teach him and fit him up to be a laborer together with God.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 199.

Christ’s death proves God’s great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father’s love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved.

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour’s love, and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy, for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.

Through the cross we learn that the heavenly Father loves us with a love that is infinite. Can we wonder that Paul exclaimed, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”? Galatians 6:14. It is our

privilege also to glory in the cross, our privilege to give ourselves wholly to Him who gave Himself for us. Then, with the light that streams from Calvary shining in our faces, we may go forth to reveal this light to those in darkness.  
—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 209, 210.

## **Thursday, October 5: The God Who Will Come Back for Us**

As Christ's earthly ministry drew to a close, and He realized that He must soon leave His disciples to carry on the work without His personal supervision, He sought to encourage them and to prepare them for the future. He did not deceive them with false hopes. As an open book He read what was to be. He knew He was about to be separated from them, to leave them as sheep among wolves. He knew that they would suffer persecution, that they would be cast out of the synagogues, and would be thrown into prison. He knew that for witnessing to Him as the Messiah, some of them would suffer death. And something of this He told them. In speaking of their future, He was plain and definite, that in their coming trial they might remember His words and be strengthened to believe in Him as the Redeemer.

He spoke to them also words of hope and courage. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said; "ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." John 14:1-4. For your sake I came into the world; for you I have been working. When I go away I shall still work earnestly for you. I came to the world to reveal Myself to you, that you might believe. I go to My Father and yours to co-operate with Him in your behalf.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 21.

As Christ ascended, His hands outstretched to bless His disciples, a cloud of angels received Him and hid Him from their sight. As the disciples looked with straining eyes for the last glimpse of their ascending Lord, two angels from the rejoicing throng stood by them and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). . . .

The disciples were filled with great joy. Over and over again they repeated the words Christ had spoken to them in His last lessons, as recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of John; and every one had something to say about the instruction, especially with regard to the



words of the fourteenth of John [Verses 1-3, quoted]. . . .

The promise that He would come again, and also the thought that He had left them His peace, filled their hearts with joy.—*The Upward Look*, p. 357.

It is our privilege to understand the great responsibilities that God has placed upon us so that we shall not be in darkness as to what is coming upon our world. We cannot afford to meet that day without a preparation. But when we think of this great and solemn event of Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, we should live in great humiliation before God lest we fail of the grace of God and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life.—*The Upward Look*, p. 192.

**Friday, October 6: For Further Reading**

*Sons and Daughters of God*, “Oneness With Christ,” p. 295;  
*The Upward Look*, “Where Is Your Treasure?” p. 355.

## **Lesson 2**

# God's Mission to Us: Part 2

**Sabbath Afternoon, October 7**

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."

The Father sets His love upon His elect people who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of His own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, through the sovereign mercy of God, they are elected to be saved as His obedient children.—*Our High Calling*, p. 77.

Church members do not show that living connection with God that they must have in order to win souls from darkness to light. Make the tree good, and good fruit will be the result. The work of the Spirit of God upon the heart is essential to godliness. It must be received into the hearts of those who accept the truth, and create in them clean hearts, before one of them can keep His commandments and be doers of the Word. "Marvel not," said the great Teacher unto the astonished Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

The Bible is not studied as much as it should be; it is not made the rule of life. Were its precepts conscientiously followed, and made the basis of character, there would be steadfastness of purpose that no business speculations or worldly pursuits could seriously influence. A character thus formed, and supported by the Word of God, will abide the day of trial, of difficulties, and dangers. The conscience must be enlightened, and the life sanctified by the love of the truth received into the heart, before the influence

will be saving upon the world.—*Review and Herald*, August 28, 1879, 76.

Upon us . . . [God] pours unnumbered blessings. We are to express our thankfulness to Him that we are accepted as workers to cooperate with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who preach the word of the Lord must live that which they teach. If we receive the grace of God in the heart, we must reveal to others this grace in every word and act. Those who dwell upon the long-sufferance and mercy of Christ must practice His patience and forbearance, and never reveal a spirit of high-handed injustice toward their brethren or others.—*Medical Ministry*, p. 255.

## Sunday, October 8: The Triune God: The Origin of Mission

God stands toward His people in the relation of a father, and He has a father's claim to our faithful service. Consider the life of Christ. Standing at the head of humanity, serving His Father, He is an example of what every son should and may be. The obedience that Christ rendered God requires from human beings today. He served His Father with love, in willingness and freedom. "I delight to do Thy will, O My God," He declared; "yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. Christ counted no sacrifice too great, no toil too hard, in order to accomplish the work which He came to do. At the age of twelve He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Luke 2:49. He had heard the call, and had taken up the work. "My meat," He said, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." John 4:34.

Thus we are to serve God.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 282, 283.

The incarnation of Christ is a mystery. The union of divinity with humanity is a mystery indeed, hidden with God, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages." It was kept in eternal silence by Jehovah, and was first revealed in Eden, by the prophecy that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and that he should bruise His heel.

To present to the world this mystery that God kept in silence for eternal ages before the world was created, before man was created, was the part that Christ was to act in the work He entered upon when He came to this earth. And this wonderful mystery, the incarnation of Christ and the atonement that He made, must be declared to every son and daughter of Adam. . . . His sufferings perfectly fulfilled the claims of the law of God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1082.

The Godhead was stirred with pity for the [human] race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the

resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man's uplifting. Here is love—the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer. —*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

## **Monday, October 9: Making Disciples: The Focus of Mission**

Christ gave His disciples their commission. He made full provision for the prosecution of the work, and took upon Himself the responsibility for its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe. Labor in faith, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.

The Saviour's commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 149.

A great and solemn work is before the people of God. They are to come close to Christ in self-denial and self-sacrifice, their one aim being to give the message of mercy to all the world. Some will work in one way and some in another, as the Lord shall call and lead them. But they are all to strive together, seeking to make the work a perfect whole. With pen and voice God's servants are to labor for Him. The printed word of truth is to be translated into different tongues. To all peoples the gospel is to be preached.—*This Day With God*, p. 221.

No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell. . . . There will be an intensity of desire to follow in the path that Jesus trod. There will be an earnest longing that those around us may "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29.



And the effort to bless others will react in blessings upon ourselves. This was the purpose of God in giving us a part to act in the plan of redemption. He has granted men the privilege of becoming partakers of the divine nature and, in their turn, of diffusing blessings to their fellow men. This is the highest honor, the greatest joy, that it is possible for God to bestow upon men. Those who thus become participants in labors of love are brought nearest to their Creator.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 78, 79.

## **Tuesday, October 10: The Eternal Gospel: The Message of Mission**

It is the gospel, and the gospel alone, that will sanctify the soul. And this makes possible to the receiver that life “that measures with the life of God.” This is the record that God has given us, even eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He who is a partaker of the divine nature will escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. His faith in Christ as the Life-giver, gives him life. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

This life of sanctification and joy in believing is for every soul who in faith will claim the promises of the Word of God, and draw upon divine strength for the work of overcoming.—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 4, p. 356.

“He that winneth souls is wise.” [Proverbs 11:30.] “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.” [Daniel 12:3.] What is done through the co-operation of men with God is a work that shall never perish, but endure through the eternal ages. He that makes God his wisdom, that grows up into the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, will stand before kings, before the so-called great men of the world, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvelous light.—*Christian Education*, p. 97.

We are to be diligent workers; an idle man is a miserable creature. But what excuse can be offered for idleness in the great work which Christ gave his life to accomplish? The spiritual faculties cease to exist if they are not exercised, and it is Satan’s design that they shall perish. All heaven is actively engaged in the work of preparing a people for the second coming of Christ to our world, and “we are laborers together with God.” The end of all things is at hand. Now is our opportunity to work. “The night cometh, in which no man can work.” We should proclaim Christ and him crucified, thus preparing the way for his second appearing. . . .

Unite with the great Master-worker, follow the self-denying Redeemer through his pilgrimage of love on earth. The same Jesus that walked with his

disciples, that taught them upon earth, that toiled and suffered in his human nature, is with us in his divine power. He is at our right hand to help in every emergency. Let us lift up Jesus, and reveal the Bible foundation for our faith.  
—*Review and Herald*, January 24, 1893.

## **Wednesday, October 11: God's People: The Channels of Mission**

God had chosen Israel. He had called them to preserve among men the knowledge of His law, and of the symbols and prophecies that pointed to the Saviour. He desired them to be as wells of salvation to the world. What Abraham was in the land of his sojourn, what Joseph was in Egypt, and Daniel in the courts of Babylon, the Hebrew people were to be among the nations. They were to reveal God to men.

In the call of Abraham the Lord had said, "I will bless thee; . . . and thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3. The same teaching was repeated through the prophets.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

"Ye are the light of the world," Christ declares. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:14, 16. God's work in the earth in these last days is to reflect the light that Christ brought into the world. This light is to dissipate the gross darkness of ages. Men and women in heathen darkness are to be reached by those who at one time were in a similar condition of ignorance, but who have received the knowledge of the truth of God's word. These heathen nations will accept eagerly the instruction given them in a knowledge of God.

Very precious to God is His work in the earth. Christ and heavenly angels are watching it every moment. As we draw near to the coming of Christ, more and still more of missionary work will engage our efforts. The message of the renewing power of God's grace will be carried to every country and clime, until the truth shall belt the world. . . . But before this work can be accomplished, we must experience here in our own country the work of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 531, 532.

If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. Instead of congregating together and shunning responsibility and cross bearing, the members of the church would scatter into all lands, letting the light of Christ shine out from them, working as He did for the salvation of

souls, and this “gospel of the kingdom” would speedily be carried to all the world.

The cross of Calvary is to be lifted high above the people, absorbing their minds and concentrating their thoughts. Then all the spiritual faculties will be charged with divine power direct from God. Then there will be a concentration of the energies in genuine work for the Master. The workers will send forth to the world beams of light, as living agencies to enlighten the earth.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 42, 44.

## **Thursday, October 12: The World: The Arena of Mission**

Christ's visible presence was about to be withdrawn from the disciples, but a new endowment of power was to be theirs. The Holy Spirit was to be given them in its fullness, sealing them for their work. "Behold," the Saviour said, "I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:5, 8.

The Saviour knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that His disciples must receive the heavenly endowment; that the gospel would be effective only as it was proclaimed by hearts made warm and lips made eloquent by a living knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. The work committed to the disciples would require great efficiency; for the tide of evil ran deep and strong against them. A vigilant, determined leader was in command of the forces of darkness, and the followers of Christ could battle for the right only through the help that God, by His Spirit, would give them.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 30, 31.

The disciples were not to wait for the people to come to them. They were to go to the people, hunting for sinners as a shepherd hunts for lost sheep. Christ opened the world before them as their field of labor. They were to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. It was of the Saviour that they were to preach, of His life of unselfish service, His death of shame, His unparalleled, unchanging love. His name was to be their watchword, their band of union. In His name they were to subdue the strongholds of sin. Faith in His name was to mark them as Christians.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 14.

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. John

17:21.

Let these words be oft repeated and let every soul train his ideas and spirit and action daily that he may fulfill this prayer of Jesus Christ. He does not request impossible things of His Father. He prays for the very things which must be in His disciples in relation to their oneness to each other and their unity and oneness with God and Jesus Christ. Anything short of this is not attaining to perfection of Christian character. The golden chain of love, binding the hearts of the believers in unity, in bonds of fellowship and love, and in oneness with Christ and the Father, makes the connection perfect, and bears to the world a testimony of the power of Christianity that cannot be controverted.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 173.

### **Friday, October 13: For Further Reading**

*Our High Calling*, “Fullness of Christ’s Ransom,” p. 78;

*The Acts of the Apostles*, “Written From Rome,” pp. 478, 479.



## Lesson 3

# God's Call to Mission

**Sabbath Afternoon, October 14**

The Angel of the covenant is empowering His servants to carry the truth to all parts of the world. He has sent forth His angels with the message of mercy; but, as if they did not speed on their way fast enough to satisfy His heart of yearning love, He lays on every member of His church the responsibility of proclaiming this message. "Let him that heareth say, Come." Every member of the church is to show his loyalty by inviting the thirsty to drink of the water of life. A chain of living witnesses is to carry the invitation to the world. Will you act your part in this great work?

Jesus is calling for many missionaries, for men and women who will consecrate themselves to God, willing to spend and be spent in His service. Oh, can we not remember that here is a world to labor for? Shall we not move forward step by step, letting God use us as His helping hand? Shall we not place ourselves on the altar of service? Then the love of Christ will touch and transform us, make us willing for His sake to do and dare.—*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 18.

God has given us the gift of speech that we may recite to others His dealing with us, that His love and compassion may touch other hearts, and that praise may arise from other souls also to Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. The Lord has said, "Ye are My witnesses." Isaiah 43:10. But all who are called to be witnesses for Christ must learn of Him, that they may be efficient witnesses. As children of the heavenly King, they should educate themselves to bear testimony in a clear, distinct voice and in such a manner that no one may receive the impression that they are reluctant to tell of the mercies of the Lord.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 243.

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for

a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God’s people are to be true to the trust committed to them. . . .

It is not a small matter that the counsels and plans of God have been so clearly opened to us. It is a wonderful privilege to be able to understand the will of God as revealed in the sure word of prophecy. This places on us a heavy responsibility. God expects us to impart to others the knowledge that He has given us.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 19.

## Sunday, October 15: Moving Beyond Our Comfort Zone

The dwellers on the plain of Shinar established their kingdom for self-exaltation, not for the glory of God. Had they succeeded, a mighty power would have borne sway, banishing righteousness and inaugurating a new religion. The world would have been demoralized. But God never leaves the world without witnesses for Him. At this time there were men who humbled themselves before God and cried unto Him. “O God,” they pleaded, “interpose between Thy cause, and the plans and methods of men.” . . .

Suddenly the work that had been advancing so prosperously was checked. Angels were sent to bring to naught the purpose of the builders. . . . Confusion and dismay followed. All work came to a standstill. . . .

“The Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth.” This dispersion was the means of peopling the earth, and thus the Lord’s purpose was accomplished through the very means that men had employed to prevent its fulfillment.

In our day the Lord desires that His people shall be dispersed throughout the earth. They are not to colonize. Jesus said: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 43.

The fallen world is the battlefield for the greatest conflict the heavenly universe and earthly powers have ever witnessed. It was appointed as the theater on which would be fought out the grand struggle between good and evil, between heaven and hell. Every human being acts a part in this conflict. No one can stand on neutral ground. Men must either accept or reject the world’s Redeemer. All are witnesses, either for or against Christ. Christ calls upon those who stand under His banner to engage in the conflict with Him as faithful soldiers, that they may inherit the crown of life. They have been adopted as sons and daughters of God. Christ has left them His assured promise that great will be the reward in the kingdom of heaven of those who partake of His humiliation and suffering for the truth’s sake.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 242.

The faithful ambassador of Christ is not ashamed of the banner of truth. He does not cease from proclaiming the truth, however unpopular it may be.

In all places, in season, out of season, he heralds the glad tidings of salvation. Missionaries for God are called to face dangers, endure privations, and suffer reproach for the truth's sake, yet amid dangers, hardships, and reproach they are still to hold the banner aloft. . . .

These last-day witnesses are bold soldiers of Jesus Christ. They have tasted of the powers of the world to come. Their feet are not on sliding sand, but on solid rock. They are not easily moved away from the faith once delivered to the saints. These will be strengthened by their leader to cope with difficulties. They are messengers of righteousness, representatives of Christ, revealing the triumphs of grace.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 347.

## **Monday, October 16: Becoming a Blessing to the Whole World**

The sentence pronounced on Satan, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15), was to our first parents a promise of the redemption to be wrought out through Christ. . . .

The Messiah was to be of the royal line, for in the prophecy uttered by Jacob the Lord said, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.” Genesis 49:10.

Isaiah prophesied . . . “I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God.” Isaiah 55:4-5.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 222, 223.

[Christ] left His home of security and peace, left the glory that He had with the Father before the world was, left His position upon the throne of the universe. He went forth, a suffering, tempted man; went forth in solitude, to sow in tears, to water with His blood, the seed of life for a world lost.

His servants in like manner must go forth to sow. When called to become a sower of the seed of truth, Abraham was bidden, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” Genesis 12:1. “And he went out, not knowing whither he went.” Hebrews 11:8. . . . So those who are called to unite with Christ must leave all, in order to follow Him. Old associations must be broken up, plans of life relinquished, earthly hopes surrendered. In toil and tears, in solitude, and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 36.

