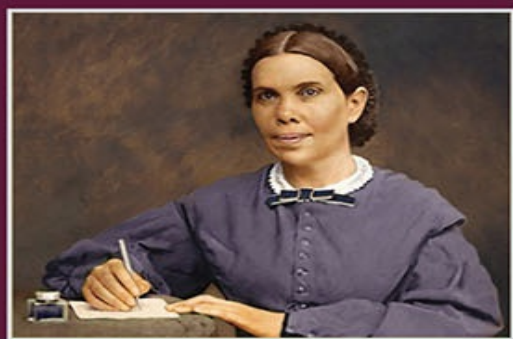


A Companion to the Adult Bible Study Guide

Ellen White Notes on Themes in the Gospel of John

October | November | December 2024

Compiled by Pacific Press® Publishing Association



Spirit of Prophecy quotations arranged for
daily study with the adult Bible study guides

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

E. G. White Notes for the Sabbath School Lessons (ISSN 1076-2434) is published quarterly by

Pacific Press® Publishing Association, 1350 N. Kings Road, Nampa, ID 83687-3193, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Nampa, Idaho, and at additional mailing offices. One-year subscription in the USA, \$23.12; single copy, \$6.99. One-year subscription to countries outside USA, \$33.12. All prices at USA exchange. When a change of address is desired, please send both old and new addresses. Vol. 32, no. 4.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **E. G. White Notes for the Sabbath School Lessons**, PO Box 5353, Nampa, ID 83653-5353.

Copyright © 2024 by Pacific Press® Publishing Association.
Printed in the United States of America.

Themes in the Gospel of John

Contents

- [1. Signs That Point the Way \(September 28–October 4\)](#)
- [2. Signs of Divinity \(October 5–11\)](#)
- [3. The Backstory: The Prologue \(October 12–18\)](#)
- [4. Witnesses of Christ as the Messiah \(October 19–25\)](#)
- [5. The Testimony of the Samaritans \(October 26–November 1\)](#)
- [6. More Testimonies About Jesus \(November 2–8\)](#)
- [7. Blessed Are Those Who Believe \(November 9–15\)](#)
- [8. Fulfilling Old Testament Prophecies \(November 16–22\)](#)
- [9. The Source of Life \(November 23–29\)](#)
- [10. The Way, the Truth, and the Life \(November 30–December 6\)](#)
- [11. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit \(December 7–13\)](#)
- [12. The Hour of Glory: The Cross and Resurrection \(December 14–20\)](#)
- [13. Epilogue: Knowing Jesus and His Word \(December 21–27\)](#)

Lesson 1

Signs That Point the Way

Sabbath Afternoon, September 28

As one who understands his subject, John ascribes all power to Christ, and speaks of His greatness and majesty. He flashes forth divine rays of precious truth, as light from the sun. He presents Christ as the only Mediator between God and humanity.

The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, “even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.” It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this. He “so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” John presents this wonderful subject with such simplicity that all may grasp the ideas set forth, and be enlightened.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God.

As legislator, Jesus exercised the authority of God; His commands and decisions were supported by the sovereignty of the eternal throne. The glory of the Father was revealed in the Son; Christ made manifest the character of the Father. He was so perfectly connected with God, so completely embraced in His encircling light, that he who had seen the Son had seen the Father. His voice was as the voice of God. . . . He says, “I am in the Father, and the Father in me.” “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father;

neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:11; Matthew 11:27; 14:9)—*That I May Know Him*, p. 38.

Every miracle that Christ performed was a sign of His divinity. He was doing the very work that had been foretold of the Messiah; but to the Pharisees these works of mercy were a positive offense. The Jewish leaders looked with heartless indifference on human suffering. In many cases their selfishness and oppression had caused the affliction that Christ relieved. Thus His miracles were to them a reproach.

That which led the Jews to reject the Saviour’s work was the highest evidence of His divine character. The greatest significance of His miracles is seen in the fact that they were for the blessing of humanity. The highest evidence that He came from God is that His life revealed the character of God. He did the works and spoke the words of God. Such a life is the greatest of all miracles.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 406.

Sunday, September 29: The Wedding at Cana

Jesus did not begin His ministry by some great work before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. At a household gathering in a little Galilean village His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast. Thus He showed His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness. In the wilderness of temptation He Himself had drunk the cup of woe. He came forth to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life. . . .

It was to honor Mary’s trust, and to strengthen the faith of His disciples, that the first miracle was performed. The disciples were to encounter many and great temptations to unbelief. To them the prophecies had made it clear beyond all controversy that Jesus was the Messiah. They looked for the religious leaders to receive Him with confidence even greater than their own. They declared among the people the wonderful works of Christ and their own confidence in His mission, but they were amazed and bitterly disappointed by the unbelief, the deep-seated prejudice, and the enmity to Jesus, displayed by the priests and rabbis. The Saviour’s early miracles strengthened the disciples to stand against this opposition.

—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 144, 147.

When the time had fully come, the miracle wrought by Christ was recognized. As soon as the ruler of the feast put the goblet to his lips and tasted the wine, he looked up with glad surprise. The wine was superior to any he had ever before drunk. And it was unfermented wine. He said to the bridegroom, “Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now” (verse 10).

Christ did not approach the jars, or touch the water; He simply looked upon the water, and it became the pure juice of the grape, clarified and refined. What effect did this miracle have?—“His disciples believed on him” (verse 11). . . . By this miracle Christ also gave evidence of His mercy and compassion. He showed that He had regard for the necessities of those who followed Him to hear His words of knowledge and wisdom.—*This Day with God*, p. 366.

The Lord has promised to give light to those who seek him with the whole heart. If we will but wait patiently and prayerfully upon God, and not follow our own impetuous plans, he will guide our decisions, and open many doors of hope and labor. The great General of armies will lead in every battle for the advancement of his cause. He will be the guide of his people in the perilous conflicts in which they have to engage, if [they] . . . will do their appointed work, and listen to the voice which says, “This is the way, walk ye in it;” “They that follow me shall not walk in darkness.” What a great comfort this promise should be to us! We may walk in the light as he is in the light. . . . Men may follow many kinds of lights, but there is only one Light that it will be safe for them to follow. Be sure that you are following Jesus whithersoever he goeth.—*Special Testimonies to Ministers and Workers*, no. 3, p. 44.

Monday, September 30: The Second Sign in Galilee

In Capernaum the tidings [of Christ’s return to Cana] attracted the attention of a Jewish nobleman who was an officer in the king’s service. A son of the officer was suffering from what seemed to be an incurable disease. Physicians had given him up to die; but when the father heard of Jesus, he determined to seek help from Him. . . .

On reaching Cana he found a throng surrounding Jesus. With an anxious heart he pressed through to the Saviour's presence. His faith faltered when he saw only a plainly dressed man, dusty and worn with travel. He doubted that this Person could do what he had come to ask of Him; yet, . . . his sorrow was known to Jesus. Before the officer had left his home, the Saviour had beheld his affliction.

But He knew also that the father had, in his own mind, made conditions concerning his belief in Jesus. Unless his petition should be granted, he would not receive Him as the Messiah. While the officer waited in an agony of suspense, Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." . . .

The Saviour contrasted this questioning unbelief with the simple faith of the Samaritans, who asked for no miracle or sign.

—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 196–198.

The nobleman had a degree of faith; for he had come to ask what seemed to him the most precious of all blessings. Jesus had a greater gift to bestow. He desired, not only to heal the child, but to make the officer and his household sharers in the blessings of salvation, and to kindle a light in Capernaum, which was so soon to be the field of His own labors. But the nobleman must realize his need before he would desire the grace of Christ. . . .

Like a flash of light, the Saviour's words to the nobleman laid bare his heart. He saw that his motives in seeking Jesus were selfish. His vacillating faith appeared to him in its true character. In deep distress he realized that his doubt might cost the life of his son. He knew that he was in the presence of One who could read the thoughts, and to whom all things were possible. In an agony of supplication he cried, "Sir, come down ere my child die." His faith took hold upon Christ as did Jacob, when, wrestling with the Angel, he cried, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Genesis 32:26.

Like Jacob he prevailed. The Saviour cannot withdraw from the soul that clings to Him, pleading its great need. "Go thy way," He said; "thy son liveth." The nobleman left the Saviour's presence with a peace and joy he had never known before. Not only did he believe that his son would be restored, but with strong confidence he trusted in Christ as the Redeemer.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 198.

Tuesday, October 1: The Miracle at the Pool of Bethesda

The [paralytic] was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” The sick man might have said, “Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.” But, no, he believed Christ’s word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You will to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise,—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed,—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, “I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.”
—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 50, 51.

Christ asked [the paralytic], “Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6). What a question! That was what he was there for, but Christ wanted to call forth the expression of desire in that man’s heart to be made whole. And when Christ bade him to rise, take up his bed and walk, he did just as Christ told him to do. . . . He did not stop to argue, but did just as he was bidden. He took up his bed and walked out and was healed from that time.

This is the faith that we need. But if you stop to explain everything and reason out every point, you will die in your sins, because you will never be satisfied.—*Faith and Works*, p. 68.

When Christ healed disease, He warned many of the afflicted ones, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” John 5:14. Thus He taught that they had brought disease upon themselves by transgressing the laws of God, and that health could be preserved only by obedience.

The physician should teach his patients that they are to cooperate with

God in the work of restoration. The physician has a continually increasing realization of the fact that disease is the result of sin. He knows that the laws of nature, as truly as the precepts of the Decalogue, are divine, and that only in obedience to them can health be recovered or preserved. He sees many suffering as the result of hurtful practices who might be restored to health if they would do what they might for their own restoration. They need to be taught that every practice which destroys the physical, mental, or spiritual energies is sin, and that health is to be secured through obedience to the laws that God has established for the good of all mankind.
—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 113.

Wednesday, October 2: Hard Hearts

[In Christ's] days the Sabbath had become so perverted that its observance reflected the character of selfish and arbitrary men rather than the character of God. Christ set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. Although followed with merciless hostility by the rabbis, He did not even appear to conform to their requirements, but went straight forward keeping the Sabbath according to the law of God.

In unmistakable language He testified to His regard for the law of Jehovah. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets," He said; "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" [Matthew 5:17–18].—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 183.

May the Lord work upon the hearts of those who have received great light, that they may depart from all iniquity. Behold the cross of Calvary. There is Jesus, who gave His life, not that men might continue in sin, not that they may have license to break the law of God, but that through this infinite sacrifice they may be saved from all sin. . . .

We have been asked why it is that there is so little power in the churches, why there is so little efficiency among our teachers. The answer is that it is because known sin in various forms is cherished among the professed followers of Christ, and the conscience becomes hardened by long violation. The answer is that men do not walk with God but separate

company with Jesus, and as a result we see manifested in the church selfishness, covetousness, pride, strife, contention, hard-heartedness, licentiousness, and evil practices.

—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 161, 162.

The spirit of the truth makes better men and women of those who receive it in their hearts. It works like leaven till the entire being is brought into conformity to its principles. It opens the heart that has been frozen by avarice; it opens the hand that has ever been closed to human suffering; and charity and kindness are seen as its fruits. . . .

Day by day men and women are deciding their eternal destiny. I have been shown that many are in great danger. When a man will do or say anything to gain his end, nothing but the power of God can save him. His character needs to be transformed before he can have a good conscience, void of offense toward God and man. Self must die, and Christ must take possession of the soul temple. When, by rejecting the light that God has given, men abuse and trample upon the conscience, they are in fearful danger. Their future eternal welfare is imperiled.—*Mind, Character, Personality*, vol. 1, pp. 319, 320.

Thursday, October 3: Jesus' Claims

“Jerusalem, and all Judea” had listened to the preaching of John the Baptist; and the deputation from the Sanhedrin, with the multitude, had heard his testimony concerning Jesus. In Judea, Christ had received His first disciples. Here much of His early ministry had been spent. The flashing forth of His divinity in the cleansing of the temple, His miracles of healing, and the lessons of divine truth that fell from His lips, all proclaimed that which after the healing at Bethesda He had declared before the Sanhedrin,—His Sonship to the Eternal.

If the leaders in Israel had received Christ, He would have honored them as His messengers to carry the gospel to the world. To them first was given the opportunity to become heralds of the kingdom and grace of God. But . . . jealousy and distrust of the Jewish leaders had ripened into open hatred, and the hearts of the people were turned away from Jesus.

The Sanhedrin had rejected Christ's message and was bent upon His

death.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 231, 232.

Where many have erred, was in not being careful in following God's ideas, but their own. Christ Himself declared, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do" (John 5:19). So utterly was He emptied of Himself that He made no schemes and plans. He lived accepting God's plans for Him, and the Father day by day unfolded His plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, and declared, "Whatsoever I see the Father do, that I do," how much more should human agents depend upon God for constant instruction, so that their lives might be the simple working out of God's plans!

—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 147.

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

Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ; we are to draw constantly from Him, partaking of Him, the living Bread that came down from heaven, drawing from a fountain ever fresh, ever giving forth its abundant treasures. If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Often our hearts will burn within us as He draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. When this is in truth the experience of the Christian, there is seen in his life a simplicity, a humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, that show to all with whom he associates that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 129.

Friday, October 4: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "Forgiveness of Sin Brings Healing," p. 154;

The Upward Look, “Revelation of God’s Will,” p. 341.

Lesson 2

Signs of Divinity

Sabbath Afternoon, October 5

Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible. Christ, the sinless One, will save every son and daughter of Adam who accepts the salvation proffered them, consenting to become the children of God. The Saviour has purchased the fallen race with His own blood.

This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

Those who had an appreciation of the character and mission of Christ, were filled with reverence and awe, as they looked upon him and felt that they were looking upon the temple of the living God. Officers were sent to take the Son of God, that the temple in which God was enshrined might be destroyed. But as they drew near and heard the words of divine wisdom that fell from his lips, they were charmed, and the power and excellence of his instruction so filled their hearts and minds that they forgot the purpose for which they had been sent. Christ revealed himself to their souls. Divinity flashed through humanity, and they returned so filled with this one thought, so charmed with the ideas he had presented, that when the leaders of Israel inquired, “Why have ye not brought him?” they replied, “Never

man spake like this man.” They had seen that which priests and rulers would not see,—humanity flooded with the light and glory of divinity.—*Signs of the Times*, January 20, 1890, par. 9.

When he was upon earth Jesus said to those who refused him, “Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.” There are many who are refusing to respond to the drawing love of Christ today. Jesus calls, but many refuse to respond to the invitation. They will not avail themselves of the privilege of having Jesus for their personal Saviour. They do not come in humility and faith, that they may know by a personal experience what they are to Jesus, and what he is to them. But the promise is, “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” Jesus will not rest until he leads his followers unto the realms of perfect joy and glory.—*Signs of the Times*, February 27, 1893, par. 5.

Sunday, October 6: The Feeding of the Five Thousand

The Passover was at hand, and, from far and near, bands of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem gathered to see Jesus. Additions were made to their number, until there were assembled five thousand men besides women and children. Before Christ reached the shore, a multitude were waiting for Him. But He landed unobserved by them, and spent a little time apart with the disciples.

From the hillside He looked upon the moving multitude, and His heart was stirred with sympathy. Interrupted as He was, and robbed of His rest, He was not impatient. He saw a greater necessity demanding His attention as He watched the people coming and still coming. He “was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd.” . . . They received no help from the priests and rulers; but the healing waters of life flowed from Christ as He taught the multitude the way of salvation.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 364.

I was directed to the power of God manifested through Moses, when the Lord sent him in before Pharaoh. Satan understood his business, and was upon the ground. He well knew that Moses was chosen of God to break the

yoke of bondage upon the children of Israel; and that he in his work prefigured Christ's first advent to break Satan's power over the human family, and deliver those who were made captives by his power. Satan knew that when Christ should appear, mighty works and miracles would be wrought by him, that the world might know that the Father had sent him. He trembled for his power. He consults with his angels to accomplish a work which shall answer a two-fold purpose: 1. To destroy the influence of the work wrought by God through his servant Moses, by working through his agents, and thus counterfeiting the true work of God. 2. The influence of his work through the magicians would reach down through all ages, and would destroy in the minds of many, true faith in the mighty miracles and works of Christ, which would be performed by him when he should come to this world. He knew that his kingdom would suffer, for the power which he held over mankind would be subject to Christ. It was no human influence or power Moses possessed, which wrought on the minds, that produced those miracles before Pharaoh. It was the power of God. These signs and wonders were wrought through Moses, to convince Pharaoh that the great "I am" sent him to command Pharaoh to let Israel go, that they might serve him.—*Spiritual Gifts*, volume 4b, p. 81.