There are those who may be in favorable positions in all the things of this life, but God may have a work for them to do elsewhere, a work that they could not do among their relatives and friends. The very position of ease and the relatives who surround them may prevent them from developing the very

traits of character which God would have them develop. But God sees that to change their position and to send them where their surroundings will be entirely different will be the very best place for them to develop a character which will glorify Him.

When we set ourselves where all is convenience and ease, we do not feel so much the necessity of depending moment by moment upon God. God in His providence brings us into positions where we shall feel our necessity of His help and strength.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 112.

## Tuesday, October 17: Abraham's Call

What is temptation?—It is the means by which those who claim to be the children of God are tested and tried. We read that God tempted Abraham, that He tempted the children of Israel. This means that He permitted circumstances to occur to test their faith, and lead them to look to Him for help. God permits temptation to come to His people today, that they may realize that He is their helper. If they draw nigh to Him when they are tempted, He strengthens them to meet the temptation. But if they yield to the enemy, neglecting to place themselves close to their Almighty Helper, they are overcome. They separate themselves from God. They do not give evidence that they walk in God's way.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1094.

Abraham continued to journey southward, and again his faith was tested. The heavens withheld their rain, the brooks ceased to flow in the valleys, and the grass withered on the plains. The flocks and herds found no pasture, and starvation threatened the whole encampment. Did not the patriarch now question the leadings of Providence? Did he not look back with longing to the plenty of the Chaldean plains? All were eagerly watching to see what Abraham would do, as trouble after trouble came upon him. So long as his confidence appeared unshaken, they felt that there was hope; they were assured that God was his Friend, and that He was still guiding him.

Abraham could not explain the leadings of Providence; he had not realized his expectations; but he held fast the promise, "I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." With earnest prayer he considered how to preserve the life of his people and his flocks, but he would not allow circumstances to shake his faith in God's word. To escape the famine he went down into Egypt. He did not forsake Canaan, or in his extremity turn back to the Chaldean land from which he came, where there was no scarcity of bread; but he sought a temporary refuge as near as possible to the Land of Promise, intending shortly to return where God had placed him.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 128, 129.

The faith of Abraham should be our example, yet how few will patiently

endure a simple test of reproof for the sins which imperil their eternal welfare. How few receive reproof with humility, and profit by it. God's claim upon our faith, our services, our affections, should meet with a cheerful response. We are infinite debtors to the Lord and should unhesitatingly comply with the least of His requirements. In order to be a commandment breaker it is not necessary that we should trample upon the whole moral code. If one precept is disregarded, we are transgressors of the sacred law. But if we would be true commandment keepers we should strictly observe every requirement that God has enjoined upon us.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 253.



## **Wednesday, October 18: The Early Church and Comfort Zones**

After the disciples had been driven from Jerusalem by persecution, the gospel message spread rapidly through the regions lying beyond the limits of Palestine; and many small companies of believers were formed in important centers. Some of the disciples “traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word.” Their labors were usually confined to the Hebrew and Greek Jews, large colonies of whom were at this time to be found in nearly all the cities of the world. . . .

It was God who gave to [the early believers] the name of Christian. This is a royal name, given to all who join themselves to Christ. It was of this name that James wrote later, “Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?” James 2:6, 7. And Peter declared, “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.” “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.” 1 Peter 4:16, 14.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 155, 157.

[Peter] overcame his natural prejudice as to sit at table with the Gentile converts. But when certain Jews who were zealous for the ceremonial law, came from Jerusalem, Peter injudiciously changed his deportment toward the converts from paganism. . . . This revelation of weakness on the part of those who had been respected and loved as leaders, left a most painful impression on the minds of the Gentile believers. The church was threatened with division. But Paul, who saw the subverting influence of the wrong done to the church through the double part acted by Peter, openly rebuked him for thus disguising his true sentiments. . . .

Peter saw the error into which he had fallen, and immediately set about repairing the evil that had been wrought, so far as was in his power. God, who knows the end from the beginning, permitted Peter to reveal this weakness of character in order that the tried apostle might see that there was nothing in himself whereof he might boast.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 197, 198.

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*, p. 20.

## **Thursday, October 19: Starting From Where You Are**

Christ commissioned His disciples to do the work He had left in their hands, beginning at Jerusalem. Jerusalem had been the scene of His amazing condescension for the human race. There He had suffered, been rejected and condemned. The land of Judea was His birthplace. There, clad in the garb of humanity, He had walked with men, and few had discerned how near heaven came to the earth when Jesus was among them. At Jerusalem the work of the disciples must begin.

In view of all that Christ had suffered there, and the unappreciated labor He had put forth, the disciples might have pleaded for a more promising field; but they made no such plea. The very ground where He had scattered the seed of truth was to be cultivated by the disciples, and the seed would spring up and yield an abundant harvest. In their work the disciples would have to meet persecution through the jealousy and hatred of the Jews; but this had been endured by their Master, and they were not to flee from it. The first offers of mercy must be made to the murderers of the Saviour.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 820.

We are nearing the close of this earth's history; soon we shall stand before the great white throne. Your opportunities for work will soon be past. Therefore work while it is called today. With the help of God, every true believer can see where there is work to be done. When the human will cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent, and the worker can make opportunities. Watch for the souls with whom you come in contact. Watch for opportunities to speak a word in season to them. Do not wait for an introduction, or until you become acquainted with them, before you seek to save the perishing souls around you. If you will go to work in earnest, ways will open before you for the accomplishment of this work. Lean upon the divine arm for wisdom, strength, and skill for the work that God has given you to do.—*Our High Calling*, p. 298.

Will our churches now arise, and awake to the situation? The representatives of Christ are to carry a burden for souls. Every nation and kindred and tongue and people is to hear the last message of mercy to the world. When our church members have a better understanding of Bible truth,

they will arouse from their drowsy slumber and will be ready to devote their money to the cause of God, and to give themselves in earnest labor under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. God's people are His agents, appointed to proclaim the truth in all parts of the world. . . .

Every church member is to engage in active service for the Master. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" He asks. "Go work today in My vineyard. Work while it is day; for the night cometh, when no man can work."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 204.

**Friday, October 20: For Further Reading**

*This Day With God*, “Let Your Light Shine,” p. 211;

*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, “Bring Us Not Into Temptation,”  
pp. 117–120.

## Lesson 4

# Sharing God's Mission

**Sabbath Afternoon, October 21**

He who claims to be a Christian should examine himself and see if he is as kind and considerate of his fellow beings as he desires his fellow beings to be of him. Christ taught that rank or wealth should make no difference in our treatment of one another and that in the light of heaven all are brethren. Earthly possessions or worldly honor do not count in God's valuation of man. He created all men equal; He is no respecter of persons. He values a man according to the virtue of his character.

To possess true godliness means to love one another, to help one another, to make apparent the religion of Jesus in our lives. We are to be consecrated channels through which the love of Christ flows to those who need help. He who approaches nearest to obedience to the divine law will be of the most service to God. He who follows Christ, reaching out after His goodness, His compassion, His love for the human family, will be accepted by God as a worker together with Him.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 287.

The foundation of our hope in Christ is the fact that we recognize ourselves as sinners in need of restoration and redemption. It is because we are sinners that we have courage to claim Him as our Saviour. Then let us take heed lest we deal with the erring in a way that would say to others that we have no need of redemption. Let us not denounce, condemn, and destroy as though we were faultless. It is the work of Christ to mend, to heal, to restore. God is love. He gives Satan no occasion for triumphing by making the worst appear or by exposing our weaknesses to our enemies.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 291.

God has given to His servants precious knowledge of His truth, and He desires that they shall closely connect themselves with Jesus and, through sympathy, draw near to their brethren, that they may do them all the good that lies in their power. The Redeemer of the world did not consult His own

pleasure, but went about doing good. He bound Himself closely to the Father, that He might bring Their united strength to bear upon the souls of men to save them from eternal ruin. In like manner should His servants cultivate spirituality if they expect to succeed in their work.

Jesus pitied poor sinners so much that He left the courts of heaven and laid aside the robes of royalty, humiliating Himself to humanity, that He might become acquainted with the needs of man and help him to rise above the degradation of the Fall. When He has given to man such unquestionable evidence of His love and tenderest sympathy, how important that His representatives should imitate His example in coming close to their fellow men and helping them to form a true Christian character.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 268.

## Sunday, October 22: The Gift of Hospitality

The Bible lays much stress upon the practice of hospitality. Not only does it enjoin hospitality as a duty, but it presents many beautiful pictures of the exercise of this grace and the blessings which it brings. Foremost among these is the experience of Abraham.

In the records of Genesis we see the patriarch at the hot summer noontide resting in his tent door under the shadow of the oaks of Mamre. Three travelers are passing near. They make no appeal for hospitality, solicit no favor; but Abraham does not permit them to go on their way unrefreshed. He is a man full of years, a man of dignity and wealth, one highly honored, and accustomed to command; yet on seeing these strangers he “ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.” . . . With his own hands he brought water that they might wash the dust of travel from their feet. He himself selected their food; while they were at rest under the cooling shade, Sarah his wife made ready for their entertainment, and Abraham stood respectfully beside them while they partook of his hospitality. This kindness he showed them simply as wayfarers, passing strangers, who might never come his way again.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 341.

There are many . . . to whom we might make our homes a blessing. Our social entertainments should not be governed by the dictates of worldly custom, but by the Spirit of Christ and the teaching of His word. The Israelites, in all their festivities, included the poor, the stranger, and the Levite, who was both the assistant of the priest in the sanctuary, and a religious teacher and missionary. These were regarded as the guests of the people, to share their hospitality on all occasions of social and religious rejoicing, and to be tenderly cared for in sickness or in need. It is such as these whom we should make welcome to our homes. How much such a welcome might do to cheer and encourage the missionary nurse or the teacher, the care-burdened, hard-working mother, or the feeble and aged, so often without a home, and struggling with poverty and many discouragements. . . .

Our time here is short. We can pass through this world but once; as we pass along, let us make the most of life. The work to which we are called



does not require wealth or social position or great ability. It requires a kindly, self-sacrificing spirit and a steadfast purpose. A lamp, however small, if kept steadily burning, may be the means of lighting many other lamps. Our sphere of influence may seem narrow, our ability small, our opportunities few, our acquirements limited; yet wonderful possibilities are ours through a faithful use of the opportunities of our own homes. If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life we shall become channels for currents of life-giving power.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 352, 355.

## Monday, October 23: Abraham's Love for Everyone

In the hearts of His professed followers there is need of the tender sympathy of Christ—a deeper love for those whom He has so valued as to give His own life for their salvation. These souls are precious, infinitely more precious than any other offering we can bring to God. To bend every energy toward some apparently great work, while we neglect the needy or turn the stranger from his right, is not a service that will meet His approval. . . .

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by trying to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 383, 384.

[Abraham,] man of faith, pleaded for the inhabitants of Sodom. Once he had saved them by his sword, now he endeavored to save them by prayer. With deep reverence and humility he urged his plea. Himself a sinner, he pleaded in the sinner's behalf. Such a spirit all who approach God should possess. Yet Abraham manifested the confidence of a child pleading with a loved father. He came close to the heavenly Messenger, and fervently urged his petition. . . .

Love for perishing souls inspired Abraham's prayer. While he loathed the sins of that corrupt city, he desired that the sinners might be saved. His deep interest for Sodom shows the anxiety that we should feel for the impenitent. We should cherish hatred of sin, but pity and love for the sinner.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 51.

In order to convince others of the power of Christ's grace, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is it possible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. If we would draw sinners out of the swift-running

current, our own feet must be firmly set upon the Rock, Christ Jesus.

The badge of Christianity is not an outward sign, not the wearing of a cross or a crown, but it is that which reveals the union of man with God. By the power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer. No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 469, 470.

## **Tuesday, October 24: Abraham's Spirit of Prayer**

Are you gaining in the knowledge of the truth? Have you a living connection with Jesus Christ? You see Abraham had, and he talked with angels, and he could ask a favor of them. . . .

We have not earnestness enough in our faith or in our experience. . . . Just as long as there is a soul to save in all the world you want to press yourselves to the Source of all light and power that you may save these souls. You do not care to have an earthly, worldly mold upon your experience. You have souls to save or to lose and you want a great deal more of Jesus brought into your lives, into your character, and into your experience. You can be a help and blessing to one another by being true in every position where you are, by feeling that you are God's representative upon the earth.—*This Day With God*, p. 95.

Christ's lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer.

Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give. The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives. . . . The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 142.

[Christ] is today standing at the altar of incense, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.

The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ

unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God. “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:33, 34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

## Wednesday, October 25: Abraham's Mission

In sparing the life of Cain the murderer, God gave the world an example of what would be the result of permitting the sinner to live to continue a course of unbridled iniquity. Through the influence of Cain's teaching and example, multitudes of his descendants were led into sin, until "the wickedness of man was great in the earth" and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Genesis 6:5, 11.

In mercy to the world, God blotted out its wicked inhabitants in Noah's time. In mercy He destroyed the corrupt dwellers in Sodom. Through the deceptive power of Satan the workers of iniquity obtain sympathy and admiration, and are thus constantly leading others to rebellion. It was so in Cain's and in Noah's day, and in the time of Abraham and Lot; it is so in our time. It is in mercy to the universe that God will finally destroy the rejecters of His grace.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 543.

"The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." The bright rays of the morning seemed to speak only prosperity and peace to the cities of the plain. The stir of active life began in the streets; men were going their various ways, intent on the business or the pleasures of the day. The sons-in-law of Lot were making merry at the fears and warnings of the weak-minded old man. Suddenly and unexpectedly as would be a thunder peal from an unclouded sky, the tempest broke. The Lord rained brimstone and fire out of heaven upon the cities and the fruitful plain; its palaces and temples, costly dwellings, gardens and vineyards, and the gay, pleasure-seeking throngs that only the night before had insulted the messengers of heaven—all were consumed. . . .

We are taught the fearful and solemn lesson that while God's mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men may not go on in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn, and the ministration of judgment begins.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 162.

Everyone who professes the name of Christ is to be an earnest, disinterested worker, ready to defend the principles of righteousness. Every

soul should take an active part in advancing the cause of God. Whatever our calling, as Christians we have a work to do in making Christ known to the world. We are to be missionaries, having for our chief aim the winning of souls to Christ.

To His church God has committed the work of diffusing light and bearing the message of His love. Our work is not to condemn, not to denounce, but to draw with Christ, beseeching men to be reconciled to God. We are to encourage souls, to attract them, and thus win them to the Saviour.  
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 427.

## Thursday, October 26: Submission to God's Will

The Lord in His providence had brought [trials] upon Abraham to teach him lessons of submission, patience, and faith—lessons that were to be placed on record for the benefit of all who should afterward be called to endure affliction. God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him. He permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. He allowed the beloved John to be exiled to lonely Patmos, but the Son of God met him there, and his vision was filled with scenes of immortal glory.

God permits trials to assail His people, that by their constancy and obedience they themselves may be spiritually enriched, and that their example may be a source of strength to others. “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil.” Jeremiah 29:11. The very trials that task our faith most severely and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are to lead us closer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at His feet and experience the peace which He will give us in exchange.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 129.

We are daily to cherish a spirit of childlike submission, and pray that our eyes may be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve in order that we may discern the indications of the divine will, lest we become confused in our ideas, because our will seems to be all-controlling. With the eye of faith, with childlike submission as obedient children, we must look to God, to follow His guidance, and difficulties will clear away. The promise is, “I will instruct thee and teach thee . . . : I will guide thee with mine eye” (Psalm 32:8).

If we come to God in a humble and teachable spirit, not with our plans all formed before we ask Him, and shaped according to our own will, but in submission, in willingness to be taught, in faith, it is our privilege to claim the promise every hour of the day. We may distrust ourselves, and we need to guard against our own inclinations and strong tendencies lest we shall follow our mind and plans and think it is the way of the Lord.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 249.



Christ has urged that His people pray without ceasing. This does not mean that we should always be upon our knees, but that prayer is to be as the breath of the soul. Our silent requests, wherever we may be, are to be ascending unto God, and Jesus our Advocate pleads in our behalf, bearing up with the incense of His righteousness our requests to the Father.

The Lord Jesus loves His people, and when they put their trust in Him, depending wholly upon Him, He strengthens them. He will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 78.

**Friday, October 27: For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, “Love—The Evidence of Discipleship,” p. 298;  
*The Upward Look*, “Courage in the Lord,” p. 266.