Christ made satisfaction for the guilt of the whole world, and all who will come to God in faith, will receive the righteousness of Christ, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Our sin has been expiated, put away, cast into the depths of the sea. Through repentance and faith we are rid of sin, and look unto the Lord our righteousness. Jesus suffered, the just for the unjust.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 392.

Monday, October 7: "Surely, He Is the Prophet"

Seated upon the grassy plain, in the twilight of the spring evening, the people ate of the food that Christ had provided. No human power could create from five barley loaves and two small fishes food sufficient to feed thousands of hungry people. And they said one to another, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14). . . . He can

conquer the nations, and give to Israel the long-sought dominion.

In their enthusiasm the people are ready at once to crown Him king. They see that He makes no effort to attract attention or secure honor to Himself. . . . They fear that He will never urge His claim to David's throne. Consulting together, they agree to take Him by force, and proclaim Him the King of Israel. . . . Jesus sees what is on foot, and understands, as they cannot, what would be the result of such a movement. . . .

Jesus now commands the multitude to disperse; and His manner is so decisive that they dare not disobey. . . . The kingly bearing of Jesus, and His few quiet words of command, quell the tumult, and frustrate their designs. They recognize in Him a power above all earthly authority, and without a question they submit.

—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 46.

Jesus said of the Old Testament Scriptures—and how much more it is true of the New—"They are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). . . . If you would become acquainted with the Saviour, study the Holy Scriptures. Fill the whole heart with the words of God. They are the living water, quenching your burning thirst. They are the living bread from heaven. . . . Our bodies are built up from what we eat and drink; and as in the natural economy, so in the spiritual economy: it is what we meditate upon that will give tone and strength to our spiritual nature.

Spiritual life must be sustained by communion with Christ through His Word. The mind must dwell upon it, the heart must be filled with it. The Word of God laid up in the heart and sacredly cherished and obeyed, through the power of the grace of Christ can make man right, and keep him right.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 228.

Jesus did not gratify their curiosity. He sadly said, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." They did not seek Him from any worthy motive; but as they had been fed with the loaves, they hoped still to receive temporal benefit by attaching themselves to Him. The Saviour bade them, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Seek not merely for material benefit. Let it not be the chief effort to provide for the life that now is, but seek for spiritual food, even that wisdom which will endure unto everlasting life. This the Son of God alone can give;

“for Him hath God the Father sealed.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 384.

Tuesday, October 8: The Healing of the Blind Man: Part 1

Job was sorely afflicted, and his friends sought to make him acknowledge that his suffering was the result of sin, and cause him to feel under condemnation. They represented his case as that of a great sinner; but the Lord rebuked them for their judgment of His faithful servant.

There is wickedness in our world, but all the suffering is not the result of a perverted course of life. Job is brought distinctly before us as a man whom the Lord allowed Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him. For a time his body was covered with loathsome sores, and he suffered greatly. His friends came to comfort him, but they tried to make him see that he was responsible, by his sinful course, for his afflictions. But he defended himself, and denied the charge, declaring, Miserable comforters are ye all. By seeking to make him guilty before God, and deserving of His punishment, they brought a grievous test upon him, and represented God in a false light; but Job did not swerve from his loyalty, and God rewarded His faithful servant.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1140.

Christ came to reveal to the world the knowledge of the character of God. . . . The truth of God had been hidden beneath a mass of tradition and error. The sacrificial offerings which had been instituted to teach men concerning the vicarious atonement of Christ, to teach them that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, had become to them a stumbling-block. All that was spiritual and holy was perverted to their darkened understanding. They were blinded by pride and prejudice so that they could not see to the end of that which was abolished. Jesus came to change the order of things that then existed, and reveal to them the character of the Father.

—*The Review and Herald*, November 1, 1892, par. 12.

Not infrequently the minds of even God's servants are so blinded by tradition and false teaching that they only partially grasp the things

revealed in His Word. The disciples of Christ, even when the Saviour was with them, had the popular conception of the Messiah as a temporal prince who was to exalt Israel to universal empire. They could not understand His words foretelling His suffering and death. . . .

After His resurrection Jesus appeared to His disciples on the way to Emmaus, and, “expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” It was His purpose to fasten their faith upon the “sure word of prophecy” (Luke 24:27; 2 Peter 1:19), not merely by His personal testimony, but by the prophecies of the Old Testament. And as the very first step in imparting this knowledge, Jesus directed the disciples to “Moses and all the prophets” of the Old Testament Scriptures.—*From Here to Forever*, pp. 215, 217.

Wednesday, October 9: The Healing of the Blind Man: Part 2

The miracles [Christ] performed on the Sabbath were all for the relief of the afflicted, but the Pharisees had sought to condemn Him as a Sabbathbreaker. They had tried to arouse the Herodians against Him. They represented that He was seeking to set up a rival kingdom, and consulted with them how to destroy Him. To excite the Romans against Him, they had represented Him as trying to subvert their authority. They had tried every pretext to cut Him off from influencing the people. But so far their attempts had been foiled. The multitudes who witnessed His works of mercy and heard His pure and holy teachings knew that these were not the deeds and words of a Sabbathbreaker or blasphemer. Even the officers sent by the Pharisees had been so influenced by His words that they could not lay hands on Him. In desperation the Jews had finally passed an edict that any man who professed faith in Jesus should be cast out of the synagogue.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 538.

Because of the pride and ambition of the children of men, God has chosen to perform His mighty works by the most simple and humble means. It is not the men whom the world honors as great, talented, or brilliant, that God selects. He chooses those who will work in meekness and simplicity, acknowledging Him as their leader and their source of strength. He would have us make Him our protector and our guide in all the duties and affairs of life. . . .

The apostle Paul could meet eloquence with eloquence, logic with logic; he could intelligently enter into all controversies. But was he satisfied with this worldly knowledge? He writes: “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentaries*, vol. 6, p. 1083.

Christ chose the foolish things of the world—those whom the world pronounced unlearned and ignorant—to confound the wise men of the

world. The disciples were unlearned in the traditions of the rabbis, but with Christ as their example and teacher, they were gaining an education of the highest order; for they had before them a divine Example. Christ was presenting to them truths of the highest character.

Those whom God employs to do service for Him, He would have fitted in His way for that service. Those who preach Christ must learn of Christ daily, in order to understand the mystery of saving and serving the souls for whom He has died. . . . They must pattern after Him in all things, sharing His tender compassion and His sternness against all evil working.—*This Day with God*, p. 41.

Thursday, October 10: The Resurrection of Lazarus

[Christ] wept at the grave of Lazarus, that He could not save every one whom Satan's power had laid low in death. He had given Himself a ransom for many, even all who would avail themselves of the privilege of coming back to their loyalty to God. . . . When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He knew that for that life He must pay the ransom on the cross of Calvary. Every rescue made was to cause Him the deepest humiliation. He was to taste death for every man. . . .

He knew that He alone could rescue them from the pit into which they had fallen. He alone could place their feet in the right path; His perfection alone could avail for their imperfection. He alone could cover their nakedness with His spotless robe of righteousness. . . . He is strong to deliver. Help has been laid on One that is mighty. He encircles man with His long human arm, while with His divine arm He lays hold of Omnipotence.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 25.

It was not only because of His human sympathy with Mary and Martha that Jesus wept. In His tears there was a sorrow as high above human sorrow as the heavens are higher than the earth. Christ did not weep for Lazarus; for He was about to call him from the grave. He wept because many of those now mourning for Lazarus would soon plan the death of Him who was the resurrection and the life. But how unable were the unbelieving Jews rightly to interpret His tears! Some, who could see nothing more than

the outward circumstances of the scene before Him as a cause for His grief, said softly, “Behold how He loved him!” Others, seeking to drop the seed of unbelief into the hearts of those present, said derisively, “Could not this Man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?” If it were in Christ’s power to save Lazarus, why then did He suffer him to die?

With prophetic eye Christ saw the enmity of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. He knew that they were premeditating His death. He knew that some of those now apparently so sympathetic would soon close against themselves the door of hope and the gates of the city of God. A scene was about to take place, in His humiliation and crucifixion, that would result in the destruction of Jerusalem, and at that time none would make lamentation for the dead. The retribution that was coming upon Jerusalem was plainly portrayed before Him. He saw Jerusalem compassed by the Roman legions. He knew that many now weeping for Lazarus would die in the siege of the city, and in their death there would be no hope.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 533, 534.

The blessed Bible gives us a knowledge of the great plan of salvation, and shows us how every individual may have eternal life. Who is the author of the book?—Jesus Christ. He is the True Witness, and He says to His own, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.” The Bible is to show us the way to Christ, and in Christ eternal life is revealed.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 308.

Friday, October 11: For Further Reading

The Ministry of Healing, “Five Small Barley Loaves Feed the Multitude,” pp. 45–50;

The Desire of Ages, “Priestly Plottings,” pp. 537–542.

Lesson 3

The Backstory: The Prologue

Sabbath Afternoon, October 12

In speaking of His preexistence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.

Christ's words were spoken with a quiet dignity and with an assurance and power that sent conviction to the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees. They felt the power of the message sent from heaven. God was knocking at the door of their hearts, entreating entrance.

He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. . . . He is the eternal, self-existent Son.

In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12). The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life. "He that believeth in me," said Jesus, "though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." . . . Christ here looks forward to the time of His second coming.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 17.

"In him [Christ] was life; and the life was the light of men." It is not physical life that is here specified, but immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. "I lay it down of myself," He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ.

While bearing human nature, He [Christ] was dependent upon the Omnipotent for His life. In His humanity, He laid hold of the divinity of God; and this every member of the human family has the privilege of doing.—*Maranatha*, p. 302.

The cross, the cross of Calvary presented again and again, plainly dwelt

upon in every discourse, will prove the life-healing balm, will reveal the beauty and excellence of virtue. Those who quibble over the authenticity of the Scriptures and question the authority of revelation will not be influenced. . . .

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” [John 17:3]. The eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us. This theme will quench unbelief; and yet, sad to say, Jesus has been dropped out of many, many discourses that have been preached by Seventh-day Adventist ministers. And why? Because these ministers had not Jesus abiding in their hearts by faith; they were not clothed with Christ’s righteousness.—*The Voice in Speech and Song*, p. 315.

Sunday, October 13: In the Beginning—The Divine Logos

While God’s Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding His preexistence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with His Father. From everlasting He was the Mediator of the covenant, the One in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted Him, were to be blessed. “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God. . . .

God and Christ knew from the beginning of the apostasy of Satan and of the fall of Adam through the deceptive power of the apostate. The plan of salvation was designed to redeem the fallen race, to give them another trial. Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, set up from everlasting to be our substitute and surety. Before the world was made, it was arranged that the divinity of Christ should be enshrouded in humanity. “A body,” said Christ, “hast thou prepared me.” But He did not come in human form until the fullness of time had expired. Then He came to our world, a babe in Bethlehem.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 74.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the

adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right. This was no robbery of God [Proverbs 8:22–27 quoted].

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ was One with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light unapproachable and incomprehensible.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1126.

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2). “The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up” (Matthew 4:16). Here the pre-existence of Christ and the purpose of His manifestation to our world are presented as living beams of light from the eternal throne. “Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:1, 2).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 248.

Monday, October 14: The Word Made Flesh

[Christ] voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, and by His own consent. He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity, which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration, of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished. Though He walked among men in poverty, scattering His blessings wherever He went, at His word legions of angels would surround their Redeemer, and do Him homage. But He walked the

earth unrecognized, unconfessed, with but few exceptions, by His creatures.
—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1126.

The apostle [John] exalted Christ before his brethren as the One by whom God had created all things and by whom He had wrought out their redemption. He declared that the hand that sustains the worlds in space, and holds in their orderly arrangements and tireless activity all things throughout the universe of God, is the hand that was nailed to the cross for them. . . .

The Son of God stooped to uplift the fallen. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth to be “wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities.” Isaiah 53:5. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He knew what it meant to be hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He was a stranger and a sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women of today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth.” John 1:14.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 471, 472.

Christ, the outshining of the Father’s glory, came to the world as its light. He came to represent God to men, and of Him it is written that He was anointed “with the Holy Ghost and with power,” and “went about doing good.” Acts 10:38. In the synagogue at Nazareth He said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Luke 4:18, 19.
—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 416.

Tuesday, October 15: Hearing or Not Hearing the Word

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

When He spoke these words, Jesus was in the court of the temple specially connected with the services of the Feast of Tabernacles. In the center of this court rose two lofty standards, supporting lampstands of great size. After the evening sacrifice, all the lamps were kindled, shedding their light over Jerusalem. This ceremony was in commemoration of the pillar of light that guided Israel in the desert, and was also regarded as pointing to the coming of the Messiah. At evening when the lamps were lighted, the court was a scene of great rejoicing. Gray-haired men, the priests of the temple and the rulers of the people, united in the festive dances to the sound of instrumental music and the chants of the Levites.

In the illumination of Jerusalem, the people expressed their hope of the Messiah’s coming to shed His light upon Israel. But to Jesus the scene had a wider meaning. As the radiant lamps of the temple lighted up all about them, so Christ, the source of spiritual light, illumines the darkness of the world. Yet the symbol was imperfect. That great light which His own hand had set in the heavens was a truer representation of the glory of His mission.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 463.

Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted to the man, and works in mind and heart and character. It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature, and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation. Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin. Faith can present Christ’s perfect obedience instead of the sinner’s transgression and defection. When the sinner believes that Christ is his personal Saviour, then, according to His unfailing promises, God pardons his sin, and justifies him freely. The repentant soul realizes that his justification comes because Christ, as his substitute and surety, has died for him, is his atonement and righteousness.—*Selected Messages, book 1*, p. 366.

Wednesday, October 16: Reappearing Themes— Belief/Unbelief

“Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” You are just as dependent upon Christ for all that you receive as is the weakest, poorest, and humblest soul. “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” A mere speculative belief amounts to nothing. Do you believe on the Son of God as your personal Saviour? Then if you believe with all your heart, God dwells in the soul, and the soul in God. You represent Jesus. Those who are in positions of trust are on test and trial, to see if they will be wise men in positions of trust, to reveal whether Christ is working in and through them, so that He can represent His character and express Himself in their words and actions toward His heritage, for whom He has given His own precious life.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 148.

It is not for lack of knowledge that God’s people are now perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, but which has been neglected or refused, will condemn them. Those who never had the light to reject will not be in condemnation. What more could have been done for God’s vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon God’s people; but it will not save them unless they consent to be saved by it, fully live up to it, and transmit it to others in darkness. God calls upon His people to act. It is an individual work of confessing and forsaking sins and returning unto the Lord that is needed. One cannot do this work for another. Religious knowledge has accumulated, and this has increased corresponding obligations. Great light has been shining upon the church, and by it they are condemned because they refuse to walk in it. If they were blind they would be without sin. But they have seen light and have heard much truth, yet are not wise and holy. Many have for years made no advancement in knowledge and true holiness. They are spiritual dwarfs. Instead of going forward to perfection, they are going back to the darkness and bondage of Egypt. Their minds are not exercised unto godliness and true holiness.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 123.

It is our privilege to stand with the light of heaven upon us. It was thus that Enoch walked with God. It was no easier for Enoch to live a righteous

life than it is for us at the present time. The world in his time was no more favorable to growth in grace and holiness than it is now.

It was by prayer and communion with God that Enoch was enabled to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are living in the perils of the last days, and we must receive our strength from the same Source. We must walk with God. A separation from the world is required of us, for we cannot remain free from its pollution unless we follow the example of the faithful Enoch.

—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 70.

Thursday, October 17: Reappearing Themes— Glory

[In John 17,] Christ is not praying for the manifestation of the glory of human nature; for that human nature never had an existence in His pre-existence. He is praying to His Father in regard to a glory possessed in His oneness with God. His prayer is that of a mediator; the favor He entreats in the manifestation of that divine glory which was possessed by Him when He was one with God. Let the veil be removed, He says, and let My glory shine forth—the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. . . .

“Father,” He says, “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.” And then the Father declares, “Let all the angels of God worship him.” The heavenly host prostrate themselves before Him, and raise their song of triumph and joy. Glory encircles the King of heaven, and was beheld by all the heavenly intelligences. No words can describe the scene which took place as the Son of God was publicly reinstated in the place of honor and glory which He voluntarily left when He became a man.

And today Christ, glorified, and yet our brother, is our Advocate in the courts of heaven.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1146.

Oh, what soul hunger and longing had Christ to save that which was lost! The body crucified upon the cross did not detract from His divinity, His power of God to save through the human sacrifice, all who would accept His righteousness. In dying upon the cross, He transferred the guilt from the person of the transgressor to that of the divine Substitute through

faith in Him as his personal Redeemer. The sins of a guilty world, which in figure are represented as “red as crimson,” were imputed to the divine Surety. . . .

Divinity was doing its work while humanity was suffering from the hatred and revenge of a God-hating people, because Christ had acknowledged Himself the Son of God. . . .

In the prayer of the poor thief [on the cross], there was a note different from that which was sounding on every side; it was a note of faith, and it reached to Christ. The faith of the dying man in Him was as sweetest music in the ears of Christ. The glad note of redemption and salvation was heard amid His dying agonies. God was glorified in and through His Son.—*This Day With God*, p. 236.

Christ had finished the work that was given Him to do. He had glorified God on the earth. He had manifested the Father’s name. He had gathered out those who were to continue His work among men. And He said, “I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are.” “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; . . . I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.”

Thus in the language of one who has divine authority, Christ gives His elect church into the Father’s arms. As a consecrated high priest He intercedes for His people. As a faithful shepherd He gathers His flock under the shadow of the Almighty, in the strong and sure refuge. For Him there waits the last battle with Satan, and He goes forth to meet it.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 680.

Friday, October 18: For Further Reading

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, “Ye Are the Light of the World,” pp. 38–44;

Selected Messages, “Self-Indulgent Will Scorn Faithful Ones,” book 3, p. 400.

Lesson 4

Witnesses of Christ as the Messiah

Sabbath Afternoon, October 19

All the rays of light shining in the Scriptures point to Jesus Christ, and testify of Him, linking together the Old and New Testament Scriptures. Christ is presented as the author and finisher of their faith, Himself the one in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” . . .

Jesus Christ is the knowledge of the Father, and Christ is our great teacher sent from God. Christ has declared in the sixth chapter of John that He is that bread sent down from heaven. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 383.

Jesus said to [the scribes and Pharisees], “Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.” “For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d.” “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness of the truth. But I receive not testimony from man; but these things I say, that ye might be saved.” He appeals to them to recall the deep conviction that was upon them under the messages of John. He said: “He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.” The witness of the Father had been given. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out

of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

—*Signs of the Times*, November 13, 1893, par. 2.

In entering upon the great work of his earthly life, Jesus chose five disciples; John, Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael. These men were called from their humble occupations to accompany the Saviour in his ministry, receive his divine teachings, and witness his mighty miracles, that they might publish them to the world.

There was to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee. The parties were relatives of Joseph and Mary. Christ knew of this family gathering, and that many influential persons would be brought together there, so, in company with his newly-made disciples, he made his way to Cana. As soon as it was known that Jesus had come to the place, a special invitation was sent to him and his friends. This was what he had purposed, and so he graced the feast with his presence.—*Redemption: Or the Miracles of Christ, the Mighty One*, p. 3.

Sunday, October 20: The Testimony of John the Baptist

There was a great work appointed for the prophet John, but there was no school on the earth with which he could connect. His learning must be obtained away from the cities, in the wilderness. The Old Testament Scriptures, God, and the nature which God had created, were to be his study books. God was fitting John for his work of preparing the way of the Lord. His food was simply locusts and wild honey. The customs and practices of men were not to be the education of this man. Worldly engrossment was to act no part in the formation of his character. . . .

He sought the favor of God, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him, and kindled in his heart a glowing zeal to do the great work of calling the people to repentance, and to a higher and holier life. John was fitting himself, by the privations and hardships of his secluded life, to so control all his physical and mental powers that he could stand among the people as unmoved by surrounding circumstances as the rocks and mountains of the

wilderness that had surrounded him for thirty years.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentaries*, vol. 5, p. 1115.

The childhood, youth, and manhood of John had been characterized by firmness and moral power. When his voice was heard in the wilderness saying, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight” (Matthew 3:3), Satan feared for the safety of his kingdom. The sinfulness of sin was revealed in such a manner that men trembled. Satan’s power over many who had been under his control was broken. He had been unwearied in his efforts to draw away the Baptist from a life of unreserved surrender to God; but he had failed. And he had failed to overcome Jesus. In the temptation in the wilderness, Satan had been defeated, and his rage was great. Now he determined to bring sorrow upon Christ by striking John. The One whom he could not entice to sin he would cause to suffer.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 224.

John’s testimony had been positive, had been given in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. He had testified of what his eyes had seen, of what his ears had heard, of what his hands had handled, of the word of life. Jesus said, “There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.” The scribes and Pharisees had believed the words of John at the time, but pride and unbelief worked in their hearts after Satan’s order, and envy, jealousy, and downright hatred of Christ were revealed.

Jesus said to his disciples: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; . . . but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. . . . But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”

—*Signs of the Times*, November 13, 1893, par. 3, 4.

Monday, October 21: The Lamb of God

When at the baptism of Jesus, John pointed to Him as the Lamb of God, a new light was shed upon the Messiah’s work. The prophet’s mind was directed to the words of Isaiah, “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.” Isaiah 53:7. During the weeks that followed, John with new interest studied

the prophecies and the teaching of the sacrificial service. He did not distinguish clearly the two phases of Christ's work,—as a suffering sacrifice and a conquering king,—but he saw that His coming had a deeper significance than priests or people had discerned. When he beheld Jesus among the throng on His return from the desert, he confidently looked for Him to give the people some sign of His true character. . . . But no word was spoken, no sign given. Jesus did not respond to the Baptist's announcement of Him, but mingled with the disciples of John, giving no outward evidence of His special work, and taking no measures to bring Himself to notice. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 136.

The next day John sees Jesus coming. With the light of the glory of God resting upon him, the prophet stretches out his hands, declaring, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is become before me. . . . And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, for this cause came I baptizing in water. . . . I have beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize in water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." John 1:29–34, R. V., margin.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 137.

[John] knew that it was the world's Redeemer whom he had baptized. The Holy Spirit rested upon him, and with outstretched hand pointing to Jesus, he cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

None among the hearers, and not even the speaker himself, discerned the import of these words, "the Lamb of God." Upon Mount Moriah, Abraham had heard the question of his son, "My father, . . . where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" The father answered, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Genesis 22:7, 8. And in the ram divinely provided in the place of Isaac, Abraham saw a symbol of Him who was to die for the sins of men. The Holy Spirit through Isaiah, taking up the illustration, prophesied of the Saviour, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter," "and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:7, 6).

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

Tuesday, October 22: The Two Disciples of John

Peter, James, and John sought every opportunity of coming into close contact with their Master, and their desire was granted. Of all the Twelve their relationship to Him was closest. John could be satisfied only with a still near intimacy, and this he obtained. At that first conference beside the Jordan, when Andrew, having heard Jesus, hurried away to call his brother, John sat silent, rapt in the contemplation of wondrous themes. He followed the Saviour, ever an eager, absorbed listener. . . .

John's was a nature that longed for love, for sympathy and companionship. He pressed close to Jesus, sat by His side, leaned upon His breast. As a flower drinks the sun and dew, so did he drink in the divine light and life. In adoration and love he beheld the Saviour, until likeness to Christ and fellowship with Him became his one desire, and in his character was reflected the character of his Master.—*Education*, p. 87.

Leaving John, [the two] went to seek Jesus. One of the two was Andrew, the brother of Simon; the other was John the evangelist. These were Christ's first disciples. Moved by an irresistible impulse, they followed Jesus— anxious to speak with Him, yet awed and silent, lost in the overwhelming significance of the thought, "Is this the Messiah?"

Jesus knew that the disciples were following Him. They were the first fruits of His ministry, and there was joy in the heart of the divine Teacher as these souls responded to His grace. Yet turning, He asked only, "What seek ye?" He would leave them free to turn back or to speak of their desire.

Of one purpose only were they conscious. One presence filled their thought. They exclaimed, "Rabbi, . . . where dwellest thou?" In a brief interview by the wayside they could not receive that for which they longed. They desired to be alone with Jesus, to sit at His feet, and hear His words. "He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day."

—*Lift Him Up*, p. 168.

If John and Andrew had possessed the unbelieving spirit of the priests

and rulers they would not have been found as learners at the feet of Jesus. They would have come to Him as critics, to judge His words. Many thus close the door to the most precious opportunities. But not so did these first disciples. They had responded to the Holy Spirit's call in the preaching of John the Baptist. Now they recognized the voice of the heavenly Teacher. To them the words of Jesus were full of freshness and truth and beauty. A divine illumination was shed upon the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures. The many-sided themes of truth stood out in new light.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 139.

Wednesday, October 23: Philip and Nathaniel

“The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.” Philip obeyed the command, and straightway he also became a worker for Christ.
—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 139.

Philip called Nathanael. The latter had been among the throng when the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God. As Nathanael looked upon Jesus, he was disappointed. Could this man, who bore the marks of toil and poverty, be the Messiah? Yet Nathanael could not decide to reject Jesus, for the message of John had brought conviction to his heart.

At the time when Philip called him, Nathanael had withdrawn to a quiet grove to meditate upon the announcement of John and the prophecies concerning the Messiah. He prayed that if the one announced by John was the deliverer, it might be made known to him, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him with assurance that God had visited His people and raised up a horn of salvation for them. . . .

The message, “We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,” seemed to Nathanael a direct answer to his prayer. . . . [But] prejudice arose in Nathanael's heart. He exclaimed, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

Philip entered into no controversy. He said, “Come and see.” “Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” In surprise Nathanael exclaimed, “Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when

thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.”

It was enough. The divine Spirit that had borne witness to Nathanael in his solitary prayer under the fig tree now spoke to him in the words of Jesus. Though in doubt, and yielding somewhat to prejudice, Nathanael had come to Christ with an honest desire for truth, and now his desire was met. His faith went beyond that of the one who had brought him to Jesus. He answered and said, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 81.

If Nathanael had trusted to the rabbis for guidance, he would never have found Jesus. It was by seeing and judging for himself that he became a disciple. So in the case of many today whom prejudice withholds from good. How different would be the result if they would “come and see”!

While they trust to the guidance of human authority, none will come to a saving knowledge of the truth. Like Nathanael, we need to study God’s Word for ourselves, and pray for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. He who saw Nathanael under the fig tree will see us in the secret place of prayer. Angels from the world of light are near to those who in humility seek for divine guidance.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 140, 141.

Thursday, October 24: The Witness of Nicodemus

The great truth of the conversion of the heart by the Holy Spirit is presented in Christ’s words to Nicodemus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John 3:3–8, margin.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 98.

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. But while Nicodemus had not publicly acknowledged Christ, he had in the Sanhedrin council repeatedly thwarted the schemes of the priests to destroy Him. 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.

With Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus had borne the expense of the burial of Jesus. The disciples had been afraid to show themselves openly as Christ’s followers, but Nicodemus and Joseph had come boldly to their aid. The help of these rich and honored men was greatly needed in that hour of darkness. They had been able to do for their dead Master what it would have been impossible for the poor disciples to do; and their wealth and influence had protected them, in a great measure, from the malice of the priests and rulers.

—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 104.

There are very many who claim to serve God, but who have no experimental knowledge of Him. Their desire to do His will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal relation with a living Saviour, and their characters reveal defects both hereditary and cultivated. . . .

The only hope for these souls is to realize in themselves the truth of Christ’s words to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again.” “Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God.” John 3:7, 3, margin.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 48.

Friday, October 25: For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, “Wounded for our Transgressions,” p. 67;

Selected Messages, “Go Under the Fig Tree,” book 1, pp. 414, 415.

Lesson 5

The Testimony of the Samaritans

Sabbath Afternoon, October 26

Christ was the greatest teacher the world has ever known. He came to this earth to shed abroad the bright beams of truth, that men might gain a fitness for heaven. “For this cause came I into the world,” He declared, “that I should bear witness unto the truth.” John 18:37. He came to reveal the character of the Father, that men might be led to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Man’s need for a divine teacher was known in heaven. The pity and sympathy of God were aroused in behalf of human beings, fallen and bound to Satan’s chariot car; and when the fullness of time was come, He sent forth His Son. The One appointed in the councils of heaven came to this earth as man’s instructor. The rich benevolence of God gave Him to our world, and to meet the necessities of human nature He took humanity upon Himself.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 259.

In the temple at Jerusalem a low wall separated the outer court from all other portions of the sacred building. Upon this wall were inscriptions in different languages, stating that none but Jews were allowed to pass this boundary. Had a Gentile presumed to enter the inner enclosure, he would have desecrated the temple, and would have paid the penalty with his life. But Jesus, the originator of the temple and its service, drew the Gentiles to Him by the tie of human sympathy, while His divine grace brought to them the salvation which the Jews rejected.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 193.

Close by the Israelites who had set themselves to the task of rebuilding the temple, dwelt the Samaritans, a mixed race that had sprung up through the intermarriage of heathen colonists from the provinces of Assyria with

the remnant of the ten tribes which had been left in Samaria and Galilee. In later years the Samaritans claimed to worship the true God, but in heart and practice they were idolaters. . . .

During the period of the restoration, these Samaritans came to be known as “the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin.” Hearing that “the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel,” “they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers,” and expressed a desire to unite with them in its erection. “Let us build with you,” they proposed. . . . But the privilege they asked was refused them. “Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God,” the leaders of the Israelites declared; “but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.” Ezra 4:1–3. . . .

Had the Jewish leaders accepted this offer of assistance, they would have opened a door for the entrance of idolatry. They discerned the insincerity of the Samaritans. They realized that help gained through an alliance with these men would be as nothing in comparison with the blessing they might expect to receive by following the plain commands of Jehovah.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 567, 568.

Sunday, October 27: The Setting of the Encounter

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God’s family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth.

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life.

He passed by no human being as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every

neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them manifest as the children of God.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 25.

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.

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

Monday, October 28: The Woman at the Well

Christ neglected no opportunity of proclaiming the gospel of salvation. Listen to His wonderful words to that one woman of Samaria. He was

sitting by Jacob's well, as the woman came to draw water. To her surprise He asked a favor of her. "Give Me to drink," He said. He wanted a cool draft, and He wished also to open the way whereby He might give to her the water of life. "How is it," said the woman, "that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Jesus answered, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. . . . Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:7-14.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 27.

How much interest Christ manifested in this one woman! How earnest and eloquent were His words! When the woman heard them, she left her waterpot, and went into the city, saying to her friends, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" We read that "many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him." Verses 29, 39. And who can estimate the influence which these words have exerted for the saving of souls in the years that have passed since then?

Wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them. He reveals to them the Father, and the service acceptable to Him who reads the heart. For such He uses no parables. To them, as to the woman at the well, He says, "I that speak unto thee am He."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 28.

You must seek to have an indwelling Saviour, who will be to you as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. The water of life flowing from the heart always waters the hearts of others.

The water that Christ referred to was the revelation of His grace in His Word. His Spirit, His teaching, is as a satisfying fountain to every soul. . . . In Christ is fullness of joy forevermore. . . . Christ's gracious presence in His Word is ever speaking to the soul, representing Him as the well of living water to refresh the thirsting. It is our privilege to have a living, abiding Saviour. He is the source of spiritual power implanted within us, and His influence will flow forth in words and actions, refreshing all within the sphere of our influence, begetting in them desires and aspirations for

strength and purity, for holiness and peace, and for that joy which brings with it no sorrow. This is the result of an indwelling Saviour.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1134.

Tuesday, October 29: “ ‘Sir, Give Me This Water’ ”

The great difference between the Jews and the Samaritans was a difference in religious belief, a question as to what constitutes true worship. The Pharisees would say nothing good of the Samaritans, but poured their bitterest curses upon them. So strong was the antipathy between the Jews and the Samaritans that to the Samaritan woman it seemed a strange thing for Christ to ask her for a drink.

—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 380.

The prince of teachers, [the Savior] sought access to the people by the pathway of their most familiar associations. He presented the truth in such a way that ever after it was to His hearers intertwined with their most hallowed recollections and sympathies. He taught in a way that made them feel the completeness of His identification with their interests and happiness. His instruction was so direct, His illustrations were so appropriate, His words so sympathetic and cheerful, that His hearers were charmed. The simplicity and earnestness with which He addressed the needy, hallowed every word.

What a busy life He led! Day by day He might have been seen entering the humble abodes of want and sorrow, speaking hope to the downcast and peace to the distressed. Gracious, tenderhearted, pitiful, He went about lifting up the bowed-down and comforting the sorrowful. Wherever He went, He carried blessing.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 23, 24.

Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; but it is impossible to endow men with the Holy Spirit, who are set in their ideas, whose doctrines are all stereotyped and unchangeable, who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men, as were the Jews in the time of Christ. They were very punctilious in the observances of the church, very rigorous in

following their forms, but they were destitute of vitality and religious devotion. They were represented by Christ as like the dry skins which were then used as bottles. The gospel of Christ could not be placed in their hearts; for there was no room to contain it. They could not be the new bottles into which He could pour His new wine. Christ was obliged to seek elsewhere than among the scribes and the Pharisees for bottles for His doctrine of truth and life. He must find men who were willing to have regeneration of heart. He came to give to men new hearts. He said, "A new heart also will I give you." But the self-righteous of that day and of this day feel no need of having a new heart. Jesus passed by the scribes and the Pharisees, for they felt no need of a Saviour.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 386.

Wednesday, October 30: The Revelation of Jesus

Jesus had begun to break down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and to preach salvation to the world. Though He was a Jew, He mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of His nation. In face of their prejudices He accepted the hospitality of this despised people. He slept under their roofs, ate with them at their tables,—partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands,—taught in their streets, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 193.

The stay of Jesus in Samaria was designed to be a blessing to His disciples, who were still under the influence of Jewish bigotry. They felt that loyalty to their own nation required them to cherish enmity toward the Samaritans. They wondered at the conduct of Jesus. They could not refuse to follow His example, and during the two days in Samaria, fidelity to Him kept their prejudices under control; yet in heart they were unreconciled. They were slow to learn that their contempt and hatred must give place to pity and sympathy. But after the Lord's ascension, His lessons came back to them with a new meaning. After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they recalled the Saviour's look, His words, the respect and tenderness of His bearing toward these despised strangers. When Peter went to preach in Samaria, he brought the same spirit into his own work. When John was called to Ephesus and Smyrna, he remembered the experience at Shechem,

and was filled with gratitude to the divine Teacher, who, foreseeing the difficulties they must meet, had given them help in His own example.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 193.

As soon as she had found the Saviour the Samaritan woman brought others to Him. She proved herself a more effective missionary than His own disciples. The disciples saw nothing in Samaria to indicate that it was an encouraging field. Their thoughts were fixed upon a great work to be done in the future. They did not see that right around them was a harvest to be gathered. But through the woman whom they despised, a whole cityful were brought to hear the Saviour. She carried the light at once to her countrymen.

This woman represents the working of a practical faith in Christ. Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish eager to drink of the water of life.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 195.

Thursday, October 31: The Testimony of the Samaritans

The Pharisees despised the simplicity of Jesus. They ignored His miracles, and demanded a sign that He was the Son of God. But the Samaritans asked no sign, and Jesus performed no miracles among them, save in revealing the secrets of her life to the woman at the well. Yet many received Him. In their new joy they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.”

The Samaritans believed that the Messiah was to come as the Redeemer, not only of the Jews, but of the world. The Holy Spirit through Moses had foretold Him as a prophet sent from God. Through Jacob it had been declared that unto Him should the gathering of the people be; and through Abraham, that in Him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. On these scriptures the people of Samaria based their faith in the Messiah. The fact that the Jews had misinterpreted the later prophets, attributing to the

first advent the glory of Christ's second coming, had led the Samaritans to discard all the sacred writings except those given through Moses. But as the Saviour swept away these false interpretations, many accepted the later prophecies and the words of Christ Himself in regard to the kingdom of God.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 192, 193.

The Saviour is still carrying forward the same work as when He proffered the water of life to the woman of Samaria. Those who call themselves His followers may despise and shun the outcast ones; but no circumstance of birth or nationality, no condition of life, can turn away His love from the children of men. To every soul, however sinful, Jesus says, If thou hadst asked of Me, I would have given thee living water.

The gospel invitation is not to be narrowed down, and presented only to a select few, who, we suppose, will do us honor if they accept it. The message is to be given to all. Wherever hearts are open to receive the truth, Christ is ready to instruct them. He reveals to them the Father, and the worship acceptable to Him who reads the heart. For such He uses no parables. To them, as to the woman at the well, He says, "I that speak unto thee am He."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 194.

When Jesus sat down to rest at Jacob's well, He had come from Judea, where His ministry had produced little fruit. He had been rejected by the priests and rabbis, and even the people who professed to be His disciples had failed of perceiving His divine character. He was faint and weary; yet He did not neglect the opportunity of speaking to one woman, though she was a stranger, an alien from Israel, and living in open sin.

The Saviour did not wait for congregations to assemble. Often He began His lessons with only a few gathered about Him, but one by one the passers-by paused to listen, until a multitude heard with wonder and awe the words of God through the heaven-sent Teacher. The worker for Christ should not feel that he cannot speak with the same earnestness to a few hearers as to a larger company. There may be only one to hear the message; but who can tell how far-reaching will be its influence? It seemed a small matter, even to His disciples, for the Saviour to spend His time upon a woman of Samaria. But He reasoned more earnestly and eloquently with her than with kings, councilors, or high priests. The lessons He gave to that woman have been repeated to the earth's remotest bounds.—*The Desire of*

Ages, p. 194.

Friday, November 1: For Further Reading

My Life Today, “The Bible Begets New Life,” p. 24;

Christ Triumphant, “Christ Will Create a New Heart in His Followers,” p. 233.

Lesson 6

More Testimonies About Jesus

Sabbath Afternoon, November 2

Christ presented to the multitude of Jews and Gentiles of all nations the real original truths connected with his kingdom, which had been buried out of sight. He sought to clear away the mist and fog of their false, long-cherished ideas in regard to his mission and his kingdom. They supposed it was a temporal, earthly kingdom; but he showed them its spiritual and eternal nature. He unfolded before them the far-reaching principles of the law of God; commandment after commandment he opened before them in its true spiritual bearing, and showed the extent of the requirements of God's precepts. They are not only to direct conduct, but to control the heart. The lessons given by Christ were so different from anything to which the people had listened from the scribes and Pharisees, that they were astonished at his doctrines. He did not present labored, intricate arguments that buried with exactions the commandments of God, so that no one could ever hope to keep them. Jesus, the great Teacher, laid open in the simplest language, the great moral truths, clothing them with freshness and power. —*The Review and Herald*, March 21, 1893, par. 3.

The report of Christ's miracles had spread wherever the Jews were dispersed; and although for many months He had been absent from the feasts, the interest in Him had not abated. Many from all parts of the world had come up to the Feast of Tabernacles in the hope of seeing Him. At the beginning of the feast many inquiries were made for Him. The Pharisees and rulers looked for Him to come, hoping for an opportunity to condemn Him. They anxiously inquired, "Where is He?" but no one knew. The thought of Him was uppermost in all minds. Through fear of the priests and rulers, none dared acknowledge Him as the Messiah, but everywhere there

was quiet yet earnest discussion concerning Him. Many defended Him as one sent from God, while others denounced Him as a deceiver of the people.
—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 451.

Jesus could have been at peace with the world only by leaving the transgressors of the law unreprieved, unrebuked. This he could not do; for he was to take away the sins of the world. . . . Christ denounced unrighteousness, and his very presence was a rebuke to sin. The atmosphere that surrounded his soul was so pure, so elevated, that it placed the hypocritical rabbis, priests, and rulers in their true position, and revealed them in their true character as claiming sanctity, and at the same time misrepresenting God and his truth. In the rich loveliness of the character of Christ, zeal for God was always apparent. His righteousness went before him, and the glory of the Lord was rearward. He hated one thing only, and that was sin. But the world loved sin and hated righteousness, and this was the cause of the hostility of the world to Jesus.
—*The Review and Herald*, July 24, 1894, par. 5.

Sunday, November 3: Humility of Soul: John the Baptist Testifies Again

When, after Christ's ministry began, the disciples of John came to him with the complaint that all men were following the new Teacher, John showed how clearly he understood his relation to the Messiah, and how gladly he welcomed the One for whom he had prepared the way. . . .

"Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him; rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." [John 3:27–30.]

Looking in faith to the Redeemer, John had risen to the height of self-abnegation. He sought not to attract men to himself, but to lift their thoughts higher and still higher, until they should rest upon the Lamb of God. He himself had been only a voice, a cry in the wilderness. Now with joy he accepted silence and obscurity, that the eyes of all might be turned to the Light of life.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 55, 56.

The prophet [John the Baptist] points to the Saviour as the Sun of Righteousness rising with splendor, and soon to eclipse his own light, then growing pale and dim in the glory of a greater light. John, by his unselfish joy in the successful ministry of Jesus, presents to the world the truest type of nobility ever exhibited by mortal man. It carries a lesson of submission and self-sacrifice to those whom God has placed in responsible positions. It teaches them never to appropriate to themselves undue honor, nor let the spirit of rivalry disgrace the cause of God. . . .

The news that had been carried to John concerning the success of Jesus, was also borne to Jerusalem, and there created against him jealousy, envy, and hatred. Jesus knew the hard hearts and darkened minds of the Pharisees, and that they would spare no pains to create a division between his own disciples and those of John that would greatly injure the work, so he quietly ceased to baptize and withdrew to Galilee. He knew that the storm was gathering which was soon to sweep away the noblest prophet God had ever given to the world. He wished to avoid all division of feeling in the great work before him, and, for the time, removed from that region for the purpose of allaying all excitement detrimental to the cause of God. —*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 138, 139.

When, in the place of leaning upon human understanding or conforming to worldly maxims, we sit at the feet of Jesus, eagerly drinking in His words, learning of Him, and saying, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” our natural independence, our self-confidence, our strong self-will, will be exchanged for a childlike, submissive, teachable spirit. . . .

Our affections will center in Jesus, our thoughts will be strongly drawn heavenward. Christ will increase, I will decrease. . . . We will cultivate the virtues that dwell in Jesus, that we may reflect to others a representation of His character.—*Our High Calling*, p. 99.

Monday, November 4: A New Understanding of the Messiah

When the Saviour began His ministry, the popular conception of the Messiah and His work was such as wholly unfitted the people to receive Him. The spirit of true devotion had been lost in tradition and

ceremonialism, and the prophecies were interpreted at the dictate of proud, world-loving hearts. The Jews looked for the coming One, not as a Saviour from sin, but as a great prince who should bring all nations under the supremacy of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. In vain had John the Baptist, with the heart-searching power of the ancient prophets, called them to repentance. In vain had he, beside the Jordan, pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. God was seeking to direct their minds to Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering Saviour, but they would not hear.—*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 1.

In the light of divine revelation, through the atoning Sacrifice, we may see the glorious plan of redemption whereby our sins are pardoned, and we drawn near to the heart of infinite love. We see how God can retain all his justice, and yet pardon the transgressor of his law. And we are not simply forgiven, but we are accepted of God through the Beloved. The plan of redemption is not merely a way of escape from the penalty of transgression, but through it the sinner is forgiven his sins, and will be finally received into heaven,—not as a forgiven culprit pardoned and released from captivity, yet looked upon with suspicion and not admitted to friendship and trust; but welcomed as a child, and taken back into fullest confidence. The sacrifice of our Saviour has made ample provision for every repenting, believing soul. We are saved because God loves the purchase of the blood of Christ; and not only will he pardon the repentant sinner, not only will he permit him to enter heaven, but he, the Father of mercies, will wait at the very gates of heaven to welcome us, to give us an abundant entrance to the mansions of the blest. Oh what love, what wondrous love the Father has shown in the gift of his beloved Son for this fallen race! And this Sacrifice is a channel for the outflow of his infinite love, that all who believe on Jesus Christ may, like the prodigal son, receive full and free restoration to the favor of Heaven.—*The Review and Herald*, September 21, 1886, par. 12.

Jesus is our atoning sacrifice. We can make no atonement for ourselves; but by faith we can accept the atonement that has been made. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18, 19).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 321.

Tuesday, November 5: Acceptance and Rejection

The Jews were about to celebrate the Passover at Jerusalem, in commemoration of the night of Israel's deliverance, when the destroying angel smote the homes of Egypt. In the paschal lamb God desired them to behold the Lamb of God, and through the symbol receive Him who gave Himself for the life of the world. But the Jews had come to make the symbol all-important, while its significance was unnoticed. They discerned not the Lord's body. The same truth that was symbolized in the paschal service was taught in the words of Christ. But it was still undiscerned.

Now the rabbis exclaimed angrily, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" They affected to understand His words in the same literal sense as did Nicodemus when he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" John 3:4. To some extent they comprehended the meaning of Jesus, but they were not willing to acknowledge it. By misconstruing His words, they hoped to prejudice the people against Him.

Christ did not soften down His symbolical representation. He reiterated the truth in yet stronger language: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 388, 389.

Christ had spoken a sacred, eternal truth regarding the relation between Himself and His followers. He knew the character of those who claimed to be His disciples, and His words tested their faith. He declared that they were to believe and act upon His teaching. All who received Him would partake of His nature, and be conformed to His character. This involved the relinquishment of their cherished ambitions. It required the complete surrender of themselves to Jesus. They were called to become self-sacrificing, meek and lowly in heart. They must walk in the narrow path traveled by the Man of Calvary, if they would share in the gift of life and the glory of heaven.

The test was too great. The enthusiasm of those who had sought to take Him by force and make Him king grew cold. This discourse in the synagogue, they declared, had opened their eyes. Now they were

undeceived. In their minds His words were a direct confession that He was not the Messiah, and that no earthly rewards were to be realized from connection with Him. They had welcomed His miracle-working power; they were eager to be freed from disease and suffering; but they would not come into sympathy with His self-sacrificing life. They cared not for the mysterious spiritual kingdom of which He spoke. The insincere, the selfish, who had sought Him, no longer desired Him. If He would not devote His power and influence to obtaining their freedom from the Romans, they would have nothing to do with Him.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

Wednesday, November 6: The Witness of the Father

The world for Christ was not a place of ease and self-aggrandizement. He was not watching for an opportunity to seize its power and its glory. It held out no such prize for Him. It was the place into which His Father had sent Him. He had been given for the life of the world, to work out the great plan of redemption. He was accomplishing His work for the fallen race. But He was not to be presumptuous, not to rush into danger, not to hasten a crisis. Each event in His work had its appointed hour. He must wait patiently. He knew that He was to receive the world's hatred; He knew that His work would result in His death; but to prematurely expose Himself would not be the will of His Father.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 451.

What was the work of the God-given messenger to our world? The only-begotten Son of God clothed His divinity with humanity, and came to our world as a teacher, an instructor, to reveal truth in contrast with error. Truth, saving truth, never languished on His tongue, never suffered in His hands, but was made to stand out plainly and clearly defined amid the moral darkness prevailing in our world. For this work He left the heavenly courts. He said of Himself, "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." The truth came from His lips with freshness and power, as a new revelation. He was the way, the truth, and the life. His life, given for this sinful world, was full of earnestness and momentous results; for His work was to save perishing souls.

He came forth to be the True Light, shining amid the moral darkness of superstition and error, and was announced by a voice from heaven,

proclaiming, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” And at His transfiguration this voice from heaven was again heard, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 405.

The [Savior] took away the sins of the paralytic and then presented him to God as pardoned. And He gave him also physical healing. God had given His Son power to lay hold of the eternal throne. While Christ stood forth in His own personality, He reflected the luster of the position of honor that He had held within the enriching light of the eternal throne.

On another occasion Christ made the request: “Father, glorify Thy name.” And in answer there came “a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” John 12:28.

If this voice did not move the impenitent, if the power that Christ manifested in His mighty miracles did not cause the Jews to believe, we should not be greatly surprised to find that men and women today are in danger . . . of manifesting the same unbelief that the Jews manifested, and of developing the same perverted understanding.

—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 202.

Thursday, November 7: The Witness of the Crowd

The flowing of the water from the rock in the desert was celebrated by the Israelites, after their establishment in Canaan, with demonstrations of great rejoicing. In the time of Christ this celebration had become a most impressive ceremony. It took place on the occasion of the Feast of Tabernacles, when the people from all the land were assembled at Jerusalem. On each of the seven days of the feast the priests went out with music and the choir of Levites to draw water in a golden vessel from the spring of Siloam. They were followed by multitudes of the worshipers, as many as could get near the stream drinking of it, while the jubilant strains arose, “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” Isaiah 12:3. . . .

The Saviour made use of this symbolic service to direct the minds of the people to the blessings that He had come to bring them. . . . His voice was heard in tones that rang through the temple courts, “If any man thirst, let

him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water” [John 7:37, 38]. . . . The refreshing water . . . is an emblem of the divine grace which Christ alone can bestow, and which is as the living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 412.

He in whom Christ is abiding has within him a never-failing fountain of grace and strength. Jesus cheers the life and brightens the path of all who truly seek Him. His love, received into the heart, will spring up in good works unto eternal life. And not only does it bless the soul in which it springs, but the living stream will flow out in words and deeds of righteousness, to refresh the thirsting around him.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 412.