## Lesson 5

# Excuses to Avoid Mission

**Sabbath Afternoon, October 28**

Nineveh, wicked though it had become, was not wholly given over to evil. He who “beholdeth all the sons of men” (Psalm 33:13) and “seeth every precious thing” (Job 28:10) perceived in that city many who were reaching out after something better and higher, and who, if granted opportunity to learn of the living God, would put away their evil deeds and worship Him. And so in His wisdom God revealed Himself to them in an unmistakable manner, to lead them, if possible, to repentance.

The instrument chosen for this work was the prophet Jonah, the son of Amittai. To him came the word of the Lord, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me.” Jonah 1:1, 2.

As the prophet thought of the difficulties and seeming impossibilities of this commission, he was tempted to question the wisdom of the call. From a human viewpoint it seemed as if nothing could be gained by proclaiming such a message in that proud city. He forgot for the moment that the God whom he served was all-wise and all-powerful. While he hesitated, still doubting, Satan overwhelmed him with discouragement. The prophet was seized with a great dread, and he “rose up to flee unto Tarshish.” Going to Joppa, and finding there a ship ready to sail, “he paid the fare thereof and went down into it, to go with them.” Verse 3.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 265, 266.

In giving light to His people anciently, God did not work exclusively through any one class. Daniel was a prince of Judah. Isaiah also was of the royal line. David was a shepherd boy, Amos a herdsman, Zechariah a captive from Babylon, Elisha a tiller of the soil. The Lord raised up as His representatives prophets and princes, the noble and the lowly, and taught them the truths to be given to the world.

To everyone who becomes a partaker of His grace the Lord appoints a work for others. Individually we are to stand in our lot and place, saying, “Here am I; send me.” Isaiah 6:8. Upon the minister of the word, the missionary nurse, the Christian physician, the individual Christian, whether he be merchant or farmer, professional man or mechanic—the responsibility rests upon all. It is our work to reveal to men the gospel of their salvation. Every enterprise in which we engage should be a means to this end.

Those who take up their appointed work will not only be a blessing to others, but they will themselves be blessed. The consciousness of duty well done will have a reflex influence upon their own souls. The despondent will forget their despondency, the weak will become strong, the ignorant intelligent, and all will find an unfailing helper in Him who has called them. —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 148.

## **Sunday, October 29: Our Excuses: Fear**

More people than we think are longing to find the way to Christ. Those who preach the last message of mercy should bear in mind that Christ is to be exalted as the sinner's refuge. Some ministers think that it is not necessary to preach repentance and faith; they take it for granted that their hearers are acquainted with the gospel, and that matters of a different nature must be presented in order to hold their attention. But many people are sadly ignorant in regard to the plan of salvation; they need more instruction upon this all-important subject than upon any other.

Theoretical discourses are essential, that people may see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole; but no discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel.—*Evangelism*, pp. 185, 186.

In the darkest hours, under circumstances the most forbidding, the Christian believer may keep his soul stayed upon the source of all light and power. Day by day, through faith in God, his hope and courage may be renewed. "The just shall live by his faith." In the service of God there need be no despondency, no wavering, no fear. The Lord will more than fulfill the highest expectations of those who put their trust in Him. He will give them the wisdom their varied necessities demand.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 386.

Much depends on the unceasing activity of those who are true and loyal, and for this reason Satan puts forth every possible effort to thwart the divine purpose to be wrought out through the obedient. He causes some to lose sight of their high and holy mission, and to become satisfied with the pleasures of this life. He leads them to settle down at ease, or, for the sake of greater worldly advantages, to remove from places where they might be a power for good. Others he causes to flee in discouragement from duty, because of opposition or persecution. But all such are regarded by Heaven with tenderest pity. To every child of God whose voice the enemy of souls had succeeded in silencing, the question is addressed, "What doest thou here?" I commissioned you to go into all the world and preach the gospel, to prepare a people for the day of God. Why are you here? Who sent you? . . .

Those who realize, even in a limited degree, what redemption means to them and to their fellow men, will comprehend in some measure the vast needs of humanity. Their hearts will be moved to compassion as they see the moral and spiritual destitution of thousands who are under the shadow of a terrible doom, in comparison with which physical suffering fades into nothingness.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 171, 172.

## **Monday, October 30: Our Excuses: False Views**

If, when the call first came to him, Jonah had stopped to consider calmly, he might have known how foolish would be any effort on his part to escape the responsibility placed upon him. But not for long was he permitted to go on undisturbed in his mad flight. "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." Verses 4, 5.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 267.

Stablish your hearts in the belief that God knows of all the trials and difficulties you will encounter in the warfare against evil; for God is dishonored when any soul belittles His power by talking unbelief.

This world is God's great field of labor; He has purchased those that dwell on it with the blood of His only-begotten Son, and He means that His message of mercy shall go to everyone. Those who are commissioned to do this work will be tested and tried, but they are always to remember that God is near to strengthen and uphold them. He does not ask us to depend upon any broken reed. We are not to look for human aid. God forbid that we should place man where God should be. The Lord Jehovah is "everlasting strength."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 352.

When God opens the way for the accomplishment of a certain work and gives assurance of success, the chosen instrumentality must do all in his power to bring about the promised result. In proportion to the enthusiasm and perseverance with which the work is carried forward will be the success given. God can work miracles for His people only as they act their part with untiring energy. He calls for men of devotion to His work, men of moral courage, with ardent love for souls, and with a zeal that never flags. Such workers will find no task too arduous, no prospect too hopeless; they will labor on, undaunted, until apparent defeat is turned into glorious victory. Not even prison walls nor the martyr's stake beyond, will cause them to swerve from their purpose of laboring together with God for the upbuilding of His

kingdom.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 263.

Those who have been most successful in soul-winning were men and women who did not pride themselves on their ability, but who in humility and faith sought to help those about them. Jesus did this very work. He came close to those whom He desired to reach. How often, with a few gathered about Him, He gave His lessons, and one by one the passers-by paused to listen, until a great multitude heard with wonder and awe the words of the heaven-sent Teacher.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 194.



## **Tuesday, October 31: Our Excuses: Inconvenience**

Every soul who is saved must surrender his own plans, and follow where Christ leads the way. The understanding must be yielded up to Christ for Him to cleanse and refine and purify. This will always be done when we receive aright the teachings of Christ. O, how much we need a more intimate acquaintance with Him! We need to enter into His purpose, and to carry out His will, saying with the whole heart, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” . . .

We should keep ever before us the fact that time is short. Iniquity is increasing on every hand. The righteous are set as lights in the world. Through them the glory of God is to be revealed to the world.—*This Day With God*, p. 322.

If you are in communion with Christ, you will place His estimate upon every human being. You will feel for others the same deep love that Christ has felt for you. Then you will be able to win, not drive, to attract, not repulse, those for whom He died. None would ever have been brought back to God if Christ had not made a personal effort for them; and it is by this personal work that we can rescue souls. When you see those who are going down to death, you will not rest in quiet indifference and ease. . . . Your heart will go out in sympathy for them, and you will reach out to them a helping hand. In the arms of your faith and love you will bring them to Christ. You will watch over and encourage them, and your sympathy and confidence will make it hard for them to fall from their steadfastness.

In this work all the angels of heaven are ready to co-operate. All the resources of heaven are at the command of those who are seeking to save the lost. Angels will help you to reach the most careless and the most hardened. And when one is brought back to God, all heaven is made glad; seraphs and cherubs touch their golden harps, and sing praises to God and the Lamb for their mercy and loving-kindness to the children of men.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 197.

Christ came to the earth to suffer and die, that, through the exercise of faith in Him and the appropriation of His merits, we might become laborers

together with God. It was the Saviour's purpose that after He ascended to heaven to become man's intercessor, His followers should carry on the work that He had begun. Shall the human agent show no special interest in giving the light of the gospel message to those who sit in darkness? There are some who are willing to go to the ends of the earth in order to carry the light of truth to men, but God demands that every soul who knows the truth shall seek to win others to the love of the truth. If we are not willing to make special sacrifices in order to save souls that are ready to perish, how can we be counted worthy to enter into the city of God?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 103.

### **Wednesday, November 1: Our Excuses: Uncomfortable Confrontations**

When Jonah learned of God's purpose to spare the city that, notwithstanding its wickedness, had been led to repent in sackcloth and ashes, he should have been the first to rejoice because of God's amazing grace; but instead he allowed his mind to dwell upon the possibility of his being regarded as a false prophet. Jealous of his reputation, he lost sight of the infinitely greater value of the souls in that wretched city. The compassion shown by God toward the repentant Ninevites "displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry." "Was not this my saying," he inquired of the Lord, "when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil." Jonah 4:1, 2.

Once more he yielded to his inclination to question and doubt, and once more he was overwhelmed with discouragement. Losing sight of the interests of others, and feeling as if he would rather die than live to see the city spared, in his dissatisfaction he exclaimed, "Now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 271.

The lesson is for God's messengers today, when the cities of the nations are as verily in need of a knowledge of the attributes and purposes of the true God as were the Ninevites of old. Christ's ambassadors are to point men to the nobler world, which has largely been lost sight of. According to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, the only city that will endure is the city whose builder and maker is God. With the eye of faith man may behold the threshold of heaven, flushed with God's living glory. Through His ministering servants the Lord Jesus is calling upon men to strive with sanctified ambition to secure the immortal inheritance. He urges them to lay up treasure beside the throne of God.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 274.

In the gift of His Son for our redemption, God has shown how high a value He places upon every human soul, and He gives to no man liberty to speak contemptuously of another. We shall see faults and weaknesses in those about us, but God claims every soul as His property—His by creation,

and doubly His as purchased by the precious blood of Christ. All were created in His image, and even the most degraded are to be treated with respect and tenderness. God will hold us accountable for even a word spoken in contempt of one soul for whom Christ laid down His life. . . .

He who stands as a mouthpiece for God should not utter words which even the Majesty of heaven would not use when contending with Satan. We are to leave with God the work of judging and condemning.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 56, 57.

## **Thursday, November 2: Here Am I, Send Me**

Confused, humiliated, and unable to understand God's purpose in sparing Nineveh, Jonah nevertheless had fulfilled the commission given him to warn that great city; and though the event predicted did not come to pass, yet the message of warning was nonetheless from God. And it accomplished the purpose God designed it should. The glory of His grace was revealed among the heathen. Those who had long been sitting "in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron," "cried unto the Lord in their trouble," and "He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." "He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." Psalm 107:10, 13, 14, 20.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 272.

Let us remember that while the work we have to do may not be our choice, it is to be accepted as God's choice for us. Whether pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies nearest. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Ecclesiastes 9:10.

If the Lord desires us to bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be as pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or to Capernaum. He has reasons for sending us to the place toward which our feet have been directed. At that very place there may be someone in need of the help we can give. He who sent Philip to the Ethiopian councilor, Peter to the Roman centurion, and the little Israelitish maiden to the help of Naaman, the Syrian captain, sends men and women and youth today as His representatives to those in need of divine help and guidance.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 472, 473.

Our plans are not always God's plans. He may see that it is best for us and for His cause to refuse our very best intentions, as He did in the case of David. But of one thing we may be assured, He will bless and use in the advancement of His cause those who sincerely devote themselves and all they have to His glory. If He sees it best not to grant their desires He will counterbalance the refusal by giving them tokens of His love and entrusting to them another service.

In His loving care and interest for us, often He who understands us better

than we understand ourselves refuses to permit us selfishly to seek the gratification of our own ambition. He does not permit us to pass by the homely but sacred duties that lie next us. Often these duties afford the very training essential to prepare us for a higher work. Often our plans fail that God's plans for us may succeed.

We are never called upon to make a real sacrifice for God. Many things He asks us to yield to Him, but in doing this we are but giving up that which hinders us in the heavenward way. Even when called upon to surrender those things which in themselves are good, we may be sure that God is thus working out for us some higher good.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 473.

**Friday, November 3: For Further Reading**

*Messages to Young People*, “Work in Faith,” pp. 197, 198;  
*The Upward Look*, “Now Is the Time: Arise and Shine,” p. 171.

## Lesson 6

# Motivation and Preparation for Mission

### Sabbath Afternoon, November 4

Jesus would have those who are engaged in His service, not eager for rewards, nor feel that they must receive compensation for all that they do. The Lord would have our minds run in a different channel; for He sees not as man sees. He does not judge by appearances, but estimates a man by the sincerity of his heart. . . .

Paul kept in view the crown of life to be given him, and not only to be given to him, but to all who love His appearing. It was the victory gained through faith in Jesus Christ that made the crown so desirable. He ever exalted Jesus. All boasting of talent, of victory in ourselves, is out of place. “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: 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: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 339.

The Lord desires us to rest in Him without a question as to our measure of reward. When Christ abides in the soul, the thought of reward is not uppermost. This is not the motive that actuates our service. It is true that in a subordinate sense we should have respect to the recompense of reward. God desires us to appreciate His promised blessings. But He would not have us eager for rewards nor feel that for every duty we must receive compensation. We should not be so anxious to gain the reward as to do what is right, irrespective of all gain. Love to God and to our fellow men should be our motive.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 398.

Willing service and joyous self-denial . . . is the only spirit that should actuate the followers of Jesus. Our divine Master has given an example of how His disciples are to work. To those whom He bade, “Follow Me, and I



will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19), He offered no stated sum as a reward for their services. They were to share with Him in self-denial and sacrifice.

Not for the wages we receive are we to labor. The motive that prompts us to work for God should have in it nothing akin to self-serving. Unselfish devotion and a spirit of sacrifice have always been and always will be the first requisite of acceptable service. Our Lord and Master designs that not one thread of selfishness shall be woven into His work. Into our efforts we are to bring the tact and skill, the exactitude and wisdom, that the God of perfection required of the builders of the earthly tabernacle; yet in all our labors we are to remember that the greatest talents or the most splendid services are acceptable only when self is laid upon the altar, a living, consuming sacrifice. —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 64, 65.

## Sunday, November 5: To Share the Good News

Christ's first work on earth after His resurrection was to convince His disciples of His undiminished love and tender regard for them. To give them proof that He was their living Saviour, that He had broken the fetters of the tomb, and could no longer be held by the enemy death; to reveal that He had the same heart of love as when He was with them as their beloved Teacher, He appeared to them again and again. He would draw the bonds of love still closer around them. Go tell My brethren, He said, that they meet Me in Galilee.

As they heard this appointment, so definitely given, the disciples began to think of Christ's words to them foretelling His resurrection. But even now they did not rejoice. They could not cast off their doubt and perplexity. Even when the women declared that they had seen the Lord, the disciples would not believe. They thought them under an illusion.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 793, 794.

How many are still doing what these disciples did! How many echo Mary's despairing cry, "They have taken away the Lord, . . . and we know not where they have laid Him"! To how many might the Saviour's words be spoken, "Why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" He is close beside them, but their tear-blinded eyes do not discern Him. He speaks to them, but they do not understand.

Oh that the bowed head might be lifted, that the eyes might be opened to behold Him, that the ears might listen to His voice! "Go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen." Bid them look not to Joseph's new tomb, that was closed with a great stone, and sealed with the Roman seal. Christ is not there. Look not to the empty sepulcher. Mourn not as those who are hopeless and helpless. Jesus lives, and because He lives, we shall live also. From grateful hearts, from lips touched with holy fire, let the glad song ring out, Christ is risen! He lives to make intercession for us. Grasp this hope, and it will hold the soul like a sure, tried anchor. Believe, and thou shalt see the glory of God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 794.

We should cultivate kindness and courtesy in our association with those whom we meet. Let us strive always to present the truth in an easy way. This

truth means life, eternal life to the receiver. Study therefore to pass easily and courteously from subjects of a temporal nature to the spiritual and eternal. While walking by the way, or seated by the wayside, you may drop into some heart the seed of truth.

There is work to be done for our Master. There are souls who may by our influence be led to Christ. Who is ready to engage in this work with all the heart?—*Our High Calling*, p. 301.

## **Monday, November 6: A Prophetic Foundation**

Jesus remained with His disciples forty days, causing them joy and gladness of heart as He opened to them more fully the realities of the kingdom of God. He commissioned them to bear testimony to the things which they had seen and heard concerning His sufferings, death, and resurrection, that He had made a sacrifice for sin, and that all who would might come unto Him and find life. With faithful tenderness He told them that they would be persecuted and distressed; but they would find relief in recalling their experience and remembering the words which He had spoken to them. He told them that He had overcome the temptations of Satan and obtained the victory through trials and suffering. Satan could have no more power over Him, but would bring his temptations to bear more directly upon them and upon all who should believe in His name. But they could overcome as He had overcome. Jesus endowed His disciples with power to work miracles, and told them that although they should be persecuted by wicked men, He would from time to time send His angels to deliver them; their lives could not be taken until their mission should be accomplished; then they might be required to seal with their blood the testimonies which they had borne.—*Early Writings*, p. 189.

Those who have Jesus abiding in the heart by faith, have actually received the Holy Spirit. Every individual who receives Jesus as his personal Saviour, just as surely receives the Holy Spirit, to be his Counselor, Sanctifier, Guide, and Witness. The more closely the believer walks with God, the clearer his witness, and, as a sure result, the more powerful will be the influence of his testimony upon others of a Saviour's love; the more he will give evidence that he prizes the Word of God. It is his meat, it is his drink, to satisfy the thirsty soul. He prizes the privilege of learning the will of God from His Word.—*The Upward Look*, p. 19.

Belief in [Christ] is essential to spiritual life. Those who feast on the Word never hunger, never thirst, never desire any higher or more exalted good.

The truest, the most exalted, knowledge is found in the Word of God. In its simplicity there is eloquence. . . .

The Bible is our guide in the safe paths that lead to eternal life. God has

inspired men to write that which will present the truth to us, which will attract, and which, if practised, will enable the receiver to obtain moral power to rank among the most highly educated minds. The minds of all who make the Word of God their study will enlarge. Far more than any other study, this is of a nature to increase the powers of comprehension, and endow every faculty with new vigor. It brings us into close connection with all heaven, imparting wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding. The gospel is adapted for spiritual food, to satisfy man's spiritual appetite. In every case it is just what man needs.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 70.

## **Tuesday, November 7: Waiting and Mission**

[Christ's] anxious followers gladly listened to His teachings, eagerly feasting upon every word which fell from His holy lips. Now they certainly knew that He was the Saviour of the world. His words sank deep into their hearts, and they sorrowed that they must soon be parted from their heavenly Teacher and no longer hear comforting, gracious words from His lips. But again their hearts were warmed with love and exceeding joy, as Jesus told them that He would go and prepare mansions for them and come again and receive them, that they might be ever with Him. He promised also to send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to guide them into all truth. "And He lifted up His hands, and blessed them."—*Early Writings*, p. 190.

[We] must have times set apart for meditation and prayer and for receiving spiritual refreshing. We do not value the power and efficacy of prayer as we should. Prayer and faith will do what no power on earth can accomplish. . . .

The temptations to which we are daily exposed make prayer a necessity. Dangers beset every path. Those who are seeking to rescue others from vice and ruin are especially exposed to temptation. In constant contact with evil, they need a strong hold upon God lest they themselves be corrupted. . . .

When we permit our communion with God to be broken, our defense is departed from us. Not all your good purposes and good intentions will enable you to withstand evil. You must be men and women of prayer. Your petitions must not be faint, occasional, and fitful, but earnest, persevering, and constant. It is not always necessary to bow upon your knees in order to pray. Cultivate the habit of talking with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking, and when you are busy with your daily labor. Let the heart be continually uplifted in silent petition for help, for light, for strength, for knowledge. Let every breath be a prayer.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 509, 510.

Those who are of the household of faith should never neglect the assembling of themselves together; for this is God's appointed means of leading His children into unity, in order that in Christian love and fellowship they may help, strengthen, and encourage one another.

As brethren of our Lord, we are called with a holy calling to a holy, happy life. Having entered the narrow path of obedience, let us refresh our minds by communion with one another and with God. As we see the day of God approaching, let us meet often to study His Word and to exhort one another to be faithful unto the end. These earthly assemblies are God's appointed means by which we have opportunity to speak with one another and to gather all the help possible to prepare, in the right way, to receive in the heavenly assemblies the fulfillment of the pledges of our inheritance.—*Our High Calling*, p. 166.

### **Wednesday, November 8: “Whom You Crucified”**

On the day of Pentecost the Infinite One revealed Himself in power to the church. By His Holy Spirit He descended from the heights of heaven as a rushing mighty wind to the room in which the disciples were assembled. Words of penitence and confession of sin were mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven was bending low to behold and adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love.

The apostles and disciples were lost in wonder, and exclaimed, “Herein is love!” They grasped the imparted gift. Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth testifying, God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to add to the church such as should be saved.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 344.

Three thousand souls were added to the church. The apostles spoke by the power of the Holy Ghost; and their words could not be controverted, for they were confirmed by mighty miracles, wrought by them through the outpouring of the Spirit of God. The disciples were themselves astonished at the results of this visitation, and the quick and abundant harvest of souls. All the people were filled with amazement. . . .

The arguments of the apostles alone, although clear and convincing, would not have removed the prejudice of the Jews which had withstood so much evidence. But the Holy Ghost sent those arguments home with divine power to their hearts. They were as sharp arrows of the Almighty, convicting them of their terrible guilt in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory. “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 245.

Peculiar and rapid changes will soon take place, and God’s people are to be endowed with the Holy Spirit, so that with heavenly wisdom they may



meet the emergencies of this age, and as far as possible counteract the demoralizing movements of the world. If the church is not asleep, if the followers of Christ watch and pray, they may have light to comprehend and appreciate the movements of the enemy.

The end is near! God calls upon the church to set in order the things that remain. Workers together with God, you are empowered by the Lord to take others with you into the kingdom. You are to be God's living agents, channels of light to the world, and round about you are angels of heaven with their commission from Christ to sustain, strengthen, and uphold you in working for the salvation of souls.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 436.

## **Thursday, November 9: A Picture of the Early Church**

After the descent of the Holy Spirit the disciples went forth to proclaim a risen Saviour, their one desire the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of the communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice for the truth's sake. In their daily association with one another they revealed the love that Christ had commanded them to reveal. By unselfish words and deeds they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.

The believers were ever to cherish the love that filled the hearts of the apostles after the descent of the Holy Spirit. They were to go forward in willing obedience to the new commandment: "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34. So closely were they to be united to Christ that they would be enabled to fulfill His requirements. The power of a Saviour who could justify them by His righteousness was to be magnified. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 241.

The apostle [Paul] exhorts his brethren to manifest in their lives the power of the truth which he had presented to them. 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?

When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the early church, the brethren loved one another. "They . . . did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people: and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Those primitive Christians were few in numbers, without wealth or honor, yet they exerted a mighty influence. The light of the world shone out from them. They were a terror to evildoers wherever their character and their doctrines were known. For this cause they were hated by the wicked and persecuted even unto death.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 239.

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 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.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 510.

**Friday, November 10: For Further Reading**

*That I May Know Him*, “He Is Coming Again!” p. 348;

*Reflecting Christ*, “Glorify God in Our Body and Spirit,” p. 138.

## Lesson 7

# Mission to My Neighbor

## Sabbath Afternoon, November 11

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

If there were not another text in the Bible, this statement carries sufficient light and knowledge and assurance for every soul. The lawyer had answered his own question, but willing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” (Verse 29). Then by the parable of the Good Samaritan, Christ showed who is our neighbor, and gives us an example of the love we should manifest toward those suffering and in need. The priest and Levite, whose duty it was to minister to the needs of the stranger, passed by on the other side.—*The Upward Look*, p. 215.

A true disciple of Christ will seek to imitate the Pattern. His love will lead to perfect obedience. He will study to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. He whose heart is still defiled with sin cannot be zealous of good works; and is not careful to abstain from evil, is not vigilant and watchful over his own motives and conduct, is not jealous over his unruly tongue; he is not careful to deny self and lift the cross of Christ. These poor, deceived souls fail to keep the first four precepts of the decalogue, defining the duty of man to God, neither do they keep the last six commandments, defining the duty of man to his fellow men.

The fruits of the Spirit, ruling in the heart and controlling the life, are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, bowels of mercies, and humbleness of mind. True believers walk after the Spirit, and the Spirit of God dwells in

them.—*This Day With God*, p. 291.

There are practical lessons in the Word of God. That Word teaches living, holy principles, which prompt men to do unto others as they would have others do unto them, principles which they are to bring into the daily life here, and carry with them into the school above. The altar and the plough are the experiences for all who seek eternal life. We know altogether too little of the greatness of the love and compassion of God. . . . Heaven is our home. Our citizenship is above, and our lives must not be devoted to a world which is soon to be destroyed. We need the Word of God revealed in living characters. What pure, excellent language is found in the Word of God! What elevating, ennobling principles!—*The Upward Look*, p. 215.

## Sunday, November 12: The Question of Questions

The question which the lawyer put to Christ was one of vital consequence. The Pharisees who had prompted the lawyer to ask this question were expecting the Lord Jesus to answer it in such a way that they could find something against Him whereby they might accuse and condemn Him before the people. The self-possession of Christ, the wisdom and authority by which He spake, was something they could not interpret.

When this question was asked by the lawyer, Christ knew that the suggestion came from His bitterest enemies, who were setting a trap to catch Him in His words. The Lord Jesus responded to the question by placing the burden upon the lawyer to answer his own question before that crowd. “What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live” (Luke 10:26–28). Obedience to the commandments of God is the price of eternal life.—*The Upward Look*, p. 221.

Let all remember that there is not a motive in the heart of any man that the Lord does not clearly see. The motives of each one are weighed as carefully as if the destiny of the human agent depended upon this one result. We need a connection with divine power, that we may have an increase of clear light and an understanding of how to reason from cause to effect. We need to have the powers of the understanding cultivated, by our being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Let each one consider carefully the solemn truth, God in heaven is true, and there is not a design, however intricate, nor a motive, however carefully hidden, that He does not clearly understand.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1160.

Do not allow anything to draw your attention from the question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25). This is a life and death question, which we must each settle for eternity. Let the mind be weighted with the importance of the solemn truth which we possess. . . .

God desires men and women to think soberly and candidly. They are to ascend to a higher and still higher grade, commanding a wider and still wider horizon. Looking unto Jesus, they are to be changed into His image. They are to spend their time in searching for the deep, everlasting truths of heaven. . . . And as they learn of Him, their motives and sympathies become firm and unchanging; for the impressions made by the All-wise are substantial and enduring. The living water, which Christ gives, is not like a surface spring, which babbles for a short time, and then dries up. The living water springs up unto everlasting life—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 171, 172.



## Monday, November 13: Jesus' Method and Response

Everywhere men are unsatisfied. They long for something to supply the need of the soul. Only One can meet that want. The need of the world, "The Desire of all nations," is Christ. The divine grace which He alone can impart, is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul.

Jesus did not convey the idea that merely one draft of the water of life would suffice the receiver. He who tastes of the love of Christ will continually long for more; but he seeks for nothing else. The riches, honors, and pleasures of the world do not attract him. The constant cry of his heart is, More of Thee. And He who reveals to the soul its necessity is waiting to satisfy its hunger and thirst. Every human resource and dependence will fail. The cisterns will be emptied, the pools become dry; but our Redeemer is an inexhaustible fountain. We may drink, and drink again, and ever find a fresh supply. He in whom Christ dwells has within himself the fountain of blessing,—“a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” From this source he may draw strength and grace sufficient for all his needs.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 187.

[Christ] will make plain His word to all who seek Him in sincerity of heart. Those who study the word of God with hearts open to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will not remain in darkness as to the meaning of the word. “If any man willeth to do His will,” Christ said, “he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself.” John 7:17, R.V. All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul temple, and will be revealed to others as the bright shining of a lamp on a dark path.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 35.

God's messengers are commissioned to take up the very work that Christ did while on this earth. They are to give themselves to every line of ministry that He carried on. With earnestness and sincerity they are to tell men of the unsearchable riches and the immortal treasures of heaven. They are to be

filled with the Holy Spirit. They are to repeat Heaven's offers of peace and pardon. They are to point to the gates of the city of God, saying, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).—*This Day With God*, p. 30.

## **Tuesday, November 14: To Inherit Eternal Life**

The lawyer was not satisfied with the position and works of the Pharisees. He had been studying the scriptures with a desire to learn their real meaning. He had a vital interest in the matter, and he asked in sincerity, "What shall I do?" In his answer as to the requirements of the law, he passed by all the mass of ceremonial and ritualistic precepts. For these he claimed no value, but presented the two great principles on which hang all the law and the prophets. The Saviour's commendation of this answer placed Him on vantage ground with the rabbis. They could not condemn Him for sanctioning that which had been advanced by an expositor of the law. . . .

Christ knew that no one could obey the law in his own strength. He desired to lead the lawyer to clearer and more critical research that he might find the truth. Only by accepting the virtue and grace of Christ can we keep the law. Belief in the propitiation for sin enables fallen man to love God with his whole heart and his neighbor as himself.

The lawyer knew that he had kept neither the first four nor the last six commandments. He was convicted under Christ's searching words, but instead of confessing his sin he tried to excuse it. Rather than acknowledge the truth, he endeavored to show how difficult of fulfillment the commandment is. Thus he hoped both to parry conviction and to vindicate himself in the eyes of the people.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 377, 378.

In all His lessons, Christ sought to impress upon the minds and hearts of His hearers the principles which underlie His great standard of righteousness. He taught them that if they would keep God's commandments, love for God and for their fellow men must be manifested in their daily life. He sought to instill into their hearts the love He felt for humanity. Thus He sowed the seeds of truth, the fruits of which will produce a rich harvest of holiness and beauty of character. The holy influence will not only be far-reaching while time shall last, but its results will be felt throughout eternity. It will sanctify the actions, and have a purifying influence wherever it exists.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 61.

Any neglect of duty to the needy and to the afflicted is a neglect of duty to

Christ in the person of His saints. When the cases of all come in review before God, the question What did they profess? is never asked, but, What have they done? Have they been doers of the Word? Have they lived for themselves? or have they been exercised in works of benevolence, in deeds of kindness, in love preferring others before themselves, and denying themselves that they might bless others? If the record shows that this has been their life, that their characters have been marked with tenderness, self-denial, and benevolence, they will receive the blessed assurance and benediction from Christ, "Well done."—*That I May Know Him*, p. 334.

## **Wednesday, November 15: Loving Others as We Love Ourselves**

To leave a suffering neighbor unrelieved is a breach of the law of God. He who loves God will not only love his fellow men, but will regard with tender compassion the creatures which God has made. When the Spirit of God is in man it leads him to relieve rather than to create suffering. We are to care for every case of suffering, and to look upon ourselves as God's agents to relieve the needy to the very uttermost of our ability. We are to be laborers together with God. There are some who manifest great affection for their relatives, for their friends and favorites, who yet fail to be kind and considerate to those who need tender sympathy, who need kindness and love. With earnest heart, let us inquire, Who is my neighbor? Our neighbors are not merely our neighbors and special friends, are not simply those who belong to our church or who think as we do. Our neighbors are the whole human family. We are to do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. We are to give to the world an exhibition of what it means to carry out the law of God. We are to love God supremely and our neighbors as ourselves. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 52.

False teachers had brought to the Galatians doctrines that were opposed to the gospel of Christ. Paul sought to expose and correct these errors. . . . He therefore sought to impress upon his brethren the importance of trying to help one another in love. He declared that all the requirements of the law setting forth our duty to our fellow men are fulfilled in love to one another. . . . They must by constant prayer seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which would lead them to love and unity.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 243.

When the law of God is written in the heart it will be exhibited in a pure and holy life. The commandments of God are no dead letter. They are spirit and life, bringing the imaginations and even the thoughts into subjection to the will of Christ. The heart in which they are written will be kept with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. All who love Jesus and keep the commandments will seek to avoid the very appearance of evil; not because they are constrained thus to do, but because they are copying a pure model, and feel averse to everything contrary to the law written in their hearts. They

will not feel self-sufficient, but their trust will be in God, who alone is able to keep them from sin and impurity. The atmosphere surrounding them is pure; they will not corrupt their own souls or the souls of others. It is their pleasure to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God.—*This Day With God*, p. 146.

## Thursday, November 16: The Good Samaritan Story Today

There are many who ask, as did the lawyer, “Who is my neighbor?” . . . Everyone who is in suffering need is our neighbor. Every straying son and daughter of Adam, who has been ensnared by the enemy of souls, and bound in the slavery of wrong habits that blight the God-given manhood or womanhood, is my neighbor. . . .