Have you exhausted the fountain?—No; for it is inexhaustible. Just as soon as you feel your need, you may drink, and drink again. The fountain is always full. And when you have once drunk of that fountain, you will not be seeking to quench your thirst from the broken cisterns of this world; you will not be studying how you can find the most pleasure, amusement, fun, and frolic. No; because you have been drinking from the stream which makes glad the city of God. Then your joy will be full.—*Our High Calling*, p. 65.

Friday, November 8: For Further Reading

Conflict and Courage, “I Must Decrease,” p. 275;
The Desire of Ages, “In the Outer Court,” pp. 621–626.

Lesson 7

Blessed Are Those Who Believe

Sabbath Afternoon, November 9

In the human brotherhood it takes all classes of talents to make a perfect whole; and the church of Christ is composed of all ranks, all classes, and varied talents. God never designed that the pride of men should dissolve that which his own wisdom had ordained,—the combination of all classes of minds, of all the varied talents that make a complete whole. There should be no depreciating of any part of God's great work, whether the agencies are higher or lowlier. All have their part to act in diffusing light in different degrees. There should be no monopolizing of what belongs, in a measure, to all, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. Not a ray of light must be undervalued, not a ray shut out, not a gleam unrecognized or acknowledged reluctantly. Let all act their part for truth and righteousness. The interests of the varied classes of society are indissolubly united. We are all woven together in the great web of humanity, and we cannot without loss withdraw our sympathies from one another. It is impossible for a healthful influence to be maintained in the church when this common interest and sympathy does not exist.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 314.

It is in the order of God that persons of varied temperament should associate together. When this is the case, each member of the household should sacredly regard the feelings and respect the rights of the others. By this means mutual consideration and forbearance will be cultivated, prejudices will be softened, and rough points of character smoothed. Harmony may be secured, and the blending of the varied temperaments may be a benefit to each.—*Signs of the Times*, September 9, 1886, par. 2.

Today let the question come home to the heart of every one who

professes the name of Christ, “Dost thou believe in the Son of God?” . . . Many accept Jesus as an article of belief, but they have no saving faith in him as their sacrifice and Saviour. They have no realization that Christ has died to save them from the penalty of the law which they have transgressed, in order that they may be brought back to loyalty to God. Do you believe that Christ, as your substitute, pays the debt of your transgression? Not, however, that you may continue in sin, but that you may be saved from your sins; that you, through the merits of his righteousness, may be reinstated to the favor of God. . . .

You may say that you believe in Jesus, when you have an appreciation of the cost of salvation. You may make this claim, when you feel that Jesus died for you on the cruel cross of Calvary; when you have an intelligent, understanding faith that his death makes it possible for you to cease from sin, and to perfect a righteous character through the grace of God, bestowed upon you as the purchase of Christ’s blood.—*The Review and Herald*, July 24, 1888, par. 4, 5.

Sunday, November 10: Harking Back to Abraham

[Abraham] offered up the most earnest prayer that before his death he might behold the Messiah. And he saw Christ. A supernatural light was given him, and he acknowledged Christ’s divine character. He saw His day, and was glad. He was given a view of the divine sacrifice for sin. Of this sacrifice he had an illustration in his own experience. The command came to him, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, . . . and offer him . . . for a burnt offering.” Genesis 22:2. Upon the altar of sacrifice he laid the son of promise, the son in whom his hopes were centered. Then as he waited beside the altar with knife upraised to obey God, he heard a voice from heaven saying, “Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me.” Genesis 22:12. This terrible ordeal was imposed upon Abraham that he might . . . realize the great love of God for the world, so great that to raise it from its degradation, He gave His only-begotten Son to a most shameful death.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 468.

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”

Here Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than 50 years, yet His divine life could not be reckoned by human computation. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.

“Before Abraham was, I am.” Christ is the preexistent, self-existent Son of God. The message He gave to Moses to give to the children of Israel was, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 17.

The reward is not of works, lest any man should boast; but it is all of grace. “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Romans 4:1–5. Therefore there is no occasion for one to glory over another or to grudge against another. No one is privileged above another, nor can anyone claim the reward as a right.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 401.

Monday, November 11: The Witness of Mary

I was carried down to the time when Jesus ate the Passover supper with His disciples. Satan had deceived Judas and led him to think that he was one of Christ’s true disciples; but his heart had ever been carnal. He had seen the mighty works of Jesus, he had been with Him through His ministry, and had yielded to the overpowering evidence that He was the Messiah; but Judas was close and covetous; he loved money. He complained in anger of the costly ointment poured upon Jesus. Mary loved her Lord. He had forgiven her sins, which were many, and had raised from the dead her much-loved brother, and she felt that nothing was too dear to bestow upon

Jesus. The more precious the ointment, the better could she express her gratitude to her Saviour by devoting it to Him. . . . This act of generosity on the part of Mary was a most cutting rebuke of [Judas's] covetous disposition. The way was prepared for Satan's temptation to find a ready reception in the heart of Judas.—*Early Writings*, p. 165.

At great personal sacrifice she had purchased an alabaster box of "ointment of spikenard, very costly," with which to anoint His body. But now many were declaring that He was about to be crowned king. Her grief was turned to joy, and she was eager to be first in honoring her Lord. Breaking her box of ointment, she poured its contents upon the head and feet of Jesus; then, as she knelt weeping, moistening them with her tears, she wiped His feet with her long, flowing hair. . . .

Mary knew not the full significance of her deed of love. She could not answer her accusers. She could not explain why she had chosen that occasion for anointing Jesus. The Holy Spirit had planned for her, and she had obeyed His promptings. Inspiration stoops to give no reason. An unseen presence, it speaks to mind and soul, and moves the heart to action. It is its own justification.

Christ told Mary the meaning of her act, and in this He gave her more than He had received. "In that she hath poured this ointment on My body," He said, "she did it for My burial." As the alabaster box was broken, and filled the whole house with its fragrance, so Christ was to die, His body was to be broken; but He was to rise from the tomb, and the fragrance of His life was to fill the earth. Christ "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." Ephesians 5:2. —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 558, 560.

[God] always knows much better than we do, just what is necessary for the good of his children, and he leads us as we would choose to be led if we could discern our own hearts and see our necessities and perils, as God sees them. . . . If we will trust him, and commit our ways to him, he will direct our steps in the very path that will result in our obtaining the victory over every evil passion, and every trait of character that is unlike the character of our divine Pattern.—*Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1888, par. 9.

Tuesday, November 12: The Unwitting Witness of

Pilate

From the first, Pilate was convicted that Jesus was no common man. He believed Him to be an excellent character, and entirely innocent of the charges brought against Him. The angels who were witnessing the scene marked the convictions of the Roman governor, and to save him from engaging in the awful act of delivering Christ to be crucified, an angel was sent to Pilate's wife, and gave her information through a dream that it was the Son of God in whose trial her husband was engaged, and that He was an innocent sufferer. She immediately sent a message to Pilate, stating that she had suffered many things in a dream on account of Jesus and warning him to have nothing to do with that holy man. The messenger, pressing hastily through the crowd, placed the letter in the hands of Pilate. As he read, he trembled and turned pale, and at once determined to have nothing to do with putting Christ to death. If the Jews would have the blood of Jesus, he would not give his influence to it, but would labor to deliver Him.—*Early Writings*, p. 173.

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just Person: see ye to it.” In fear and self-condemnation Pilate looked upon the Saviour. In the vast sea of upturned faces, His alone was peaceful. About His head a soft light seemed to shine. Pilate said in his heart, He is a God. Turning to the multitude he declared, I am clear of His blood. Take ye Him, and crucify Him. But mark ye, priests and rulers, I pronounce Him a just man. May He whom He claims as His Father judge you and not me for this day's work. Then to Jesus he said, Forgive me for this act; I cannot save You. And when he had again scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.
—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 738.

Pilate then wrote an inscription in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and placed it upon the cross, above the head of Jesus. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.” . . .

[The priests] said, “Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews.” But Pilate was angry with himself because of his former weakness, and he thoroughly despised the jealous and artful priests

and rulers. He replied coldly, "What I have written I have written."

A higher power than Pilate or the Jews had directed the placing of that inscription above the head of Jesus. In the providence of God it was to awaken thought, and investigation of the Scriptures. The place where Christ was crucified was near to the city. Thousands of people from all lands were then at Jerusalem, and the inscription declaring Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah would come to their notice. It was a living truth, transcribed by a hand that God had guided.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 745.

Wednesday, November 13: The Witness of Thomas

When Jesus first met the disciples in the upper chamber, Thomas was not with them. He heard the reports of the others, and received abundant proof that Jesus had risen; but gloom and unbelief filled his heart. As he heard the disciples tell of the wonderful manifestations of the risen Saviour, it only plunged him in deeper despair. If Jesus had really risen from the dead, there could be no further hope of a literal earthly kingdom. And it wounded his vanity to think that his Master should reveal Himself to all the disciples except him. He was determined not to believe, and for a whole week he brooded over his wretchedness, which seemed all the darker in contrast with the hope and faith of his brethren.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 806.

Our Saviour has no words of commendation for those who are slow of heart to believe in these last days, any more than He had for doubting Thomas, who boasted that he would not believe upon the evidence which the disciples rehearsed, and which they credited, that Christ had indeed risen and appeared to them. Said Thomas: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails," "and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Christ granted Thomas the evidence that he had declared he must have; but He reprovably said to him: "Be not faithless, but believing." Thomas acknowledged himself convinced. Jesus said unto him: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 696.

Many who are given to doubt excuse themselves by saying that if they had the evidence which Thomas had from his companions, they would

believe. They do not realize that they have not only that evidence, but much more. Many who, like Thomas, wait for all cause of doubt to be removed, will never realize their desire. They gradually become confirmed in unbelief. Those who educate themselves to look on the dark side, and murmur and complain, know not what they do. They are sowing the seeds of doubt, and they will have a harvest of doubt to reap. At a time when faith and confidence are most essential, many will thus find themselves powerless to hope and believe.

In His treatment of Thomas, Jesus gave a lesson for His followers. His example shows how we should treat those whose faith is weak, and who make their doubts prominent. Jesus did not overwhelm Thomas with reproach, nor did He enter into controversy with him. He revealed Himself to the doubting one. Thomas had been most unreasonable in dictating the conditions of his faith, but Jesus, by His generous love and consideration, broke down all the barriers. Unbelief is seldom overcome by controversy. It is rather put upon self-defense, and finds new support and excuse. But let Jesus, in His love and mercy, be revealed as the crucified Saviour, and from many once unwilling lips will be heard the acknowledgment of Thomas, "My Lord and my God."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 807, 808.

Thursday, November 14: Our Witness of Jesus

Contemplating the fate of the city he had loved, the soul of Jesus yearned over the child of his care. Unrequited love broke the heart of the Son of God. Little did the multitude know of the grief that weighed upon the spirit of Him whom they worshiped. They saw his tears and heard his groans . . . but they could not understand the meaning of his lamentation over Jerusalem. Meanwhile, reports were brought to the rulers that Jesus was approaching the city attended by a great concourse of people. In trepidation they go out to meet him, hoping to disperse the crowd by means of their authority. As the procession is about to descend the Mount of Olives, it is intercepted by the rulers. They inquire who and what is the cause of all this tumultuous rejoicing. As they, with much authority, repeat their question,—Who is this? the disciples, filled with a spirit of inspiration, are heard above all the noise of the crowd, repeating in eloquent strains the prophecies which answered this question. Adam will tell you, It is the seed of the

woman that shall bruise the serpent's head. Ask Abraham, he will tell you, It is Melchisedek, King of Salem, King of Peace. Jacob will tell you, He is Shiloh of the tribe of Judah. . . . Daniel will tell you, He is the Messiah. Hosea will tell you, He is the Lord God of Hosts, the Lord is his memorial. John the Baptist will tell you, He is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. The great Jehovah has proclaimed from his throne, This is my beloved Son. We, his disciples, declare, This is Jesus, the Messiah, the Prince of Life, the Redeemer of the world.—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 395.

We have the great principles of salvation revealed in the word of God, which concern our eternal welfare, and our very souls should be all aglow with the love of God. We should be ready to speak forth his praises. Christ should abide in our hearts by faith, that we may learn of him, and be laborers together with him. We should unitedly go forth, determined, through the help of God, to bear testimony to his glory in every act of our life.—*The Review and Herald*, October 22, 1889, par. 10.

We have a most important work to do, the work of obeying Christ and bearing witness of Him. He said to his disciples, "And ye also shall bear witness of Me, because ye have been with Me from the beginning." The disciples were to be honored by bearing witness concerning Christ's mission. They had been with Him constantly and had gained a most valuable knowledge to impart to others. We can not be with Christ in person as were His first disciples, but He has sent His Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth, and through this power we too can bear witness for the Saviour.—*The Gospel Herald*, August 1, 1900, par. 2.

Friday, November 15: For Further Reading

The Desire of Ages, "In Pilate's Judgment Hall," pp. 723–740;
This Day with God, "Truth Will Triumph," p. 195.

Lesson 8

Fulfilling Old Testament Prophecies

Sabbath Afternoon, November 16

The Son of God came to the world as a restorer. He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Every word He uttered was spirit and life. He spoke with authority, conscious of His power to bless humanity, and deliver the captives bound by Satan; conscious also that by His presence He could bring to the world fullness of joy. He longed to help every oppressed and suffering member of the human family, and show that it was His prerogative to bless, not to condemn.

—*Lift Him Up*, p. 37.

Christ distinctly appropriated to Himself the right to authority and allegiance. “Ye call me Master and Lord,” He said, “and ye say well; for so I am.” “One is your Master, even Christ.” Thus He maintained the dignity that belonged to His name, and the authority and power He possessed in heaven.

There were occasions when He spoke with the dignity of His own true greatness. “He that hath ears to hear,” He said, “let him hear.” In these words He was only repeating the command of God, when from His excellent glory the Infinite One had declared, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” Standing amid the frowning Pharisees, who sought to make their own importance felt, Christ did not hesitate to compare Himself with the most distinguished representative men who had walked the earth, and to claim preeminence above them all.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 37.

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, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,”—“that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which “angels desire to look,” and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which “seeketh not her own” has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

Sunday, November 17: Signs, Works, and Wonders

The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son?” Hebrews 1:1–5.
—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 268.

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.

Jesus said to the Jews: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. . . . The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth.” John 5:17–20.

Here again is brought to view the personality of the Father and the Son, showing the unity that exists between them.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 268, 269.

God does not annul His laws or work contrary to them, but He is continually using them as His instruments. Nature testifies of an intelligence, a presence, an active energy, that works in and through her laws. There is in nature the continual working of the Father and the Son. Christ says, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” John 5:17.

The Levites, in their hymn recorded by Nehemiah, sang, “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things therein, . . . and Thou preservest them all.” Nehemiah 9:6. As regards this world, God’s work of creation is completed. For “the works were finished from the foundation of the world.” Hebrews 4:3. But His energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” Acts 17:28.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 114, 115.

Monday, November 18: The Authoritative Role of Scripture

It was Christ that spoke to His people through the prophets. The apostle Peter, writing to the Christian church, says that the prophets “prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.” 1 Peter 1:10, 11. It is the voice of Christ that speaks to us through the Old Testament. “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation

19:10.

In His teachings while personally among men Jesus directed the minds of the people to the Old Testament. He said to the Jews, "Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me." John 5:39, R.V. At this time the books of the Old Testament were the only part of the Bible in existence. Again the Son of God declared, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." And He added, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:29, 31. —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 366, 367.

Jesus rested upon the wisdom and strength of His heavenly Father. . . . Pointing to His own example, He says to us, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, . . . that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Isaiah 50:7–10.

"The prince of this world cometh," said Jesus, "and hath nothing in Me." John 14:30. There was in Him nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. . . .

And how this is accomplished, Christ has shown us. By what means did He overcome in the conflict with Satan? By the word of God. Only by the word could He resist temptation. "It is written," He said. And unto us are given "exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4. Every promise in God's word is ours. "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" are we to live. When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Psalm 119:11; 17:4.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 123.

Tuesday, November 19: Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus: Part 1

In John the Baptist the Lord raised up for Himself a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord. He was to bear to the world an unflinching testimony in reproof and denouncing sin. Luke, in announcing his mission and work, says, "And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). . . .

The voice of John was lifted up like a trumpet. His commission was, "Shew My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1). He had obtained no human scholarship. God and nature had been his teachers. But one was needed to prepare the way before Christ who was bold enough to make his voice heard like the prophets of old, summoning the degenerate nation to repentance.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 147, 148.

A herald had been sent from God to proclaim the coming of Christ, and to call the attention of the Jewish nation and of the world to His mission, that men might prepare for His reception. The wonderful personage whom John had announced had been among them for more than thirty years, and they had not really known Him as the One sent from God. Remorse took hold of the disciples because they had allowed the prevailing unbelief to leaven their opinions and becloud their understanding. The Light of this dark world had been shining amid its gloom, and they had failed to comprehend whence were its beams. They asked themselves why they had pursued a course that made it necessary for Christ to reprove them. They often repeated His conversations, and said, Why did we allow earthly considerations and the opposition of priests and rabbis to confuse our senses, so that we did not comprehend that a greater than Moses was among us, that One wiser than Solomon was instructing us?—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 508.

A light was shining about the tomb, but the body of Jesus was not there.

As [the women] lingered about the place, suddenly they saw that they were not alone. A young man clothed in shining garments was sitting by the tomb. It was the angel who had rolled away the stone. . . . He says, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

He is risen, He is risen! The women repeat the words again and again. No need now for the anointing spices. The Saviour is living, and not dead. They remember now that when speaking of His death He said that He would rise again. What a day is this to the world! Quickly the women departed from the sepulcher "with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 788, 789.

Wednesday, November 20: Old Testament Prophecies of Jesus: Part 2

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” Zechariah 9:9.

Five hundred years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Zechariah thus foretold the coming of the King to Israel. This prophecy is now to be fulfilled. He who has so long refused royal honors now comes to Jerusalem as the promised heir to David’s throne.

It was on the first day of the week that Christ made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Multitudes who had flocked to see Him at Bethany now accompanied Him, eager to witness His reception. Many people were on their way to the city to keep the Passover, and these joined the multitude attending Jesus.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 569.

Priests and traders fled from His presence, driving their cattle before them.

On the way from the temple they were met by a throng who came with their sick inquiring for the Great Healer. . . . eager to reach Him who was their only hope. . . . Again the temple court was filled by the sick and the dying, and once more Jesus ministered to them. . . .

Quietly returning to the temple, [the priests and rulers] heard the voices of men, women, and children praising God. Upon entering, they stood transfixed before the wonderful scene. They saw the sick healed, the blind restored to sight, and deaf receive their hearing, and the crippled leap for joy. . . . Now with glad voices the children sounded His praise. They repeated the hosannas of the day before, and waved palm branches triumphantly before the Saviour. The temple echoed and re-echoed with their acclamations, “Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord!” . . . Psalm 118:26.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 591, 592.

When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” This new birth is the result of receiving

Christ as the Word of God. When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to cooperate with God.

Thus it had been with Peter and his fellow disciples. . . . The Word bore testimony through them, the men of His appointment, and they proclaimed the mighty truth, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth.” [John 1:14.]

The apostle exhorted the believers to study the Scriptures, through a proper understanding of which they might make sure work for eternity. Peter realized that in the experience of every soul who is finally victorious there would be scenes of perplexity and trial; but he knew also that an understanding of the Scriptures would enable the tempted one to bring to mind promises that would comfort the heart and strengthen faith in the Mighty One.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 520, 521.

Thursday, November 21: From Beneath

Jesus was hunted from place to place during his ministry. Priests and rulers were on his track. They misrepresented his mission and labor. He came unto his own and his own received him not. Angels watched the conflict at every step. They saw the spirit and work of the enemy. They looked with amazement upon the devices of Satan against the divine Son of God. They saw that he who had only been second to Jesus in power and glory had fallen so low that he could influence men to hunt the steps of Christ from city to city. When Christ sought the garden of Gethsemane, the enemy pressed darkness upon his soul. Even his disciples did not watch with him through that hour of trial. They heard the agony of prayer that came from his pale and quivering lips, but they soon allowed sleep to overcome them, and left their suffering Master to wrestle with the powers of darkness alone.—*Signs of the Times*, November 25, 1889, par. 1.

We see how professedly righteous people can act out the spirit of Satan to carry their wicked purposes through envy and jealousy and religious bigotry. There is no warfare between Satan and the sinner, between fallen angels and fallen humans. Both possess the same attributes, both are evil through apostasy and sin. . . .

The prediction given in Eden refers in a special manner to Christ, and to all who accept and confess Him as the only begotten Son of God. Christ has pledged Himself to engage in the conflict with the prince and power of darkness and to bruise the serpent's head. All who are the sons and daughters of God are His chosen ones, His soldiers, to war against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. It is an unwearied conflict of which there is to be no end until Christ shall come the second time.—*Christ Triumphant*, p. 280.

As professed followers of Christ, we have much to learn. There is with many an icy chilliness, a reserve like that of the Pharisees, that must be broken down. . . . Like the Pharisees, [they] desire to be dictators, teachers. God sent his Son to give his people a better knowledge of the truth, to show them the best way to help their fellow-men. But the Pharisees refused to receive the divine instruction. They thought that Christ was too liberal. His ways did not agree with theirs; and instead of seeking to come into harmony with Christ, they sought to bring Christ into harmony with them. . . . In order to carry out their own purposes, they set themselves in opposition to Christ, and thus brought darkness upon themselves.

Those with whom God has intrusted his truth, must possess the same beneficent spirit that Christ manifested. They must adopt the same broad plans of action. They should have a kind, generous spirit toward the poor, and in a special sense feel that we are God's stewards. They must hold all they have—property, mental powers, spiritual strength—as not their own, but only lent them to advance the cause of Christ in the earth. Like Christ they should not shun the society of their fellow-men, but should seek it with the purpose of bestowing upon others the heavenly benefits they have received from God.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 319, 320.

Friday, November 22: For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, "Christ's Representatives in the World," p. 306;
Reflecting Christ, "Jesus Showed Us How to Live," p. 340.

Lesson 9

The Source of Life

Sabbath Afternoon, November 23

The teachers of Israel were not sowing the seed of the word of God. Christ's work as a teacher of truth was in marked contrast to that of the rabbis of His time. They dwelt upon traditions, upon human theories and speculations. Often that which man had taught and written about the word, they put in place of the word itself. Their teaching had no power to quicken the soul. The subject of Christ's teaching and preaching was the word of God. He met questioners with a plain, "It is written." "What saith the Scriptures?" "How readest thou?" At every opportunity, when an interest was awakened by either friend or foe, He sowed the seed of the word. He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Himself the living Word, points to the Scriptures, saying, "They are they which testify of Me." And "beginning at Moses and all the prophets," He opened to His disciples "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." John 5:39; Luke 24:27.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 38.

Every word He uttered seemed to the hearers as the life of God. . . .

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me" (John 1:14, 15). Yes, He was before John. Enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, He led the children of Israel through the wilderness. "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."—*The Upward Look*, p. 236.

God desires man to exercise his reasoning powers; and the study of the

Bible will strengthen and elevate the mind as no other study can. Yet we are to beware of deifying reason, which is subject to the weakness and infirmity of humanity. If we would not have the Scriptures clouded to our understanding, so that the plainest truths shall not be comprehended, we must have the simplicity and faith of a little child, ready to learn, and beseeching the aid of the Holy Spirit. A sense of the power and wisdom of God, and of our inability to comprehend His greatness, should inspire us with humility, and we should open His word, as we would enter His presence, with holy awe. When we come to the Bible, reason must acknowledge an authority superior to itself, and heart and intellect must bow to the great I AM.

There are many things apparently difficult or obscure, which God will make plain and simple to those who thus seek an understanding of them. But without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we shall be continually liable to wrest the Scriptures or to misinterpret them.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 109, 110.

Sunday, November 24: In Him Was Life

The love of God was Christ's theme when speaking of His mission and His work. "Therefore doth my Father love me," He says, "because I lay down my life, that I might take it again" (John 10:17). My Father loves you with a love so unbounded that He loves Me the more because I have given My life to redeem you. He loves you, and He loves Me more because I love you, and give My life for you. . . . Well did the disciples understand this love as they saw their Saviour enduring shame, reproach, doubt, and betrayal, as they saw His agony in the Garden, and His death on Calvary's cross. This is a love the depth of which no sounding can ever fathom. As the disciples comprehended it, as their perception took hold of God's divine compassion, they realized that there is a sense in which the sufferings of the Son were the sufferings of the Father.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 69.

When the voice of the mighty angel was heard at Christ's tomb, saying, Thy Father calls Thee, the Saviour came forth from the grave by the life that was in Himself. Now was proved the truth of His words, "I lay down My life, that I might take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Now was fulfilled the prophecy He had spoken to

the priests and rulers, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” John 10:17, 18; 2:19.

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

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. “I am come,” He says, “that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

...

Christ became one with humanity, that humanity might become one in Spirit and life with Him. By virtue of this union in obedience to the Word of God, His life becomes their life. He says to the penitent, “I am the resurrection, and the life.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 237.

Monday, November 25: The Words of Eternal Life

When so many of Christ’s followers left Him, and the Saviour asked the twelve, “Will ye also go away?” Simon Peter answered, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). It filled Christ’s heart with sorrow to see anyone leaving Him, because He knew that faith in His name and in His mission is man’s only hope. This desertion of His followers was a humiliation to Him. Oh, how little human beings know of the sorrow that filled the heart of infinite love when such things took place. . . .

Well might the disciples say, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” Consider what Christ was. The Son of the Highest, yet a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Have we experienced the

blessing that comes from trusting Him with the whole heart, and honoring Him by ever showing our love and devotion to Him? Christ is hungry for fruit—fruit that will appease His hunger of soul in our behalf. It is His desire that we bear “much fruit.”

Let us keep our hearts open to His love. “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36). Oh, when we can speak understandingly the words spoken by Peter, “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life,” wonderful blessings will come to us.—*This Day With God*, p. 189.

And if you love Jesus, you will have your feet planted in the blood-stained foot-prints of the Man of Calvary, and at last those who have gained the victory will enter in through the gates into the city, and have a right to the tree of life. God has given us reasoning faculties, and he wants us to use them. He has given us a chart which marks out for us the only right way to reach eternal life. Study the Scriptures for yourselves. Hear what the voice of the true Shepherd says to you, and then walk in the path of humble obedience, and at last the gift of eternal life will be granted to you. We cannot afford to lose eternal life. May God grant that we may meet this dear people around the great white throne, and with them sing the song of redemption in the kingdom of glory.—*The Review and Herald*, June 10, 1890, par. 13.

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given them. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” The right knowledge of the truth, God and of Jesus Christ, the world’s Redeemer, brings eternal life to the receiver,—spiritual life in this human existence and eternal life in the kingdom of God.—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 6, p. 233.

Tuesday, November 26: Believing and New Birth

The old nature, born of blood and the will of the flesh, cannot inherit the

kingdom of God. The old ways, the hereditary tendencies, the former habits, must be given up; for grace is not inherited. The new birth consists in having new motives, new tastes, new tendencies. Those who are begotten unto a new life by the Holy Spirit, have become partakers of the divine nature, and in all their habits and practices they will give evidence of their relationship to Christ. When men who claim to be Christians retain all their natural defects of character and disposition, in what does their position differ from that of the worldling? They do not appreciate the truth as a sanctifier, a refiner. They have not been born again.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1101.

Today in the religious world there are multitudes who, as they believe, are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and temporal dominion. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdoms of this world, the ruler in its courts and camps, its legislative halls, its palaces and market places. They expect Him to rule through legal enactments, enforced by human authority. Since Christ is not now here in person, they themselves will undertake to act in His stead, to execute the laws of His kingdom. The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ. They would have received Jesus, had He been willing to establish a temporal dominion, to enforce what they regarded as the laws of God, and to make them the expositors of His will and the agents of His authority. But He said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” John 18:36. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 509.

In this age, the Word of God is not considered reliable. The word of Christ, that cuts directly across human desires and indulgences, and condemns popular habits and practices—the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us—is ignored and despised. The teachings and example of Christ are not made the criterion for the life of the professed follower of Christ. Many who name the name of Christ are walking in the light of the sparks of their own kindling, rather than following in the footsteps of their professed Master. They do not represent the same character that Christ represented in His pure, sincere love to God, and in His love for fallen man. They do not take God at His word, and identify their interests with Jesus Christ. They do not form the habit of communing with Jesus, of taking Him as a guide and counselor, and thus learn the trade of living a well-defined Christian life. . . .

The result of the internal operation of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated in the outward conduct. The life of the Christian is hid with Christ in God, and God acknowledges those who are His, declaring, "Ye are My witnesses." They testify that divine power is influencing their hearts and shaping their conduct.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 124.

Wednesday, November 27: Rejecting the Source of Life

When Christ was upon this earth, the people flocked to hear Him. So simple and plain were His words that the most unlearned among the people could understand Him, and His hearers listened as if spellbound. This enraged the scribes and Pharisees. They were filled with envy because the people listened so attentively to the words of this new Teacher. They determined to break His hold upon the multitudes. They began by attacking His character, saying that He was born in sin, and that He cast out devils through the prince of the devils. Thus were fulfilled the words "They hated me without a cause" (John 15:25; cf. Psalm 69:4). The Jewish leaders maligned and persecuted the One who is chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely.—*The Upward Look*, p. 325.

This is a time when the question with all propriety may be asked, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).

Spiritual darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people. There are in many churches skepticism and infidelity in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Many, very many, are questioning the verity and truth of the Scriptures. Human reasoning and the imaginings of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of the Word of God, and that which should be received as granted, is surrounded with a cloud of mysticism. Nothing stands out in clear and distinct lines, upon rock bottom. This is one of the marked signs of the last days.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 15.

Caleb and Joshua, the two who, of all the twelve spies, trusted in the word of God, rent their clothes in distress when they perceived that these unfavorable reports had discouraged the whole camp. They endeavored to reason with them; but the congregation were filled with madness and

disappointment, and refused to listen to these two men. Finally Caleb urged his way to the front, and his clear, ringing voice was heard above all the clamor of the multitude. He opposed the cowardly views of his fellow spies, which had weakened the faith and courage of all Israel. . . . He spoke of the land he had visited. Said he: “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.” But as he spoke, the unfaithful spies interrupted him, crying: “We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.”

These men, starting upon a wrong course, set their hearts against God, against Moses and Aaron, and against Caleb and Joshua. Every step they advanced in this wrong direction made them firmer in their design to discourage every attempt to possess the land of Canaan. They distorted the truth in order to carry their baneful purpose. . . .

When men in responsible positions yield their hearts to unbelief, there are no bounds to the advance they will make in evil. Few realize, when they start upon this dangerous course, the length that Satan will lead them. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 149, 150.

Thursday, November 28: Condemnation

The first king of Israel proved a failure, because he set his will above the will of God. . . . Saul refused to make obedience to God his first consideration, and the principles of heaven the government of his conduct. . . .

Those whose deeds are evil, will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved and their real characters revealed. If they continue in the path of transgression, and sever themselves entirely from the Redeemer, stubbornness, and sullenness, and a spirit of revenge will take possession of them. . . . As Saul resisted the reproofs of the servant of the Lord, this spirit took possession of him. He defied the Lord, he defied His servant, and his enmity toward David was the outworking of the murderous spirit that comes into the heart of those who justify themselves in the face of their guilt.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1017.

John’s favorite theme was the infinite love of Christ. . . . He understood

the character and work of Jesus; and when he saw his Jewish brethren groping their way without a ray of the Sun of Righteousness to illuminate their path, he longed to present to them Christ, the Light of the world.

The faithful apostle saw that their blindness, their pride, superstition, and ignorance of the Scriptures were riveting upon their souls fetters which would never be broken. The prejudice and hatred against Christ which they obstinately cherished, was bringing ruin upon them as a nation and destroying their hopes of everlasting life. But John continued to present Christ to them as the only way of salvation. The evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah was so clear that John declares no man needs to walk in the darkness of error while such light is proffered him.—*The Sanctified Life*, pp. 62, 63.

When Jesus entered the wilderness, He was shut in by the Father's glory. Absorbed in communion with God, He was lifted above human weakness. But the glory departed, and He was left to battle with temptation. It was pressing upon Him every moment. His human nature shrank from the conflict that awaited Him. For forty days He fasted and prayed. Weak and emaciated from hunger, worn and haggard with mental agony, . . . Now was Satan's opportunity. Now he supposed that he could overcome Christ. . . .

Though Jesus recognized Satan from the beginning, He was not provoked to enter into controversy with him. . . . He rested in His Father's love. He would not parley with temptation.

Jesus met Satan with the words of Scripture. "It is written," He said. In every temptation the weapon of His warfare was the word of God. Satan demanded of Christ a miracle as a sign of His divinity. But that which is greater than all miracles, a firm reliance upon a "Thus saith the Lord," was a sign that could not be controverted. So long as Christ held to this position, the tempter could gain no advantage.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 118–120.

Friday, November 29: For Further Reading

The Desire of Ages, "Controversy," pp. 601–609;

My Life Today, "Christ Is the Truth," p. 260.