We are to think and care for others who need our love, our tenderness, and care. We should ever remember that we are representatives of Christ, and that we are to share the blessings that He gives, not with those who can recompense us again, but with those who will appreciate the gifts that will supply their temporal and spiritual necessities. . . .

Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 252.

Without a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour it is impossible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. We cannot give to others that which we do not ourselves possess. It is in proportion to our own devotion and consecration to Christ that we exert an influence for the blessing and uplifting of mankind. If there is no actual service, no genuine love, no reality of experience, there is no power to help, no connection with heaven, no savor of Christ in the life. . . . “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing.” 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 , A.R.V.

When love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not because of favors received from them, but because love is the principle of action. Love

modifies the character, governs the impulses, subdues enmity, and ennobles the affections. This love is as broad as the universe, and is in harmony with that of the angel workers. Cherished in the heart, it sweetens the entire life and sheds its blessing upon all around.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 37, 38.



**Friday, November 17: For Further Reading**

*Faith and Works*, “What God Requires,” pp. 52, 53;

*The Acts of the Apostles*, “Called to Reach a Higher Standard,” pp. 318–320.

## Lesson 8

# Mission to the Needy

### Sabbath Afternoon, November 18

The Saviour taught this principle [the golden rule] to make mankind happy, not unhappy; for in no other way can happiness come. God desires men and women to . . . improve their higher powers by doing the work He has entrusted to mankind—the work of searching out and relieving the necessities of their fellow men. Man should not work for his own selfish interest, but for the interest of everyone about him, blessing others by his influence and kindly deeds. This purpose of God is exemplified in Christ's life.

Seize every opportunity to contribute to the happiness of those around you, sharing with them your affection. Words of kindness, looks of sympathy, expression of appreciation, would to many a struggling, lonely one be as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. A word of cheer, an act of kindness, would go far to lighten the burdens that are resting heavily upon weary shoulders. It is in unselfish ministry that true happiness is found. And every word and deed of such service is recorded in the books of heaven as done to Christ. Live in the sunshine of Christ's love. Then your influence will bless the world.—*My Life Today*, p. 165.

We are to follow the example set by Christ, and make Him our pattern, until we shall have the same love for others as He has manifested for us. He seeks to impress us with this profound lesson of love. If your hearts have been given to selfishness, let Christ imbue you with His love. He desires that we shall love Him fully, and encourages, yes, even commands, that we shall love others as He has given us an example. He has made love the badge of our discipleship. This is the measurement to which you are to reach,—“Love one another; as I have loved you.” What height, what depth and breadth of love! This love is not simply to embrace a few favorites, it is to reach to the lowliest and humblest of God's creatures. Jesus says, “Inasmuch as ye have

done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 147.

Do you in your words, in your spirit, in your actions, resemble Christ? If in word and spirit you represent the character of Christ, then you are Christians; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. The tongue will testify of the principles that characterize the life; it is the sure test of what power controls the heart. We may judge our own spirit and principles by the words that proceed from our lips. The tongue is always to be under the control of the Holy Spirit.

When poor, wounded, bruised souls come to you for words of hope, you are to speak to them the words of Christ. Do you refuse to give them pleasant, courteous, kind words? Those who speak as Christ spoke will never plant bitter words like barbed arrows in the wounded soul.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 148.

## **Sunday, November 19: The Faith of Friends**

God estimates man not by the circumstances of his birth, not by his position or wealth, not by his advantages in educational lines, but by the price paid for his redemption. . . . However misshapen has been his character, although he may have been counted as an outcast among men, the man who permits the grace of Christ to enter his soul will be reformed in character and will be raised up from his condition of guilt, degradation, and wretchedness. God has made every provision in order that the lost one may become His child. The frailest human being may be elevated, ennobled, refined, and sanctified by the grace of God. . . .

[Those] who are workers together with God, who are filled with divine compassion, will see and estimate men in the same way that God sees and estimates them. Whatever may be the nationality or color, whatever may be the social condition, the missionary for God will look upon all men as the purchase of the blood of Christ, and will understand that there is no caste with God. No one is to be looked upon with indifference or to be regarded as unimportant, for every soul has been purchased with an infinite price.—*The Southern Work*, p. 31.

Again and again the bearers of the paralytic tried to push their way through the crowd, but in vain. The sick man looked about him in unutterable anguish. When the longed-for help was so near, how could he relinquish hope? At his suggestion his friends bore him to the top of the house and, breaking up the roof, let him down at the feet of Jesus. The discourse was interrupted. The Saviour looked upon the mournful countenance, and saw the pleading eyes fixed upon Him. He understood the case; He had drawn to Himself that perplexed and doubting spirit. While the paralytic was yet at home, the Saviour had brought conviction to his conscience. When he repented of his sins, and believed in the power of Jesus to make him whole, the life-giving mercies of the Saviour had first blessed his longing heart. Jesus had watched the first glimmer of faith grow into a belief that He was the sinner's only helper, and had seen it grow stronger with every effort to come into His presence.

Now, in words that fell like music on the sufferer's ear, the Saviour said,

“Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 268.

A great work is to be done, and those who know the truth should make mighty intercession for help. . . .

The Lord demands that in His servants shall be found a spirit that is quick to feel the value of souls, quick to discern the duties to be done, quick to respond to the obligations that the Lord lays upon them. There must be a devotion that will regard no earthly interest of sufficient value to take the place of the work to be done in winning souls to a knowledge of the truth. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 123.

## Monday, November 20: Christ's Method Alone

The sick man was lying on his mat and occasionally lifting his head to gaze at the pool, when a tender, compassionate face bent over him, and the words, "Wilt thou be made whole?" arrested his attention. Hope came to his heart. . . .

Jesus bids him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." With a new hope the sick man looks upon Jesus. The expression of His countenance, the tones of His voice, are like no other. Love and power seem to breathe from His very presence. The cripple's faith takes hold upon Christ's word. Without question he sets his will to obey, and, as he does this, his whole body responds.

Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. Springing to his feet, he goes on his way with firm, free step, praising God and rejoicing in his new-found strength. . . .

Never feel that Christ is far away. He is always near. His loving presence surrounds you. Seek Him as One who desires to be found of you. He desires you not only to touch His garments, but to walk with Him in constant communion.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 83–85.

There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit. . . .

We are to encourage the sick and suffering to look to Jesus and live. Let the workers keep Christ, the Great Physician, constantly before those to whom disease of body and soul has brought discouragement. Point them to the One who can heal both physical and spiritual disease. Tell them of the One who is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. Encourage them to place themselves in the care of Him who gave His life to make it possible for them to have life eternal. Talk of His love; tell of His power to save.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 143, 144.

Christ [teaches] that we should regard ourselves as inseparably bound to our Father in heaven. Whatever our position, we are dependent upon God, who holds all destinies in His hands. He has appointed us our work, and has endowed us with faculties and means for that work. So long as we surrender the will to God, and trust in His strength and wisdom, we shall be guided in safe paths, to fulfill our appointed part in His great plan—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 209.

## **Tuesday, November 21: Refugees and Immigrants**

By our churches there is a work to be done of which many have little idea, a work as yet almost untouched. “I was an hungered,” Christ says, “and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.” Matthew 25:35, 36. Some think that if they give money to this work, it is all they are required to do; but this is an error. . . . [A]ccording to their strength and opportunities, personal service is required of all.

The work of gathering in the needy, the oppressed, the suffering, the destitute, is the very work which every church that believes the truth for this time should long since have been doing. We are to show the tender sympathy of the Samaritan in supplying physical necessities, feeding the hungry, bringing the poor that are cast out to our homes, gathering from God every day grace and strength that will enable us to reach to the very depths of human misery and help those who cannot possibly help themselves. In doing this work we have a favorable opportunity to set forth Christ the crucified One.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 275, 276.

God has given a special command that we should regard the stranger, the outcast, and the poor souls who are weak in moral power. Many who appear wholly indifferent to religious things are in heart longing for rest and peace. Although they may have sunken to the very depths of sin, there is a possibility of saving them.

Christ’s servants are to follow His example. As He went from place to place, He comforted the suffering and healed the sick. Then He placed before them the great truths in regard to His kingdom. This is the work of His followers. As you relieve the sufferings of the body, you will find ways for ministering to the wants of the soul. You can point to the uplifted Saviour, and tell of the love of the great Physician, who alone has power to restore.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 233.

Christ for our sakes became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich. He made a sacrifice that He might provide a home for pilgrims



and strangers in the world seeking for a better country, even an heavenly. Shall those who are subjects of His grace, who are expecting to be heirs of immortality, refuse, or even feel reluctant, to share their homes with the homeless and needy? Shall we, who are disciples of Jesus, refuse strangers an entrance to our doors? . . .

I am daily pained with exhibitions of selfishness among our people. There is an alarming absence of love and care for those who are entitled to it. . . . Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good—waiting to see if we will bless others.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 27, 28.

## **Wednesday, November 22: To Help the Hurting**

God requires His people to be far more pitiful and considerate of the unfortunate than they are. God requires that the same consideration which should be given to the widow and fatherless be given to the blind and to those suffering under the affliction of other physical infirmities. Disinterested benevolence is very rare in this age of the world. It is strange that professed Christian men should disregard the plain, positive teachings of the Word of God and feel no compunction of conscience. God places upon them the responsibility of caring for the unfortunate, the blind, the lame, the widow, and the fatherless; but many make no effort to regard it.

There is a great work to be done in our world, and as we approach the close of earth's history, it does not lessen in the least degree; but when the perfect love of God is in the heart, wonderful things will be done.—*My Life Today*, p. 243.

The Lord has a great work for us to do, and He invites us to look to Him, to trust in Him, to walk with Him, to talk with Him. He invites us to make an unreserved surrender of all that we have and are to Him, that when He shall call upon us to sacrifice for Him, we may be ready and willing to obey. We shall enjoy the fullness of divine grace only as we give all to Christ. We shall know the meaning of true happiness only as we keep the fire burning on the altar of sacrifice. God will bequeath the most in the future to those who have done the most in the present. Each day, under different circumstances, He tries us; and in each truehearted endeavor He chooses His workers, not because they are perfect, but because they are willing to work unselfishly for Him.—*Our High Calling*, p. 191.

While the world needs sympathy, while it needs the prayers and assistance of God's people, while it needs to see Christ in the lives of His followers, the people of God are equally in need of opportunities that draw out their sympathies, give efficiency to their prayers, and develop in them a character like that of the divine pattern.

It is to provide these opportunities that God has placed among us the poor, the unfortunate, the sick, and the suffering. They are Christ's legacy to His

church, and they are to be cared for as He would care for them. In this way God takes away the dross and purifies the gold, giving us that culture of heart and character which we need. . . .

In placing among us the poor and the suffering, the Lord is testing us to reveal to us what is in our hearts. . . .

The world will be convinced not so much by what the pulpit teaches as by what the church lives. The preacher announces the theory of the gospel, but the practical piety of the church demonstrates its power.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 324.

## Thursday, November 23: Greater Love

How did Christ manifest His love for poor mortals? By the sacrifice of His own glory, His own riches, and even His most precious life. Christ consented to a life of humiliation and great suffering. He submitted to the cruel mockings of an infuriated, murderous multitude, and to the most agonizing death upon the cross. Said Christ: “This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” We give evidence of being the friends of Christ when we manifest implicit obedience to His will. . . . Who are obeying the commandment to love one another as Christ has loved them? [We] must have a firmer, deeper, and more unselfish love than [we] have ever yet possessed, if [we] obey the commandment of Christ.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 690.

Our love is frequently selfish, for we confine it to prescribed limits. When we come into close union and fellowship with Christ, our love and sympathy and our works of benevolence will reach down deeper and will widen and strengthen with exercise. The love and interest of Christ’s followers must be as broad as the world. Those who live merely for “me and mine” will fail of heaven. . . .

There are those all around you who have woes, who need words of sympathy, love, and tenderness, and our humble, pitying prayers. Some are suffering under the iron hand of poverty, some with disease, and others with heartaches, despondency, and gloom. Like Job, you should be eyes to the blind and feet to the lame, and you should inquire into the cause which you know not and search it out with the object in view to relieve their necessities and help just where they most need help.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 529, 530.

The more closely we resemble our Saviour in character, the greater will be our love toward those for whom He died. Christians who manifest a spirit of unselfish love for one another are bearing a testimony for Christ which unbelievers can neither gainsay nor resist. It is impossible to estimate the

power of such an example. Nothing will so successfully defeat the devices of Satan and his emissaries, nothing will so build up the Redeemer's kingdom, as will the love of Christ manifested by the members of the church. . . .

No matter how high his profession, he whose heart is not imbued with love for God and for his fellow men is not a disciple of Christ. Though he should possess great faith, and even have power to work miracles, yet without love his faith would be worthless. He might display great liberality, but should he from some other motive than genuine love bestow all his goods to feed the poor, the act would not commend him to the favor of God. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 167, 168.

**Friday, November 24: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, “My Spirituality Strengthened and My Health Improves,”  
p. 246;

*The Ministry of Healing*, “Healing of the Soul,” pp. 73–79.

## Lesson 9

# Mission to the Powerful

### Sabbath Afternoon, November 25

Those who belong to the higher ranks of society are to be sought out with tender affection and brotherly regard. Men in business life, in high positions of trust, men with large inventive faculties and scientific insight, men of genius, teachers of the gospel whose minds have not been called to the special truths for this time—these should be the first to hear the call. To them the invitation must be given. . . .

Those who stand high in the world for their education, wealth, or calling, are seldom addressed personally in regard to the interests of the soul. Many Christian workers hesitate to approach these classes. But this should not be. If a man were drowning, we would not stand by and see him perish because he was a lawyer, a merchant, or a judge. If we saw persons rushing over a precipice, we would not hesitate to urge them back, whatever might be their position or calling. Neither should we hesitate to warn men of the peril of the soul.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 230.

There are many . . . men whom [God] desires to connect with His church. Their sympathies are with the Lord's people. But the ties that bind them to the world hold them firmly. It requires moral courage for these men to take their position with the lowly ones. Special effort should be made for these souls, who are in so great danger because of their responsibilities and associations.

Much is said concerning our duty to the neglected poor; should not some attention be given to the neglected rich? Many look upon this class as hopeless, and they do little to open the eyes of those, who, blinded and dazed by the glitter of earthly glory, have lost eternity out of their reckoning. Thousands of wealthy men have gone to their graves unwarned. But indifferent as they may appear, many among the rich are soul-burdened. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth

abundance with increase.” Ecclesiastes 5:10.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 209, 210.

There is another danger to which the wealthy are especially exposed. . . . Multitudes who are prosperous in the world, and who never stoop to the common forms of vice, are yet brought to destruction through the love of riches. The cup most difficult to carry is not the cup that is empty, but the cup that is full to the brim. It is this that needs to be most carefully balanced. Affliction and adversity bring disappointment and sorrow; but it is prosperity that is most dangerous to spiritual life. . . .

Often prayer is solicited for those who are suffering from illness or adversity; but our prayers are most needed by the men entrusted with prosperity and influence. . . .

[The] men who stand, as it were, on a lofty pinnacle, and who, because of their position, are supposed to possess great wisdom—these are in greatest peril. Unless such men make God their dependence, they will surely fall. —*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 211, 212.



## **Sunday, November 26: Nebuchadnezzar**

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. The pride of man hinders him from accepting the provisions of salvation. But human merit will not admit a soul into the presence of God. That which will make a man acceptable to God is the imparted grace of Christ through faith in His name. No dependence can be placed in works or in happy flights of feelings as evidence that men are chosen of God; for the elect are chosen through Christ.

Jesus says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37. When the repenting sinner comes to Christ, conscious of his guilt and unworthiness, realizing that he is deserving of punishment, but relying on the mercy and love of Christ, he will not be turned away.—*Our High Calling*, p. 78.

In Daniel's life, the desire to glorify God was the most powerful of all motives. He realized that when standing in the presence of men of influence, a failure to acknowledge God as the source of his wisdom would have made him an unfaithful steward. And his constant recognition of the God of heaven before kings, princes, and statesmen, detracted not one iota from his influence. King Nebuchadnezzar, before whom Daniel so often honored the name of God, was finally thoroughly converted, and learned to "praise and extol and honour the King of heaven."

The king upon the Babylonian throne became a witness for God, giving his testimony, warm and eloquent, from a grateful heart that was partaking of the mercy and grace, the righteousness and peace, of the divine nature.—Ellen G. White Comments in, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1170.