Lesson 10

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Sabbath Afternoon, November 30

He who came to our world to seek and to save that which was lost has pledged His own life [for man]. . . . He has pity, and compassion, and love that are without a parallel; and He has made every provision in behalf of men that none need perish. The divine Son of God came into our world, its Light and Life, to encompass the whole world and to attract and unite to Himself every human being who is under Satan's discipline and rule. He invites them, "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" (Matthew 11:28, 29). Thus He unites with Himself by a new inspiration of grace all who will come unto Him. He puts upon them His seal, His sign of obedience and loyalty to His holy Sabbath.—*The Upward Look*, p. 285.

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." These words are an eye opener to all who will see. The knowledge of God is a knowledge which will not need to be left behind when our probation closes, a knowledge which is of the most lasting benefit to the world and to us individually. Why, then, should we put the word of God in the background when it is wisdom unto salvation. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." . . . [The] Bible is full of the knowledge of God, and is competent to educate the student for usefulness in this life and for the eternal life. . . .

Become interested in the Scriptures. Read and study them diligently. "In them ye think ye have eternal life," Christ said, "and they are they which testify of Me." It means everything to us to have an experimental and

individual knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, “whom He hath sent.” “For this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”

—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 403, 404.

Look at Jesus, the Majesty of heaven. What do you behold in His life history? His divinity clothed with humanity, a whole life of continual humility, the doing of one act of condescension after another, a line of continual descent from the heavenly courts to a world all seared and marred with the curse, and in a world unworthy of His presence, descending lower and still lower, taking the form of a servant, to be despised and rejected of men, obliged to flee from place to place to save His life, and at last betrayed, rejected, crucified. . . .

Lose no time, let not another day pass into eternity, but just as you are, whatever your weakness, your unworthiness . . . delay not to come [to Him] now.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 56.

Sunday, December 1: I Have Given You an Example

Christ gave His disciples to understand that the washing of their feet did not cleanse away their sin, but that the cleansing of their heart was tested in this humble service. If the heart was cleansed, this act was all that was essential to reveal the fact. He had washed the feet of Judas; but He said, “Ye are not all clean.” Judas brought a traitor’s heart to this scene, and Christ revealed to all that He knew him to be the betrayer of his Lord, and that the washing of his feet was not an ordinance to cleanse the soul from its moral defilement. . . .

And we have, in His example, the lesson that the ordinance of feet-washing is not to be deferred because there are some professed believers who are not cleansed from their sins. Christ knew the heart of Judas, yet He washed his feet. Infinite love could do no more to bring Judas to repentance, and save him from taking this fatal step. . . . It was the last act of love that Jesus could evidence in behalf of Judas. Infinite love could not compel Judas to repent, confess his sin, and be saved. Every opportunity was granted him. Nothing was left undone that could be done to save him from the snare of

Satan.

—*The Review and Herald*, June 14, 1898, par. 7, 10.

The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other.

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13–17 quoted].—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1138.

When Jesus girded Himself with a towel to wash the dust from [the disciples] feet, He desired by that very act to wash the alienation, jealousy, and pride from their hearts. This was of far more consequence than the washing of their dusty feet. With the spirit they then had, not one of them was prepared for communion with Christ. Until brought into a state of humility and love, they were not prepared to partake of the paschal supper, or to share in the memorial service which Christ was about to institute. Their hearts must be cleansed. Pride and self-seeking create dissension and hatred, but all this Jesus washed away in washing their feet. A change of feeling was brought about. Looking upon them, Jesus could say, “Ye are clean.” Now there was union of heart, love for one another. They had become humble and teachable. Except Judas, each was ready to concede to another the highest place. Now with subdued and grateful hearts they could receive Christ's words.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 646.

Monday, December 2: I Will Certainly Come Again

“Little children,” [Christ] said, “Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.”

The disciples could not rejoice when they heard this. Fear fell upon them.

They pressed close about the Saviour. . . . Dark were the forebodings that filled their hearts.

But the Saviour's words to them were full of hope. He knew that they were to be assailed by the enemy, and that Satan's craft is most successful against those who are depressed by difficulties. Therefore He pointed them away from "the things which are seen," to "the things which are not seen." 2 Corinthians 4:18. From earthly exile He turned their thoughts to the heavenly home.

"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." . . . The object of Christ's departure was the opposite of what the disciples feared. It did not mean a final separation. He was going to prepare a place for them, that He might come again, and receive them unto Himself. While He was building mansions for them, they were to build characters after the divine similitude.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 662, 663.

Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ's return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfillment of the Saviour's promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 536.

In the contemplation of Christ we linger on the shore of a love that is measureless. We endeavor to tell of this love, and language fails us. We consider His life on earth, His sacrifice for us, His work in heaven as our advocate, and the mansions He is preparing for those who love Him, and we can only exclaim, O the height and depth of the love of Christ! "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." 1 John 4:10; 3:1.

—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 333, 334.

Tuesday, December 3: I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life

The disciples were perplexed. Thomas, always troubled by doubts, said, “Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.”

There are not many ways to heaven. Each one may not choose his own way. Christ says, “I am the way: . . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.” Since the first gospel sermon was preached, when in Eden it was declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, Christ had been uplifted as the way, the truth, and the life. He was the way when Adam lived, when Abel presented to God the blood of the slain lamb, representing the blood of the Redeemer. Christ was the way by which patriarchs and prophets were saved. He is the way by which alone we can have access to God.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 663.

“Lord, show us the Father,” said Philip, “and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” . . . John 14:1–10.

The disciples did not yet understand Christ’s words concerning His relation to God. Much of His teaching was still dark to them. Christ desired them to have a clearer, more distinct knowledge of God. . . .

When, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples, they understood more fully the truths that Christ had spoken in parables. Much of the teaching that had been a mystery to them was made clear. But not even then did the disciples receive the complete fulfillment of Christ’s promise. They received all the knowledge of God that they could bear, but the complete fulfillment of the promise that Christ would show them plainly of the Father was yet to come. Thus it is today. Our knowledge of God is partial and imperfect. When the conflict is ended, and the Man

Christ Jesus acknowledges before the Father His faithful workers, who in a world of sin have borne true witness for Him, they will understand clearly what now are mysteries to them.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 420.

When Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” he uttered a truth of wonderful significance. The transgression of man had separated earth from heaven, and finite man from the infinite God. . . . Jesus bridged this gulf, and made a way for man to come to God.—*The Review and Herald*, November 11, 1890, par. 5.

Wednesday, December 4: I AM the Truth

Truth in Christ and through Christ is measureless. The student of Scripture looks, as it were, into a fountain that deepens and broadens as he gazes into its depths. Not in this life shall we comprehend the mystery of God’s love in giving His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The work of our Redeemer on this earth is and ever will be a subject that will put to the stretch our highest imagination. Man may tax every mental power in the endeavor to fathom this mystery, but his mind will become faint and weary. The most diligent searcher will see before him a boundless, shoreless sea.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 128.

We are living in a time when Satan is working with all his power to discourage and defeat those who are laboring in God’s service. But we must not fail nor be discouraged. We must exercise greater faith in God. We must trust His living word. Unless we have a firmer hold from above, we shall never be able to cope with the powers of darkness that will be seen and felt in every department of the work.

Earth’s cisterns will often be empty, its pools become dry; but in Christ there is a living spring from which we may continually draw. However much we draw and give to others, an abundance will remain. There is no danger of exhausting the supply; for Christ is the inexhaustible wellspring of truth.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 276.

When Adam’s sin plunged the race into hopeless misery, God might have cut Himself loose from fallen beings. He might have treated them as sinners deserved to be treated. He might have commanded the angels of heaven to

pour out upon our world the vials of His wrath. He might have removed this dark blot from His universe. But He did not do this. Instead of banishing them from His presence, He came still nearer to the fallen race. He gave His Son to become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Christ by His human relationship to men drew them close to God. He clothed His divine nature with the garb of humanity, and demonstrated before the heavenly universe, before the unfallen worlds, how much God loves the children of men.

The gift of God to man is beyond all computation. Nothing was withheld. God would not permit it to be said that He could have done more or revealed to humanity a greater measure of love. In the gift of Christ He gave all heaven.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 53.

Thursday, December 5: The Scriptures and the Truth

In the Word the Saviour is revealed in all His beauty and loveliness. Every soul will find comfort and consolation in the Bible, which is full of promises concerning what God will do for the one who comes into right relation to Him. Especially will the sick be comforted by hearing the Word; for in giving the Scriptures God has given to mankind a leaf from the tree of life, which is for the healing of the nations. How can anyone who reads the Scriptures or who has heard them read, lose his interest in heavenly things, and find pleasure in amusements and enchantments of the world.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1134.

The Word of God includes the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as of the New. One is not complete without the other. Christ declared that the truths of the Old Testament are as valuable as those of the New. Christ was as much man’s Redeemer in the beginning of the world as He is today. . . .

Of Christ’s life and death and intercession, which prophets had foretold, the apostles were to go forth as witnesses. Christ in His humiliation, in His purity and holiness, in His matchless love, was to be their theme. And in order to preach the gospel in its fullness, they must present the Saviour not

only as revealed in His life and teachings, but as foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament and as symbolized by the sacrificial service. . . .

In every age there is a new development of truth, a message of God to the people of that generation. The old truths are all essential; new truth is not independent of the old, but an unfolding of it. It is only as the old truths are understood that we can comprehend the new. When Christ desired to open to His disciples the truth of His resurrection, He began “at Moses and all the prophets,” and “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). But it is the light which shines in the fresh unfolding of truth that glorifies the old.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 306.

In preaching to the Thessalonians, Paul appealed to the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah. Christ in His ministry had opened the minds of His disciples to these prophecies; “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” Luke 24:27. Peter in preaching Christ had produced his evidence from the Old Testament. Stephen had pursued the same course. And Paul also in his ministry appealed to the scriptures foretelling the birth, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. By the inspired testimony of Moses and the prophets he clearly proved the identity of Jesus of Nazareth with the Messiah and showed that from the days of Adam it was the voice of Christ which had been speaking through patriarchs and prophets.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 221.

Friday, December 6: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, “Where Is Your Treasure?” p. 355;
Our High Calling, “Almost Home,” p. 367.

Lesson 11

The Father, the Son, and the Spirit

Sabbath Afternoon, December 7

The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.

The office of the Holy Spirit is distinctly specified in the words of Christ: “When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” John 16:8. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. “He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you,” Christ said. “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 16:14; 14:26.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 52.

The word of God—the truth—is the channel through which the Lord manifests His Spirit and power. Obedience to the word produces fruit of the required quality—“unfeigned love of the brethren.” This love is heaven-born and leads to high motives and unselfish actions.

When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the Word of God. When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are

impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to cooperate with God.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 519, 520.

I was carried down to the time when Jesus was to take upon Himself man's nature, humble Himself as a man, and suffer the temptations of Satan.

His birth was without worldly grandeur. He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger; yet His birth was honored far above that of any of the sons of men. Angels from heaven informed the shepherds of the advent of Jesus, and light and glory from God accompanied their testimony. The heavenly host touched their harps and glorified God. They triumphantly heralded the advent of the Son of God to a fallen world to accomplish the work of redemption, and by His death to bring peace, happiness, and everlasting life to man. God honored the advent of His Son. Angels worshiped Him.

Angels of God hovered over the scene of His baptism; the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and lighted upon Him, and as the people stood greatly amazed, with their eyes fastened upon Him, the Father's voice was heard from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased.—*Early Writings*, p. 153.

Sunday, December 8: The Heavenly Father

The Father can not be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The word of God declares Him to be "the express image of His person." "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is shown the personality of the Father.

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio. In the name of these three powers,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the

obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.
—*Bible Training School*, March 1, 1906, par. 1, 2.

Let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of the heavenly atmosphere. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. “The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.

Jesus said, “Ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you.” “I have chosen you: . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.” John 16:26, 27; 15:16.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 99, 100.

Monday, December 9: Jesus and the Father

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Genesis 1:26.

The life of Christ is to be revealed in humanity. Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God; but Satan has labored to obliterate the image of God in

man, and to imprint upon him his own image. Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image. This fact should impress us with the importance of teaching by precept and example the sin of defiling, by the indulgence of appetite, or by any other sinful practice, the body which is designed to represent God to the world.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 48.

Instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled.

Satan was exulting that he had succeeded in debasing the image of God in humanity. Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 37.

The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from physical disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, “Thy sins are forgiven.” The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can give, would impart vigor to the mind, and health to the body.

Jesus came to “destroy the works of the devil.” “In Him was life,” and He says, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” He is “a quickening spirit.” 1 John 3:8; John 1:4; 10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:45. And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He “forgiveth

all thine iniquities,” He “healeth all thy diseases.” Psalm 103:3.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 270.

Tuesday, December 10: Knowing the Son Is Knowing the Father

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. . . .

Those who, having heard the word, keep it, will bring forth fruit in obedience. The word of God, received into the soul, will be manifest in good works. Its results will be seen in a Christlike character and life. Christ said of Himself, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8. “I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me.” John 5:30. And the Scripture says, “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” 1 John 2:6.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 60.

The acceptance of Christ gives value to the human being. His sacrifice carries life and light to all who take Christ as their personal Saviour. The love of God through Jesus Christ is shed abroad in the heart of every member of His body, carrying with it the vitality of the law of God the Father. . . .

God loves those who are redeemed through Christ, even as He loves His Son. What a thought! Can God love the sinner as He loves His own Son?—Yes; Christ has said it, and He means just what He says. He will honor all our drafts if we will grasp His promise by living faith, and put our trust in Him. Look to Him, and live. All who obey God are embraced in the prayer which Christ offered to His Father, “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26). Wonderful truth, too difficult for humanity to comprehend!—*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 299, 300.

To redeem man, Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden linked chain which binds our souls to Christ and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man, and He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. And He was God in the flesh. . . .

Christ's position with His Father is one of equality. This enabled Him to become a sin-offering for transgressors. He was fully sufficient to magnify the law and make it honorable.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 904, 905.

Wednesday, December 11: The Holy Spirit

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

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

The Holy Spirit recognizes and guides us into all truth. God has given His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Christ is the sinner's Saviour. Christ's death has redeemed the sinner. This is our only hope. If we make a full surrender of self, and practice the virtues of Christ, we shall gain the prize of eternal life.

“He that believeth in the Son, hath the Father also.” He who has continual faith in the Father and the Son has the Spirit also. The Holy Spirit is his comforter, and he never departs from the truth.

—*Bible Training School*, March 1, 1906, par. 5, 6.

As a witness for Christ, John entered into no controversy, no wearisome contention. He declared what he knew, what he had seen and heard. He had been intimately associated with Christ, had listened to His teachings, had witnessed His mighty miracles. Few could see the beauties of Christ's character as John saw them. For him the darkness had passed away; on him the true light was shining. His testimony in regard to the Saviour's life and death was clear and forcible. Out of the abundance of a heart overflowing with love for the Saviour he spoke; and no power could stay his words.

"That which was from the beginning," he declared, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

So may every true believer be able, through his own experience, to "set to his seal that God is true." John 3:33. He can bear witness to that which he has seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ.

—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 555, 556.

Thursday, December 12: The Prayer of Jesus

I urge our people to cease their criticism and evil-speaking, and go to God in earnest prayer, asking Him to help them to help the erring. Let them link up with one another and with Christ. Let them study the seventeenth of John, and learn how to pray and how to live the prayer of Christ. He is the Comforter. He will abide in their hearts, making their joy full. His words will be to them as the bread of life, and in the strength thus gained they will be enabled to develop characters that will be an honor to God. Perfect Christian fellowship will exist among them. . . .

When you as individual workers of the church love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself . . . there will be oneness in Christ. . . . The members of the church will cherish love and unity and be as one great family. Then we shall bear the credentials to the world that will testify that God has sent His Son into the world. Christ has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 200.

We must open our hearts to the power and influence of the Holy

Spirit. . . . We want to become so sensitive to holy influences, that the lightest whisper of Jesus will move our souls, till he is in us, and we in Him, living by the faith of the Son of God. . . .

Then we shall delight to do the will of God, and Christ can own us before the Father and before the holy angels as those who abide in Him, and he will not be ashamed to call us brethren.

But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotlessness and infinite purity, we shall feel as did Daniel, when he beheld the glory of the Lord, and said, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption." . . .

But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus, the blessed hope is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; complete in Christ, robed in his righteousness and perfection. —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 355.

The church is to reflect light into the moral darkness of the world, as the stars reflect light into the darkness of the night. These who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, do not reflect light into the world, and will not have power to reach the hearts of the unsaved. . . . But if Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, his saving grace will be manifested in sympathy and love for perishing souls.