In the work for this class [the rich and powerful] many discouragements will be presented, many heartsickening revelations will be made. But all things are possible with God. He can and will work through human agencies upon the minds of men whose lives have been devoted to money getting.

There are miracles to be wrought in genuine conversion, miracles that are not now discerned. The greatest men of the earth are not beyond the power of a wonder-working God. If those who are workers together with Him will do their duty bravely and faithfully, God will convert men who occupy responsible places, men of intellect and influence. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, many will be led to accept the divine principles.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 215, 216.

## Monday, November 27: Naaman

Few realize the full meaning of the words that Christ spoke when, in the synagogue at Nazareth, He announced Himself as the Anointed One. He declared His mission to comfort, bless, and save the sorrowing and the sinful; and then, seeing that pride and unbelief controlled the hearts of His hearers, He reminded them that in time past God had turned away from His chosen people because of their unbelief and rebellion, and had manifested Himself to those in heathen lands who had not rejected the light of heaven. The widow of Sarepta and Naaman the Syrian had lived up to all the light they had; hence they were accounted more righteous than God's chosen people who had backslidden from Him and had sacrificed principle to convenience and worldly honor.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 416.

Some are especially fitted to work for the higher classes. These should seek wisdom from God to know how to reach these persons, to have not merely a casual acquaintance with them, but by personal effort and living faith to awaken them to the needs of the soul, to lead them to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Many suppose that in order to reach the higher classes, a manner of life and method of work must be adopted that will be suited to their fastidious tastes. An appearance of wealth, costly edifices, expensive dress, equipage, and surroundings, conformity to worldly customs, the artificial polish of fashionable society, classical culture, the graces of oratory, are thought to be essential. This is an error. The way of worldly policy is not God's way of reaching the higher classes. That which will reach them effectually is a consistent, unselfish presentation of the gospel of Christ.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 213.

The truth should be presented with divine tact, gentleness, and tenderness. It should come from a heart that has been softened and made sympathetic. We need to have close communion with God, lest self rise up . . . and we pour forth a torrent of words that are unbefitting, that are not as dew or as the still showers that revive the withering plants. Let our words be gentle as we seek to win souls. God will be wisdom to him who seeks for wisdom from a

divine source. We are to seek opportunities on every hand, we are to watch unto prayer, and be ready always to give a reason for the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. Lest we shall impress unfavorably one soul for whom Christ died we should keep our hearts uplifted to God, so that when the opportunity presents itself, we may have the right word to speak at the right time. If you thus undertake work for God, the Spirit of God will be your helper. The Holy Spirit will apply the word spoken in love for the soul. The truth will have quickening power when spoken under the influence of the grace of Christ. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 400.

## **Tuesday, November 28: Witnessing to the Learned: Nicodemus**

The success of the gospel message does not depend upon learned speeches, eloquent testimonies, or deep arguments. It depends upon the simplicity of the message and its adaptation to the souls that are hungering for the bread of life. “What shall I do to be saved?”—this is the want of the soul.

Thousands can be reached in the most simple and humble way. The most intellectual, those who are looked upon as the world’s most gifted men and women, are often refreshed by the simple words of one who loves God, and who can speak of that love as naturally as the worldling speaks of the things that interest him most deeply.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 231, 232.

Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and with others had been stirred by the teaching of Jesus. As he had witnessed Christ’s wonderful works, the conviction had fastened itself upon his mind that this was the Sent of God. Too proud openly to acknowledge himself in sympathy with the Galilean Teacher, he had sought a secret interview. In this interview Jesus had unfolded to him the plan of salvation and His mission to the world, yet still Nicodemus had hesitated. He hid the truth in his heart, and for three years there was little apparent fruit. . . . When at last Christ had been lifted up on the cross, Nicodemus remembered the words that He had spoken to him in the night interview on the Mount of Olives, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up” (John 3:14); and he saw in Jesus the world’s Redeemer. . . .

Now, when the Jews were trying to destroy the infant church, Nicodemus came forward in its defense. No longer cautious and questioning, he encouraged the faith of the disciples and used his wealth in helping to sustain the church at Jerusalem and in advancing the work of the gospel. Those who in other days had paid him reverence, now scorned and persecuted him, and he became poor in this world’s goods; yet he faltered not in the defense of his faith.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 104, 105.

The experience of the apostle Paul in meeting the philosophers of Athens has a lesson for us. In presenting the gospel before the court of the

Areopagus, Paul met logic with logic, science with science, philosophy with philosophy. The wisest of his hearers were astonished and silenced. His words could not be controverted. But the effort bore little fruit. Few were led to accept the gospel. Henceforth Paul adopted a different manner of labor. He avoided elaborate arguments and discussion of theories, and in simplicity pointed men and women to Christ as the Saviour of sinners. . . .

Let those who work for the higher classes bear themselves with true dignity, remembering that angels are their companions. Let them keep the treasure house of mind and heart filled with, "It is written." Hang in memory's hall the precious words of Christ. They are to be valued far above gold or silver.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 214, 215.

## **Wednesday, November 29: Mission to the Rich**

There is a work to be done for the wealthy. They need to be awakened to their responsibility as those entrusted with the gifts of heaven. They need to be reminded that they must give an account to Him who shall judge the living and the dead. The wealthy man needs your labor in the love and fear of God. Too often he trusts in his riches, and feels not his danger. The eyes of his mind need to be attracted to things of enduring value. He needs to recognize the authority of true goodness, which says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30. —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 230.

The [rich young ruler] looked upon Christ with admiration. His heart was drawn toward the Saviour. But he was not ready to accept the Saviour’s principle of self-sacrifice. He chose his riches before Jesus. He wanted eternal life, but would not receive into the soul that unselfish love which alone is life, and with a sorrowful heart he turned away from Christ.

As the young man turned away, Jesus said to His disciples, . . . “Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure.” Now they realized that they themselves were included in the solemn warning. In the light of the Saviour’s words, their own secret longing for power and riches was revealed.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 393, 394.

The Bible condemns no man for being rich, if he has acquired his riches honestly. Not money, but the love of money, is the root of all evil. It is God who gives men power to get wealth; and in the hands of him who acts as God’s steward, using his means unselfishly, wealth is a blessing, both to its possessor and to the world. But many, absorbed in their interest in worldly treasures, become insensible to the claims of God and the needs of their fellow men. They regard their wealth as a means of glorifying themselves. They add house to house, and land to land; they fill their homes with

luxuries, while all about them are human beings in misery and crime, in disease and death. Those who thus give their lives to self-serving are developing in themselves, not the attributes of God, but the attributes of the wicked one.

These men are in need of the gospel. They need to have their eyes turned from the vanity of material things to behold the preciousness of the enduring riches. They need to learn the joy of giving, the blessedness of being co-workers with God.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 212, 213.



## **Thursday, November 30: Mission to the Powerful**

Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus came to the help of the disciples. Both these men were members of the Sanhedrin, and were acquainted with Pilate. Both were men of wealth and influence. They were determined that the body of Jesus should have an honorable burial.

Joseph went boldly to Pilate, and begged from him the body of Jesus. . . .

Neither Joseph nor Nicodemus had openly accepted the Saviour while He was living. They knew that such a step would exclude them from the Sanhedrin, and they hoped to protect Him by their influence in its councils. For a time they had seemed to succeed; but the wily priests, seeing their favor to Christ, had thwarted their plans. In their absence Jesus had been condemned and delivered to be crucified. Now that He was dead, they no longer concealed their attachment to Him.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 773.

We need a power to come upon us now and stir us up to diligence and earnest faith. Then, baptized with the Holy Spirit, we shall have Christ formed within, the hope of glory. Then we will exhibit Christ as the divine object of our faith and our love. We will talk of Christ, we will pray to Christ and about Christ. We will praise His holy name. We will present before the people His miracles, His self-denial, His self-sacrifice, His sufferings, and His crucifixion, His resurrection and triumphant ascension. These are the inspiring themes of the gospel, to awaken love and intense fervor in every heart. . . .

We need to have a living connection with God ourselves in order to teach Jesus. Then we can give the living personal experience of what Christ is to us by experience and faith. We have received Christ and with divine earnestness we can tell that which is an abiding power with us. The people must be drawn to Christ. Prominence must be given to his saving efficacy.

The true learners, sitting at Christ's feet, discover the precious gems of truth uttered by our Saviour, and will discern their significance and appreciate their value. And more and more, as they become humble and teachable, will their understanding be opened to discover wondrous things out of his law, for Christ has presented them in clear, sharp lines.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 186, 187.

If we only realized how earnestly Jesus worked to sow the world with the gospel seed, we would labor untiringly to give the bread of life to perishing souls.

Catch the spirit of the great Master-Worker. Learn from the Friend of sinners how to minister to sin-sick souls. His heart was ever touched with human woe. . . .

God's servants are to work for the higher classes, but this does not mean that they are to bind themselves up with the honored of the earth, depending on them for strength, influence, and success. The Lord will often incline the hearts of those in positions of responsibility to grant favors to His commandment-keeping people. But when God's servants leave Him to solicit recognition from men of the world, they exchange power for weakness.—*The Upward Look*, pp. 330, 331.

**Friday, December 1: For Further Reading**

*The Story of Redemption*, “The Burial,” pp. 227–229;  
*Our High Calling*, “A Submissive Will,” p. 105.

## **Lesson 10**

# Mission to the Unreached: Part 1

## Sabbath Afternoon, December 2

The Lord Jesus is looking upon every soul with intense interest. He has declared that the spiritual character of His church is to be carefully maintained. The church is in the world, and is to do a work for the world. . . .

Today the truth is to be proclaimed to all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples. Christ desires us to labor in a way that will not arouse prejudice, for when prejudice is aroused, some are cut off from hearing the truth.

We are still in this world, where these barriers exist, and we must work in a way that will enable us to reach all classes. Let not the present obstructions worry you and destroy your faith and confidence in God.—*This Day With God*, p. 269.

The apostle [Paul] was not deceived by that which he saw in this center of learning [Athens]. His spiritual nature was so alive to the attraction of heavenly things that the joy and glory of the riches which will never perish made valueless in his eyes the pomp and splendor with which he was surrounded. As he saw the magnificence of Athens he realized its seductive power over lovers of art and science, and his mind was deeply impressed with the importance of the work before him. . . .

He “disputed . . . in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.” But his principal work in Athens was to bear the tidings of salvation to those who had no intelligent conception of God and of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. The apostle was soon to meet paganism in its most subtle, alluring form.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 234.

Unless the members of God’s church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

Those only who are constantly receiving fresh supplies of grace, will have power proportionate to their daily need and their ability to use that power.

Instead of looking forward to some future time when, through a special endowment of spiritual power, they will receive a miraculous fitting up for soul winning, they are yielding themselves daily to God, that He may make them vessels meet for His use. Daily they are improving the opportunities for service that lie within their reach. Daily they are witnessing for the Master wherever they may be, whether in some humble sphere of labor in the home, or in a public field of usefulness.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 55.

### **Sunday, December 3: A Hebrew in Athens**

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

Thus persecution followed the teachers of truth from city to city. The enemies of Christ could not prevent the advancement of the gospel, but they succeeded in making the work of the apostles exceedingly hard. Yet in the face of opposition and conflict, Paul pressed steadily forward, determined to carry out the purpose of God as revealed to him in the vision at Jerusalem: "I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." Acts 22:21.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 232, 233.

The city of Athens was the metropolis of heathendom. Here Paul did not meet with an ignorant, credulous populace, as at Lystra, but with a people famous for their intelligence and culture. Everywhere statues of their gods and of the deified heroes of history and poetry met the eye, while magnificent architecture and paintings represented the national glory and the popular worship of heathen deities. The senses of the people were entranced by the beauty and splendor of art. On every hand sanctuaries and temples, involving untold expense, reared their massive forms. Victories of arms and deeds of celebrated men were commemorated by sculpture, shrines, and tablets. All these made Athens a vast gallery of art.

As Paul looked upon the beauty and grandeur surrounding him, and saw the city wholly given to idolatry, his spirit was stirred with jealousy for God, whom he saw dishonored on every side, and his heart was drawn out in pity for the people of Athens, who, notwithstanding their intellectual culture, were ignorant of the true God.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 233, 234.

A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first, and last, and best in everything. But

this union costs us something. It is a relation of utter dependence to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment, as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome, if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is, they try to attach themselves to Christ without detaching themselves from these cherished idols.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1143.



## Monday, December 4: Paul in the Areopagus

The great men of Athens were not long in learning of the presence in their city of a singular teacher who was setting before the people doctrines new and strange. Some of these men sought Paul out and entered into conversation with him. Soon a crowd of listeners gathered about them. Some were prepared to ridicule the apostle as one who was far beneath them both socially and intellectually, and these said jeeringly among themselves, “What will this babbler say?” Others, “because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection,” said, “He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.”

Among those who encountered Paul in the market place were “certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics;” but they, and all others who came in contact with him, soon saw that he had a store of knowledge even greater than their own. His intellectual power commanded the respect of the learned; while his earnest, logical reasoning and the power of his oratory held the attention of all in the audience. His hearers recognized the fact that he was no novice, but was able to meet all classes with convincing arguments in support of the doctrines he taught. Thus the apostle stood undaunted, meeting his opposers on their own ground, matching logic with logic, philosophy with philosophy, eloquence with eloquence.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 235.

As Paul searched the Scriptures, he learned that throughout the ages “not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.” 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. And so, viewing the wisdom of the world in the light of the cross, Paul “determined not to know anything, . . . save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” 1 Corinthians 2:2.

Throughout his later ministry, Paul never lost sight of the Source of his wisdom and strength. Hear him, years afterward, still declaring, “For to me to live is Christ.” Philippians 1:21. And again: “I count all things but loss for the

excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, . . . that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.” Philippians 3:8-10.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 127, 128.

Do we expect to dwell with Christ in the eternal world? Then we must dwell with him here, that he may help us in every time of trial and temptation, and make us ready for his coming in the clouds of heaven. . . . We cannot keep Christ so apart from our lives as we do, and yet be fitted for his companionship in heaven. He is to be the all in all of heaven, and must be our all in all upon earth.—*Review and Herald*, May 5, 1891.

## **Tuesday, December 5: Paul and the Unknown God**

See Paul at Athens before the council of the Areopagus. . . . Mark how, with the tact born of divine love, he points to Jehovah as the “Unknown God,” whom his hearers have ignorantly worshiped; and in words quoted from a poet of their own, he pictures Him as a Father whose children they are. Hear him, in that age of caste, when the rights of man as man were wholly unrecognized, as he sets 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.” Then he shows how, through all the dealings of God with man, run like a thread of gold His purposes of grace and mercy.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 312.

Standing in the midst of Mars’ Hill, Paul presented before the people of Athens the majesty of the living God in contrast with their idolatrous worship.

“Ye men of Athens,” he said, “I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 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 worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and 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: for in him we live, and move, and have our beings; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device” (Acts 17:22-29).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 292.

God looks for fruit in His church—fruit that responds to the lessons of Christ, worthy of the truth we profess to believe, and revealing the wisdom

and mercy of Christ. The Lord calls for a converted ministry, a ministry that will meet the people where they are, that will agree with them wherever they can, but that will not deny the truth. We are not to keep ourselves shut within four walls, so that our light cannot come to others. There is common ground where we may meet those not of our faith, where we may agree in principles and in regard to the lesson of Christ. Few will become combative over these holy principles.—Manuscript 104, 1898.

## **Wednesday, December 6: Introducing a New God**

In words of matchless beauty and tenderness, the apostle Paul set before the sages of Athens the divine purpose in the creation and distribution of races and nations. “God that made the world and all things therein,” declared the apostle, “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.” Acts 17:24-27.

God has made plain that whosoever will, may come “into the bond of the covenant.” Ezekiel 20:37. In the creation it was His purpose that the earth should be inhabited by beings whose existence would be a blessing to themselves and to one another, and an honor to their Creator. All who will may identify themselves with this purpose. Of them it is spoken, “This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise.” Isaiah 43:21. —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 500.

True reverence for God is inspired by a sense of His infinite greatness and a realization of His presence. With this sense of the Unseen, every heart should be deeply impressed. The hour and place of prayer are sacred, because God is there. And as reverence is manifested in attitude and demeanor, the feeling that inspires it will be deepened. “Holy and reverend is His name,” the psalmist declares. Psalm 111:9. Angels, when they speak that name, veil their faces. With what reverence, then, should we, who are fallen and sinful, take it upon our lips!—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 48.

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 love of Christ is a golden chain that binds finite, human beings who believe in Jesus Christ to the Infinite God. The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it. The more we feel the influence of this love, the more meek and humble shall we be.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1141.

## Thursday, December 7: Crossing a Line

[Paul] was in a position where he might easily have said that which would have irritated his proud listeners and brought himself into difficulty. Had his oration been a direct attack upon their gods and the great men of the city, he would have been in danger of meeting the fate of Socrates. But with a tact born of divine love, he carefully drew their minds away from heathen deities, by revealing to them the true God, who was to them unknown.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 241.

With words borrowed from a poet of their own [Paul] pictured the infinite God as a Father, whose children they were. “In Him we live, and move, and have our being,” he declared; “as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device. . . .

As Paul spoke of the resurrection from the dead, “some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.” . . .

Among those who listened to the words of Paul were some to whose minds the truths presented brought conviction, but they would not humble themselves to acknowledge God and to accept the plan of salvation. No eloquence of words, no force of argument, can convert the sinner. The power of God alone can apply the truth to the heart. He who persistently turns from this power cannot be reached. The Greeks sought after wisdom, yet the message of the cross was to them foolishness because they valued their own wisdom more highly than the wisdom that comes from above.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 238, 239.

God’s promise is, “Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13.

The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. By nature we are alienated from God. The Holy Spirit describes our condition in such words as these: “Dead in trespasses and sins;” “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;” “no soundness in it.” We are held fast in the snare of

Satan, “taken captive by him at his will.” Ephesians 2:1; Isaiah 1:5, 6; 2 Timothy 2:26. God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 43.

Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they may find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart’s unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded. Those who consent to enter into covenant with God are not left to the power of Satan or to the infirmity of their own nature.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 93.



### **Friday, December 8: For Further Reading**

*Selected Messages*, “A Heaven to Win,” book 1, pp. 96, 97;

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, “Satan’s Enmity Against the Law,” pp. 331–342.

## **Lesson 11**

# Mission to the Unreached: Part 2

## Sabbath Afternoon, December 9

The fall of man filled all heaven with sorrow. . . . Angels ceased their songs of praise. Throughout the heavenly courts there was mourning for the ruin that sin had wrought.

The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him. But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. . . . Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63.

We should cultivate the spirit with which Christ labored to save the erring. They are as dear to Him as we are. They are equally capable of being trophies of His grace and heirs of the kingdom. But they are exposed to the snares of a wily foe, exposed to danger and defilement, and without the saving grace of Christ, to certain ruin. Did we view this matter in the right light, how would our zeal be quickened and our earnest, self-sacrificing efforts be multiplied, that we might come close to those who need our help, our prayers, our sympathy, and our love! . . .

Those only live for Christ and honor His name who are true to their Master in seeking to save that which is lost. Genuine piety will surely manifest the deep longing and earnest labor of the crucified Saviour to save those for whom He died. If our hearts are softened and subdued by the grace of Christ, and glowing with a sense of God's goodness and love, there will be a natural outflow of love, sympathy, and tenderness to others. The truth exemplified in the life will exert its power, like the hidden leaven, upon all with whom it is brought in contact.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 605, 606.

Man is God's property, and angels are looking with intense interest to see how man will deal with his fellow man. When heavenly intelligences see those who claim to be the sons and daughters of God putting forth Christlike efforts to help the erring, manifesting a tender, sympathetic spirit for the repentant and the fallen, angels press close to them and bring to their remembrance the very words that will soothe and uplift the soul. Holy angels are on the track of every one of us. We are not to despise the least of [these].  
—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 100.

## Sunday, December 10: Mission to Regions Beyond

Christ says, “As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world” (John 17:18). . . . Every soul whom Christ has rescued is called to work in His name for the saving of the lost. . . .

When you turn from those who seem unpromising and unattractive, do you realize that you are neglecting the souls for whom Christ is seeking? At the very time when you turn from them, they may be in the greatest need of your compassion. In every assembly for worship, there are souls longing for rest and peace. They may appear to be living careless lives, but they are not insensible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Many among them might be won for Christ.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 191.

All heaven is interested in the work of saving the lost. Angels watch with intense interest to see who will leave the ninety and nine and go out in tempest and storm and rain into the wild desert to seek the lost sheep. The lost are all around us, perishing and sadly neglected. But they are of value to God, the purchase of the blood of Christ.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 100.

As you engage in this work, [ministering to the lost], you have companions unseen by human eyes. Angels of heaven were beside the Samaritan who cared for the wounded stranger. Angels from the heavenly courts stand by all who do God’s service in ministering to their fellow men. And you have the co-operation of Christ Himself. He is the Restorer, and as you work under His supervision, you will see great results. . . .

Christ is seeking to uplift all who will be lifted to companionship with Himself, that we may be one with Him as He is one with the Father. He permits us to come in contact with suffering and calamity in order to call us out of our selfishness; He seeks to develop in us the attributes of His character—compassion, tenderness, and love. By accepting this work of ministry we place ourselves in His school, to be fitted for the courts of God.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 388.

[The Savior] has committed to His followers a world-wide mission. 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. . . . 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.

## Monday, December 11: Seeking the Multitudes

Jesus went up into a mountain, and there the multitude flocked to Him, bringing their sick and lame, and laying them at His feet. He healed them all; and the people, heathen as they were, glorified the God of Israel. For three days they continued to throng about the Saviour, sleeping at night in the open air, and through the day pressing eagerly to hear the words of Christ, and to see His works. At the end of three days their food was spent. Jesus would not send them away hungry, and He called upon His disciples to give them food.

Again the disciples revealed their unbelief. At Bethsaida they had seen how, with Christ's blessing, their little store availed for the feeding of the multitude; yet they did not now bring forward their all, trusting His power to multiply it for the hungry crowds. Moreover, those whom He fed at Bethsaida were Jews; these were Gentiles and heathen. Jewish prejudice was still strong in the hearts of the disciples, and they answered Jesus, "Whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?" But obedient to His word they brought Him what they had,—seven loaves and two fishes. The multitude were fed, seven large baskets of fragments remaining. Four thousand men, besides women and children, were thus refreshed, and Jesus sent them away with glad and grateful hearts.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 404.

We are not, as a people, sufficiently aroused to the short time in which we have to work, and we do not understand the magnitude of the work for the time.

The night soon cometh, in which no man can work. God calls for men and women to qualify themselves, by consecration to His will and earnest study of the Scriptures, to do His special work for these last days. He calls for men now who can work. As they engage in the work in sincerity and humility to do all they can, they will be obtaining a more thorough experience. They will have a better knowledge of the truth and better know how to reach souls and help them just where they need to be helped. Workmen are needed now, just now, to labor for God. The fields are already white for the harvest, and yet laborers are few.—*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 211.

There is a possibility of the believer in Christ obtaining an experience that

will be wholly sufficient to place him in right relation to God. Every promise that is in God's Book holds out to us the encouragement that we may be partakers of the divine nature. This is the possibility—to rely upon God, to believe his Word, to work his works. . . . This possibility is worth more to us than all the riches in the world. There is nothing on earth that can compare with it. As we lay hold of the power thus placed within our reach, we receive a hope so strong that we can rely wholly upon God's promises; and laying hold of the possibilities there are in Christ, we become the sons and daughters of God.—*Review and Herald*, January 14, 1909.



## **Tuesday, December 12: In Tyre and Sidon**

Looking westward, [Jesus] could see, spread out upon the plain below, the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon, with their heathen temples, their magnificent palaces and marts of trade, and the harbors filled with shipping. Beyond was the blue expanse of the Mediterranean, over which the messengers of the gospel were to bear its glad tidings to the centers of the world's great empire. But the time was not yet. The work before Him now was to prepare His disciples for their mission. . . .

The people of this district were of the old Canaanite race. They were idolaters, and were despised and hated by the Jews. To this class belonged the woman who now came to Jesus. She was a heathen, and was therefore excluded from the advantages which the Jews daily enjoyed. There were many Jews living among the Phoenicians, and the tidings of Christ's work had penetrated to this region. . . .

Christ knew this woman's situation. He knew that she was longing to see Him, and He placed Himself in her path. By ministering to her sorrow, He could give a living representation of the lesson He designed to teach. For this He had brought His disciples into this region. He desired them to see the ignorance existing in cities and villages close to the land of Israel. The people who had been given every opportunity to understand the truth were without a knowledge of the needs of those around them. No effort was made to help souls in darkness. The partition wall which Jewish pride had erected, shut even the disciples from sympathy with the heathen world. But these barriers were to be broken down.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 399, 400.

During His earthly ministry Christ began to break down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and to preach salvation to all mankind. Though He was a Jew, He mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of the Jews with regard to this despised people. He slept under their roofs, ate at their tables, and taught in their streets.

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. This truth was revealed in part at the time when He rewarded the faith of the

centurion at Capernaum, and also when He preached the gospel to the inhabitants of Sychar. Still more plainly was it revealed on the occasion of His visit to Phoenicia, when He healed the daughter of the Canaanite woman. These experiences helped the disciples to understand that among those whom many regarded as unworthy of salvation, there were souls hungering for the light of truth.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 19.

### **Wednesday, December 13: “Send Her Away!”**

The Saviour manifested divine compassion toward the Syrophenician woman. His heart was touched as He saw her grief. He longed to give her an immediate assurance that her prayer was heard; but He desired to teach His disciples a lesson, and for a time He seemed to neglect the cry of her tortured heart. When her faith had been made manifest, He spoke to her words of commendation and sent her away with the precious boon she had asked. The disciples never forgot this lesson, and it is placed on record to show the result of persevering prayer.

It was Christ Himself who put into that mother’s heart the persistence which would not be repulsed. It was Christ who gave the pleading widow courage and determination before the judge. It was Christ who, centuries before, in the mysterious conflict by the Jabbok, had inspired Jacob with the same persevering faith. And the confidence which He Himself had implanted, He did not fail to reward.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 175.

Jesus knows the burden of every mother’s heart. He who had a mother that struggled with poverty and privation, sympathizes with every mother in her labors. He who made a long journey in order to relieve the anxious heart of a Canaanite woman will do as much for the mothers of today. He who gave back to the widow of Nain her only son, and in His agony upon the cross remembered His own mother, is touched today by the mother’s sorrow. In every grief and every need, He will comfort and help. . . .

In the children who were brought in contact with Him, Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects of His kingdom, and some of whom would become martyrs for His sake. He knew that these children would listen to Him and accept Him as their Redeemer far more readily than would grown-up people, many of whom were the worldly-wise and hardhearted. In teaching, He came down to their level. He, the Majesty of heaven, answered their questions and simplified His important lessons to meet their childish understanding. He planted in their minds the seeds of truth, which in after years would spring up and bear fruit unto eternal life. —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 42.

If the lost sheep is not brought back to the fold, it wanders until it perishes. And many souls go down to ruin for want of a hand stretched out to save. These erring ones may appear hard and reckless; but if they had received the same advantages that others have had, they might have revealed far more nobility of soul, and greater talent for usefulness. Angels pity these wandering ones. Angels weep, while human eyes are dry and hearts are closed to pity.

O the lack of deep, soul-touching sympathy for the tempted and the erring! O for more of Christ's spirit, and for less, far less, of self!—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 191, 192.

## **Thursday, December 14: Faith on Earth?**

As the rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. Instead of congregating together and shunning responsibility and cross bearing, the members of the church would scatter into all lands, letting the light of Christ shine out from them, working as He did for the salvation of souls, and this “gospel of the kingdom” would speedily be carried to all the world.

It is thus that God’s purpose in calling His people, from Abraham on the plains of Mesopotamia to us in this age, is to reach its fulfillment.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 42, 43.

Christ gave up all in order that He might bring salvation to every people, nation, and tongue. He bridged the gulf that sin had made, in order that through His merits man might be reconciled to God. Why is there not an army of workers enlisted under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel, ready to go forth to . . . bring souls out of darkness into light? Why do we not teach the perishing to believe in Christ as their personal Saviour, and aid them to see Christ by faith, and wash in the fountain that has been opened to cleanse away the sins of the world? We should teach [them] how to cast away their old, sin-stained garments of character, and how to put on Christ’s righteousness. We should plant in their darkened minds the elevating, ennobling thoughts of heavenly things. By faith, by Christlike sympathy and example, we should lead the polluted into pure and holy lives. We should live such a life before them that they will discern the difference between error and vice, and purity, righteousness, and holiness.—*The Southern Work*, p. 27.

In large cities there are certain classes that cannot be reached by public meetings. These must be searched out as the shepherd searches for his lost sheep. Diligent, personal effort must be put forth in their behalf. When personal work is neglected, many precious opportunities are lost, which, were they improved, would advance the work decidedly. . . .

Those who desire to investigate the truth need to be taught to study diligently the word of God. Someone must help them to build on the sure foundation. At this critical time in their religious experience, how important it is that wisely directed Bible workers come to their help and open to their understanding the treasure house of God's word.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 111.

### **Friday, December 15: For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, “Love Heals Many Wounds,” p. 179;

*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, “Sowing Beside All Waters,” pp. 213, 214.

## Lesson 12

# Esther and Mordecai

## Sabbath Afternoon, December 16

Under the favor shown them by Cyrus, nearly fifty thousand of the children of the captivity had taken advantage of the decree permitting their return. These, however, in comparison with the hundreds of thousands scattered throughout the provinces of Medo-Persia, were but a mere remnant. The great majority of the Israelites had chosen to remain in the land of their exile rather than undergo the hardships of the return journey and the re-establishment of their desolated cities and homes.

A score or more of years passed by, when a second decree, quite as favorable as the first, was issued by Darius Hystaspes, the monarch then ruling. Thus did God in mercy provide another opportunity for the Jews in the Medo-Persian realm to return to the land of their fathers. The Lord foresaw the troublous times that were to follow during the reign of Xerxes,—the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther,—and He not only wrought a change of feeling in the hearts of men in authority, but also inspired Zechariah to plead with the exiles to return.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 598.

Christians are Christ's jewels. They are to shine brightly for Him, shedding forth the light of His loveliness. Their luster depends on the polishing they receive. They may choose to be polished or to remain unpolished. But everyone who is pronounced worthy of a place in the Lord's temple must submit to the polishing process. Without the polishing that the Lord gives they can reflect no more light than a common pebble. . . .

The divine Worker spends little time on worthless material. Only the precious jewels does He polish after the similitude of a palace, cutting away all the rough edges. This process is severe and trying; it hurts human pride. Christ cuts deep into the experience that man in his self-sufficiency has regarded as complete, and takes away self-uplifting from the character. He cuts away the surplus surface, and putting the stone to the polishing wheel,



presses it close, that all roughness may be worn away. Then, holding the jewel up to the light, the Master sees in it a reflection of Himself, and He pronounces it worthy of a place in His casket.

“In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, . . . and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts.” Blessed be the experience, however severe, that gives new value to the stone, and causes it to shine with living brightness.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1177.

God in His great love is seeking to develop in us the precious graces of His Spirit. He permits us to encounter obstacles, persecution, and hardships, not as a curse, but as the greatest blessing of our lives. Every temptation resisted, every trial bravely borne, gives us a new experience and advances us in the work of character building. The soul that through divine power resists temptation reveals to the world and to the heavenly universe the efficiency of the grace of Christ.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 117.

## Sunday, December 17: Captive in a Foreign Culture

God proves his people in this world. This is the fitting up place to appear in his presence. Here, in this world, in these last days, individuals will show what power affects their hearts and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead to good works. It will elevate the receiver, and make him noble-hearted and generous, like his divine Lord. . . .

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Professors of religion are [often] not willing to closely examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith, and it is a fearful fact that many are leaning on a false hope. Some lean upon an old experience they had years ago; but when brought down to this heart-searching time, when all should have a daily experience, they have nothing to relate. They seem to think a profession of the truth will save them. When those sins which God hates are subdued, Jesus will come in and sup with you and you with him. You will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and you will grow up in him, and be able with holy triumph to say, Blessed be God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 2, pp. 226, 227.

[All] should stand in a position where their hearts may be wholly the Lord's; where they are honoring God with their strength. God will then honor them by giving them knowledge and wisdom. Thus did Daniel in the courts of Babylon, standing true to principle amid the corruptions of the heathen. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank."

Daniel and his companions knew not what would be the result of their decision; they knew not but that it would cost them their lives; but they determined to keep the straight path of strict temperance even when in the courts of licentious Babylon.

By the example of Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, we see that it is impossible to reach the standard which that Lord would have His children reach, and practise an easy, accommodating kind of religion that leaves principle out, and is controlled by circumstances.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 174.

Christ told His disciples that in the world they should have tribulation. They would be brought before kings and rulers for His sake; all manner of evil would be spoken against them falsely, and those who destroyed their lives would think they did God service. And all, in every age, who have lived godly lives have suffered persecution in some form. They have suffered every indignity, outrage, and cruelty which Satan could move upon minds to invent.

The world is as much opposed to genuine religion today as it ever has been.

The spirit of persecution will be aroused against the faithful ones, who make no concessions to the world, and will not be swayed by its opinions, its favor, or its opposition.—*My Life Today*, p. 69.

## Monday, December 18: In a Foreign Court

Vashti did not carry out [the king's] orders, because she knew that wine had been freely used, and that Ahasuerus was under the influence of the intoxicating liquor. For her husband's sake as well as her own, she decided not to leave her position at the head of the women of the court.

There is little doubt that the king, when he afterward considered the matter, felt that Vashti deserved to be honored, rather than to be treated as she was. . . .

Through the experience that brought Esther to the Medo-Persian throne, God was working for the accomplishment of His purposes for His people. That which was done under the influence of much wine worked out for good to Israel.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1139.

Through Esther the queen the Lord accomplished a mighty deliverance for His people. At a time when it seemed that no power could save them, Esther and the women associated with her, by fasting and prayer and prompt action, met the issue, and brought salvation to their people.

A study of women's work in connection with the cause of God in Old Testament times will teach us lessons that will enable us to meet emergencies in the work today. We may not be brought into such a critical and prominent place as were the people of God in the time of Esther; but often converted women can act an important part in more humble positions.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1140.

Those who keep in a prayerful frame of mind will be able to speak a word in season to those who are brought within the sphere of their influence; for God will give wisdom whereby they may serve the Lord Jesus. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." Proverbs 2:10, 11. You will open your mouth with wisdom, and in your tongue will be the law of kindness.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 69.

Caiaphas, raising his right hand toward heaven, addressed Jesus in the form of a solemn oath: "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us

whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God.”

To this appeal Christ could not remain silent. There was a time to be silent, and a time to speak. He had not spoken until directly questioned. He knew that to answer now would make His death certain. But the appeal was made by the highest acknowledged authority of the nation, and in the name of the Most High. Christ would not fail to show proper respect for the law. More than this, His own relation to the Father was called in question. He must plainly declare His character and mission.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 706.

## **Tuesday, December 19: Mordecai's Faithful Witness**

Through Haman the Agagite, an unscrupulous man high in authority in Medo-Persia, Satan worked at this time to counterwork the purposes of God. Haman cherished bitter malice against Mordecai, a Jew. Mordecai had done Haman no harm, but had simply refused to show him worshipful reverence. Scorning to “lay hands on Mordecai alone,” Haman plotted “to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.” Esther 3:6.

Misled by the false statements of Haman, Xerxes was induced to issue a decree providing for the massacre of all the Jews “scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces” of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Verse 8. A certain day was appointed on which the Jews were to be destroyed and their property confiscated. Little did the king realize the far-reaching results that would have accompanied the complete carrying out of this decree. Satan himself, the hidden instigator of the scheme, was trying to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 600.

Some, like Haman, forget all God's favors, because Mordecai is before them and is not disgraced; because their hearts are filled with enmity and hatred rather than love, the spirit of our dear Redeemer, who gave His precious life for His enemies. We profess to have the same Father, to be bound for the same immortal home, to enjoy the same solemn faith, and to believe the same testing message; and yet many are at strife with one another like quarrelsome children. . . .

Those who love God cannot harbor hatred or envy. . . . If we love God with all the heart, we must love His children also. This love is the spirit of God. It is the heavenly adorning that gives true nobility and dignity to the soul and assimilates our lives to that of the Master. No matter how many good qualities we may have, however honorable and refined we may consider ourselves, if the soul is not baptized with the heavenly grace of love to God and one another, we are deficient in true goodness and unfit for heaven, where all is love and unity.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 222, 223.

The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. Today the enemies of the true church see in the little company keeping the Sabbath commandment, a Mordecai at the gate. . . .

To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for Sunday laws. But those who fear God, cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield will be fought the last great conflict in the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Today, as in the days of Esther and Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 605.

## **Wednesday, December 20: For Such a Time as This**

The crisis that Esther faced demanded quick, earnest action; but both she and Mordecai realized that unless God should work mightily in their behalf, their own efforts would be unavailing. So Esther took time for communion with God, the source of her strength. “Go,” she directed Mordecai, “gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.” Verse 16.

The events that followed in rapid succession,—the appearance of Esther before the king, the marked favor shown her, the banquets of the king and queen with Haman as the only guest, the troubled sleep of the king, the public honor shown Mordecai, and the humiliation and fall of Haman upon the discovery of his wicked plot,—all these are parts of a familiar story. God wrought marvelously for His penitent people; and a counter decree issued by the king, allowing them to fight for their lives, was rapidly communicated to every part of the realm by mounted couriers, who were “hastened and pressed on by the king’s commandment.” “And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.” Esther 8:14, 17. —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 601, 602.

[Daniel] still bows before his God, “his windows being open.” He considers supplication to God of so great importance that he would rather sacrifice his life than relinquish it. On account of his praying to God, he is cast into the lions’ den. Evil angels thus far accomplish their purpose. But Daniel continues to pray, even in the den of lions. Was he suffered to be consumed? Did God forget him there? Oh, no; Jesus, the mighty Commander of the hosts of heaven, sent His angel to close the mouths of those hungry lions that they should not hurt the praying man of God. . . . Satan and his angels were defeated and enraged. . . .

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.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 295.

Now and onward till the close of time the people of God should be more earnest, more wide-awake, not trusting in their own wisdom, but in the wisdom of their Leader. They should set aside days for fasting and prayer. Entire abstinence from food may not be required, but they should eat sparingly of the most simple food.—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 187, 188.

## Thursday, December 21: The Miracle of Purim

On the day appointed for their destruction, “the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people.” Angels that excel in strength had been commissioned by God to protect His people while they “stood for their lives.” Esther 9:2, 16.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 602.

God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter His faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord’s people may not have mercy or justice. . . .

God has always wrought for His people in their greatest extremity, when there seemed the least hope that ruin could be averted. The designs of wicked men, the enemies of the church, are subject to His power and overruling providence. He can move upon the hearts of statesmen; the wrath of the turbulent and disaffected, the haters of God, His truth, and His people can be turned aside, even as the rivers of water are turned, if He orders it thus. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep, the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of His people if they call upon Him in faith. He will restrain the forces of darkness until the warning is given to the world and all who will heed it are prepared for the conflict.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 452.

If there were more praying among us, more exercise of a living faith, and less dependence upon someone else to have an experience for us, we would be far in advance of where we are today in spiritual intelligence. What we need is a deep, individual heart and soul experience. Then we shall be able to tell what God is doing and how He is working. We need to have a living

experience in the things of God; and we are not safe unless we have this. . . . If ever there was a time in our history when we needed to humble our individual souls before God, it is today. We need to come to God with faith in all that is promised in the word, and then walk in all the light and power that God gives.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 531.

## **Friday, December 22: For Further Reading**

*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, “God’s Message for the Present Time,” pp. 95, 96;

*Testimonies for the Church*, “Preparation for the Final Crisis,” vol. 6, pp. 404–406.

## Lesson 13

# The End of God's Mission

**Sabbath Afternoon, December 23**

God expects those who bear the name of Christ to represent Him in thought, word, and deed. Their thoughts are to be pure and their words and deeds noble and uplifting, drawing those around them nearer to the Saviour. In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in this world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last message of mercy for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. What manner of persons, then, ought they to be? . . .

There needs to be a deeper work of grace in the hearts of God's people. Less of self, and more of Christ, must be seen. Tests, close and sharp, are coming to all. The religion of the Bible must be interwoven with all that we do and say . . . fragrant with the presence of God.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 332.

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.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 12.

As a people we must prepare the way of the Lord under the overruling

guidance of the Holy Spirit. The gospel is to be given in its purity. The stream of living water is to deepen and widen in its course. In all fields, nigh and afar off, men will be called from the plow and from the more common commercial business vocations that largely occupy the mind, and will be educated in connection with men of experience. As they learn to labor effectively they will proclaim the truth with power. Through most wonderful workings of divine providence, mountains of difficulty will be removed and cast into the sea. The message that means so much to the dwellers upon the earth will be heard and understood. Men will know what is truth. Onward and still onward the work will advance until the whole earth shall have been warned, and then shall the end come.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 9.

## **Sunday, December 24: Revelation: God's Last-Day Mission**

As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study. But Christ through His servant John has here declared what shall be in the last days, and He says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Revelation 1:3.

"This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. 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?—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 133.

The Lord will work through the human agent who unites himself to Jesus Christ. Those who have an abiding trust in Christ, will, like Enoch, have a sense of the abiding presence of God. Why is it that there are so many who feel in uncertainty, who feel that they are orphans?—It is because they do not cultivate faith in the precious assurance that the Lord Jesus is their sin-bearer. It was in behalf of those who had transgressed the law, that Jesus took upon Him human nature, and became like unto us, in order that we might have everlasting peace and assurance. We have an advocate in the heavens, and whosoever accepts Him as his personal Saviour is not left an orphan to bear the curse of his own sins.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 287.

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

display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10. . . .

Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 9, 11.



## **Monday, December 25: The Three Angels' Messages and Mission**

We see [in God's Word] revealed the great plan of human redemption, the means devised to free mankind from the power of Satan. We see Christ, the Captain of our salvation, meeting the prince of darkness in open battle, and single-handed, obtaining the victory in our behalf. We learn too that by this victory was opened to us a door of hope, a source of strength, and that we may, as faithful soldiers, fight our own battles with the wily foe, and conquer in the name of Jesus. The powers of darkness must be met by every soul. The young as well as the old will be assailed, and all should understand the nature of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and should realize that it concerns themselves.

It is not enough to have an intellectual knowledge of the truth. There must be an entrance of the Word into the heart. It must be set home by the power of the Holy Spirit. The will must be brought into harmony with its requirements. Not only the intellect but the heart and conscience must concur in the acceptance of the truth.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 192.

The commission given to the disciples is given also to us. Today, as then, a crucified and risen Saviour is to be uplifted before those who are without God and without hope in the world. The Lord calls for pastors, teachers, and evangelists. From door to door His servants are to proclaim the message of salvation. To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people the tidings of pardon through Christ are to be carried. Not with tame, lifeless utterances is the message to be given, but with clear, decided, stirring utterances. Hundreds are waiting for the warning to escape for their lives. The world needs to see in Christians an evidence of the power of Christianity. Not merely in a few places, but throughout the world, messages of mercy are needed.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 29.

For the joy that was set before Him, Christ endured the cross. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for the world, and through this sacrifice comes the greatest blessing that God could bestow—the gift of the Holy Spirit. This blessing is for all who will receive Christ. The fallen world is the battlefield for the greatest conflict the heavenly universe and earthly powers have ever

witnessed. It was appointed as the theater on which would be fought out the grand struggle between good and evil, between heaven and hell. Every human being acts a part in this conflict. No one can stand on neutral ground. Men must either accept or reject the world's Redeemer. All are witnesses, either for or against Christ. Christ calls upon those who stand under His banner to engage in the conflict with Him as faithful soldiers, that they may inherit the crown of life. They have been adopted as sons and daughters of God.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 253.

## **Tuesday, December 26: The Final Crisis**

The gospel of Christ is to reach all classes, all nations, all tongues and people. The influence of the gospel is to unite in one great brotherhood. We have only one Model that we are to imitate in character building, and then we all shall have Christ's mold; we shall be in perfect harmony; nationalities will blend in Jesus Christ, having the same mind, and the same judgment, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. This is the work the world's Redeemer is to do for us. If we accept the truth as it is in Jesus, national prejudices and jealousies will be broken down, and the Spirit of truth will blend hearts in one. We will love as brethren; we will esteem others better than ourselves; we will be kind and courteous, meek and lowly, easy to be entreated; full of mercy and good fruits.—*Our High Calling*, p. 171.

When you look at the cross of Calvary you cannot doubt God's love or His willingness to save. He has worlds upon worlds that give Him divine honor, and heaven and all the universe would have been just as happy if He had left this world to perish, but so great was His love for the fallen race that He gave His own dear Son to die that they might be redeemed from eternal death. As we see the care, the love, that God has for us, let us respond to it; let us give to Jesus all the powers of our being, fighting manfully the battles of the Lord. We cannot afford to lose our souls; we cannot afford to sin against God. Life, eternal life in the kingdom of glory, is worth everything.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 367.

Those whom Christ commends in the judgment may have known little of theology, but they have cherished His principles. Through the influence of the divine Spirit they have been a blessing to those about them. Even among the heathen are those who have cherished the spirit of kindness; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the missionaries, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works

are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God.

How surprised and gladdened will be the lowly among the nations, and among the heathen, to hear from the lips of the Saviour, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me”! How glad will be the heart of Infinite Love as His followers look up with surprise and joy at His words of approval!—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 638.

## **Wednesday, December 27: Success in Mission**

Paul had sought to impress upon the minds of his Corinthian brethren the fact that he and the ministers associated with him were but men commissioned by God to teach the truth, that they were all engaged in the same work, and that they were alike dependent upon God for success in their labors. The discussion that had arisen in the church regarding the relative merits of different ministers was not in the order of God, but was the result of cherishing the attributes of the natural heart. “While one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” 1 Corinthians 3:4-7.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 273.

It was Paul who had first preached the gospel in Corinth, and who had organized the church there. This was the work that the Lord had assigned him. Later, by God’s direction, other workers were brought in, to stand in their lot and place. The seed sown must be watered, and this Apollos was to do. He followed Paul in his work, to give further instruction, and to help the seed sown to develop. He won his way to the hearts of the people, but it was God who gave the increase. It is not human, but divine power, that works transformation of character. Those who plant and those who water do not cause the growth of the seed; they work under God, as His appointed agencies, co-operating with Him in His work. To the Master Worker belongs the honor and glory that comes with success.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 274.

Jesus desires to efface the image of the earthly from the minds of His followers, and to impress upon them the image of the heavenly, that they may become one with Himself, reflecting His character, and showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. . . .

The character we cultivate, the attitude we assume today, is fixing our future destiny. We are all making a choice, either to be with the blessed,

inside the City of Light, or to be with the wicked, outside the city. The principles which govern our actions on earth are known in heaven, and our deeds are faithfully chronicled in the books of record. It is there known whether our characters are after the order of Christ. Are we wise virgins? This is the question which we are deciding today by our character and attitude.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 303.

## Thursday, December 28: Mission Complete

Christ tells us when the day of His kingdom shall be ushered in. He does not say that all the world will be converted, but that “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14). By giving the gospel to the world, it is in our power to hasten the coming of the day of God. . . .

Christ is coming with clouds and with great glory. A multitude of shining angels will attend Him. He will come to raise the dead, and to change the living saints from glory to glory. He will come to honor those who have loved Him, and kept His commandments, and to take them to Himself. He has not forgotten them nor His promise. . . .

A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and He will present us “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 24. —*Heaven*, pp. 161, 162.

The glorious city of God has twelve gates, set with pearls most glorious. It also has twelve foundations of various colors. The streets of the city are of pure gold. In this city is the throne of God, and a pure, beautiful river proceeding out of it, as clear as crystal. Its sparkling purity and beauty make glad the city of God. The saints will drink freely of the healing waters of the river of life.

All faces will reflect the image of their Redeemer. There will then be no anxious, troubled countenances, but all will be bright, and smiling in spotless purity. The angels will be there, also the resurrected saints with the martyrs, and the best of all, and what will cause us the most joy, our lovely Saviour, who suffered and died that we might enjoy that happiness and freedom, will be there.—His glorious face will shine brighter than the sun, and light up the beautiful city and reflect glory all around.—*My Life Today*, p. 357.

In the City of God “there shall be no night.” None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning and shall ever be far from its close. . . . The light of the sun will be superseded by a

radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.

“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” Revelation 21:22. The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. “Now we see through a glass, darkly.” 1 Corinthians 13:12. We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 676.



**Friday, December 29: For Further Reading**

*Reflecting Christ*, “God Reveals His Justice and Love,” p. 58;  
*Lift Him Up*, “Christ Died for Us,” p. 233.