Every soul truly converted to God will be a light in the world. Bright, clear rays from the Sun of Righteousness will shine forth through human agents who use their intrusted ability to do good; for they will cooperate with heavenly agencies, and labor with Christ for the conversion of souls. They will diffuse the light which Christ sheds upon them. The Sun of Righteousness shining in their hearts will shine forth, enlightening and blessing others.—*Signs of the Times*, September 11, 1893, par. 1, 2.

Friday, December 13: For Further Reading

My Life Today, "Abundant Life in Christ," p. 295;
Sons and Daughters of God, "Oneness with Christ," p. 295.

Lesson 12

The Hour of Glory: The Cross and Resurrection

Sabbath Afternoon, December 14

[Satan] was on the ground at the time when Christ presented Himself to John for baptism. . . . [He] heard the fearful words from Jehovah, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” He saw the brightness of the Father’s glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus pointing out in that crowd the One whom He acknowledged as His Son with unmistakable assurance. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene had aroused the most intense hatred in the breast of Satan. He knew then for a certainty that unless he could overcome Christ, from thenceforth there would be a limitation of his power. . . .

He feared that God was now to unite man more fully to Himself, and give power to overcome his devices. And for this purpose Christ had come from the royal courts to the earth. Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in heaven as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father. And that He should leave heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension for his safety. . . . As he had lost through his rebellion all the riches and pure glories of heaven, he was determined to be revenged by causing as many as he could to undervalue heaven and to place their affections upon earthly treasures.—*Confrontation*, p. 29.

The only-begotten Son of God took upon Him the nature of man, and established His cross between earth and heaven. Through the cross, man was drawn to God, and God to man. Justice moved from its high and awful position, and the heavenly hosts, the armies of holiness, drew near to the cross, bowing with reverence; for at the cross justice was satisfied. Through

the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, "It was my sins that crucified the Son of God." At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ His character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 470.

Jesus placed the cross in line with the light coming from heaven, for it is there that it shall catch the eye of man. The cross is in direct line with the shining of the divine countenances, so that by beholding the cross men may see and know God and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. In beholding God we behold the One who poured out His soul unto death. In beholding the cross the view is extended to God, and His hatred of sin is discerned. But while we behold in the cross God's hatred of sin, we also behold His love for sinners, which is stronger than death. To the world the cross is the incontrovertible argument that God is truth and light and love.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1133.

Sunday, December 15: What Is Truth?

When the Saviour was brought into the judgment hall, Pilate looked upon Him with no friendly eyes. The Roman governor had been called from his bedchamber in haste, and he determined to do his work as quickly as possible. He was prepared to deal with the prisoner with magisterial severity. Assuming his severest expression, he turned to see what kind of man he had to examine, that he had been called from his repose at so early an hour. He knew that it must be someone whom the Jewish authorities were anxious to have tried and punished with haste.

Pilate looked at the men who had Jesus in charge, and then his gaze rested searchingly on Jesus. He had had to deal with all kinds of criminals; but never before had a man bearing marks of such goodness and nobility been brought before him. On His face he saw no sign of guilt, no expression of fear, no boldness or defiance. He saw a man of calm and dignified bearing, whose countenance bore not the marks of a criminal, but the signature of heaven.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 723, 724.

Pilate's golden opportunity had passed. Yet Jesus did not leave him without further light. While He did not directly answer Pilate's question, He plainly stated His own mission. He gave Pilate to understand that He was not seeking an earthly throne. . . .

Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice."

Christ affirmed that His word was in itself a key which would unlock the mystery to those who were prepared to receive it. It had a self-commending power, and this was the secret of the spread of His kingdom of truth. He desired Pilate to understand that only by receiving and appropriating truth could his ruined nature be reconstructed.

Pilate had a desire to know the truth. His mind was confused. He eagerly grasped the words of the Saviour, and his heart was stirred with a great longing to know what it really was, and how he could obtain it. "What is truth?" he inquired. But he did not wait for an answer. The tumult outside recalled him to the interests of the hour.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 727.

Christ's enemies had demanded a miracle as evidence of His divinity. They had evidence far greater than any they had sought. As their cruelty degraded His torturers below humanity into the likeness of Satan, so did His meekness and patience exalt Jesus above humanity, and prove His kinship to God. His abasement was the pledge of His exaltation. The blood drops of agony that from His wounded temples flowed down His face and beard were the pledge of His anointing with "the oil of gladness" (Hebrews 1:9.) as our great high priest.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 734.

Monday, December 16: Behold the Man!

Pilate showed his weakness. He had declared that Jesus was innocent, yet he was willing for Him to be scourged to pacify His accusers. He would sacrifice justice and principle in order to compromise with the mob. This placed him at a disadvantage. The crowd presumed upon his indecision, and clamored the more for the life of the prisoner. If at the first Pilate had stood firm, refusing to condemn a man whom he found guiltless, he would have

broken the fatal chain that was to bind him in remorse and guilt as long as he lived. Had he carried out his convictions of right, the Jews would not have presumed to dictate to him. Christ would have been put to death, but the guilt would not have rested upon Pilate. But Pilate had taken step after step in the violation of his conscience. He had excused himself from judging with justice and equity, and he now found himself almost helpless in the hands of the priests and rulers. His wavering and indecision proved his ruin.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 731.

Satan and his angels were tempting Pilate and trying to lead him on to his own ruin. They suggested to him that if he did not take part in condemning Jesus others would; the multitude were thirsting for His blood; and if he did not deliver Him to be crucified, he would lose his power and worldly honor, and would be denounced as a believer on the impostor. Through fear of losing his power and authority, Pilate consented to the death of Jesus. And notwithstanding he placed the blood of Jesus upon His accusers, and the multitude received it, crying, “His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew 27:25), yet Pilate was not clear; he was guilty of the blood of Christ. For his own selfish interest, his love of honor from the great men of earth, he delivered an innocent man to die.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 218.

The difference between the character of Christ and the character of other men of His day was everywhere apparent, and because of this difference the world hated Him. It hated Him for His goodness and His strict integrity. And Christ declared that those who manifest the same attributes would be likewise hated. As we near the end of time this hatred for the followers of Christ will be more and more manifest. . . .

Satan contested every claim put forth by the Son of God and employed men as his agents to fill the Saviour’s life with suffering and sorrow. The sophistry and falsehood by which he had sought to hinder the work of Jesus, the hatred manifested through the children of disobedience, his cruel accusations against Him whose life was one of unexampled goodness, all sprang from deep-seated revenge. The pent-up fires of envy and malice, hatred and revenge, burst forth on Calvary against the Son of God, while all heaven gazed upon the scene in silent horror.—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, pp. 527, 528.

Tuesday, December 17: “ ‘It Is Finished’ ”

[Mary’s] heart was pierced with anguish such as none but a fond mother can feel; yet, with the disciples, she still hoped that Christ would work some mighty miracle and deliver Himself from His murderers. She could not endure the thought that He would suffer Himself to be crucified. But the preparations were made, and Jesus was laid upon the cross. The hammer and the nails were brought. The hearts of the disciples fainted within them. The mother of Jesus was bowed with agony almost beyond endurance. Before the Saviour was nailed to the cross, the disciples bore her from the scene, that she might not hear the crashing of the spikes as they were driven through the bone and muscle of His tender hands and feet. Jesus murmured not, but groaned in agony. His face was pale, and large drops of sweat stood upon His brow. Satan exulted in the suffering through which the Son of God was passing, yet feared that his efforts to thwart the plan of salvation had been in vain, that his kingdom was lost, and that he must finally be destroyed.—*Early Writings*, p. 176.

The eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude that had collected together to witness His death, and He saw at the foot of the cross John supporting Mary, the mother of Christ. She had returned to the terrible scene, not being able to longer remain away from her Son. The last lesson of Jesus was one of filial love. He looked upon the grief-stricken face of His mother, and then upon John; said He, addressing the former: “Woman, behold thy son!” Then, to the disciple: “Behold thy mother!” John 19:27. John well understood the words of Jesus, and the sacred trust which was committed to him. He immediately removed the mother of Christ from the fearful scene of Calvary. From that hour he cared for her as would a dutiful son, taking her to his own home. The perfect example of Christ’s filial love shines forth with undimmed luster from the mist of ages. While enduring the keenest torture, He was not forgetful of His mother.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 224.

In silence the people watch for the end of this fearful scene. . . . Suddenly the gloom is lifted from the cross, and in clear trumpet tones, that seem to resound throughout creation, Jesus cries, “It is finished.” “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” Luke 23:46. A light encircled the cross, and the

face of the Saviour shone with a glory like unto the sun. He then bowed His head upon His breast and died. . . .

Jesus did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do. . . . There was joy in heaven that the sons of Adam could now, through a life of obedience, be exalted finally to the presence of God. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 226.

Wednesday, December 18: The Empty Tomb

At last Jesus was at rest. The long day of shame and torture was ended. As the last rays of the setting sun ushered in the Sabbath, the Son of God lay in quietude in Joseph's tomb. His work completed, His hands folded in peace, He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day.

In the beginning the Father and the Son had rested upon the Sabbath after Their work of creation. When "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Genesis 2:1), the Creator and all heavenly beings rejoiced in contemplation of the glorious scene. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38:7. Now Jesus rested from the work of redemption; and though there was grief among those who loved Him on earth, yet there was joy in heaven.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 769.

A young man clothed in shining garments was sitting by the tomb. It was the angel who had rolled away the stone. . . . [The] women were afraid. They turned to flee, but the angel's words stayed their steps. "Fear not ye," he said; "for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." . . .

He is risen, He is risen! the women repeat the words again and again. No need now for the anointing spices. The Saviour is living, and not dead. They remember now that when speaking of His death He said that He would rise again. What a day is this to the world! Quickly the women departed from the sepulcher "with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word."—*Lift Him Up*, p. 99.

The disciples hurried to the tomb, and found it as Mary had said. They saw the shroud and the napkin, but they did not find their Lord. Yet even here was testimony that He had risen. The graveclothes were not thrown heedlessly aside, but carefully folded, each in a place by itself. John “saw, and believed.” He did not yet understand the scripture that Christ must rise from the dead; but he now remembered the Saviour’s words foretelling His resurrection.

It was Christ Himself who had placed those graveclothes with such care. When the mighty angel came down to the tomb, he was joined by another, who with his company had been keeping guard over the Lord’s body. As the angel from heaven rolled away the stone, the other entered the tomb, and unbound the wrappings from the body of Jesus. But it was the Saviour’s hand that folded each, and laid it in its place. In His sight who guides alike the star and the atom, there is nothing unimportant. Order and perfection are seen in all His work.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 789.

Thursday, December 19: Jesus and Mary

In the garden, Mary had stood weeping, when Jesus was close beside her. Her eyes were so blinded by tears that she did not discern Him. And the hearts of the disciples were so full of grief that they did not believe the angels’ message or the words of Christ Himself.

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.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 794.

Mary had been looked upon as a great sinner, but Christ knew the circumstances that had shaped her life. He might have extinguished every spark of hope in her soul, but He did not. It was He who had lifted her from despair and ruin. Seven times she had heard His rebuke of the demons that controlled her heart and mind. She had heard His strong cries to the Father in her behalf. She knew how offensive is sin to His unsullied purity, and in

His strength she had overcome. . . .

Through His grace she became a partaker of the divine nature. The one who had fallen, and whose mind had been a habitation of demons, was brought very near to the Saviour in fellowship and ministry. It was Mary who sat at His feet and learned of Him. It was Mary who poured upon His head the precious anointing oil, and bathed His feet with her tears. Mary stood beside the cross, and followed Him to the sepulcher. Mary was first at the tomb after His resurrection. It was Mary who first proclaimed a risen Saviour.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

In the lowering of the moral standard among the Corinthian believers, there were those who had given up some of the fundamental features of their faith. Some had gone so far as to deny the doctrine of the resurrection. . . .

With convincing power the apostle set forth the great truth of the resurrection. “If there be no resurrection of the dead,” he argued, “then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 319, 320.

Friday, December 20: For Further Reading

The Desire of Ages, “Why Weepest Thou?” pp. 788–794;

Selected Messages, “A Vivid View of Coming Events,” book 3, pp. 427–431.

Lesson 13

Epilogue: Knowing Jesus and His Word

Sabbath Afternoon, December 21

Jesus turned upon the rulers. . . . He rebuked them for the hardness of their hearts, and their ignorance of the Scriptures. He declared that they had rejected the word of God, inasmuch as they had rejected Him whom God had sent. “Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me.” John 5:39, R. V.

In every page, whether history, or precept, or prophecy, the Old Testament Scriptures are irradiated with the glory of the Son of God. So far as it was of divine institution, the entire system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. To Christ “give all the prophets witness.” Acts 10:43. From the promise given to Adam, down through the patriarchal line and the legal economy, heaven’s glorious light made plain the footsteps of the Redeemer. Seers beheld the Star of Bethlehem, the Shiloh to come, as future things swept before them in mysterious procession. In every sacrifice Christ’s death was shown. In every cloud of incense His righteousness ascended. By every jubilee trumpet His name was sounded. In the awful mystery of the holy of holies His glory dwelt.

The Jews had the Scriptures in their possession, and supposed that in their mere outward knowledge of the word they had eternal life. But Jesus said, “Ye have not His word abiding in you.” Having rejected Christ in His word, they rejected Him in person. “Ye will not come to Me,” He said, “that ye might have life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 211, 212.

“I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” Jesus came by the authority of God, bearing His image, fulfilling His word, and seeking His glory; yet He was not accepted by the leaders in Israel; but when others should come,

assuming the character of Christ, but actuated by their own will and seeking their own glory, they would be received. And why? Because he who is seeking his own glory appeals to the desire for self-exaltation in others. To such appeals the Jews could respond. They would receive the false teacher because he flattered their pride by sanctioning their cherished opinions and traditions. But the teaching of Christ did not coincide with their ideas. It was spiritual, and demanded the sacrifice of self; therefore they would not receive it. They were not acquainted with God, and to them His voice through Christ was the voice of a stranger.

Is not the same thing repeated in our day? Are there not many, even religious leaders, who are hardening their hearts against the Holy Spirit, making it impossible for them to recognize the voice of God? Are they not rejecting the word of God, that they may keep their own traditions?—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 212, 213.

Sunday, December 22: Meeting in Galilee

Peter, who still had much of his old love for boats and fishing, proposed that they should go out upon the sea and cast their nets. In this plan all were ready to join. . . . So they went out in their boat, but they caught nothing. All night they toiled, without success. . . .

A stranger standing upon the beach . . . accosted them with the question, “Children, have ye any meat?” When they answered, “No,” “He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.”

John recognized the stranger, and exclaimed to Peter, “It is the Lord.” Peter was so elated and so glad that in his eagerness he cast himself into the water and was soon standing by the side of his Master.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 810.

When, the third time, Christ said to Peter, “Lovest thou me?” the probe reached the soul center. Self-judged, Peter fell upon the Rock, saying, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” . . .

Some assert that if a soul stumbles and falls, he can never regain his position; but the case before us contradicts this. . . . In committing to his

stewardship the souls for whom He had given His life, Christ gave to Peter the strongest evidence of His confidence in his restoration. . . .

Peter was now humble enough to understand the words of Christ, and without further questioning, the once restless, boastful, self-confident disciple became subdued and contrite. He followed his Lord indeed—the Lord he had denied. The thought that Christ had not denied and rejected him was to Peter a light and comfort and blessing.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 322.

We must behold Christ. It is ignorance of Him that makes men so uplifted in their own righteousness. When we contemplate His purity and excellence, we shall see our own weakness and poverty and defects as they really are. We shall see ourselves lost and hopeless, clad in garments of self-righteousness, like every other sinner. . . .

The nearer we come to Jesus and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly we shall discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the less we shall feel like exalting ourselves. Those whom heaven recognizes as holy ones are the last to parade their own goodness. The apostle Peter became a faithful minister of Christ, and he was greatly honored with divine light and power; he had an active part in the upbuilding of Christ's church; but Peter never forgot the fearful experience of his humiliation; his sin was forgiven; yet well he knew that for the weakness of character which had caused his fall only the grace of Christ could avail. He found in himself nothing in which to glory.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 159, 160.

Monday, December 23: Keeping Your Eyes on Jesus

Jesus walked alone with Peter, for there was something which He wished to communicate to him only. . . . That he might be strengthened for the final test of his faith, the Saviour opened to him his future. He told him that after living a life of usefulness, when age was telling upon his strength, he would indeed follow his Lord. . . .

Jesus thus made known to Peter the very manner of his death; He even foretold the stretching forth of his hands upon the cross. Again He bade His

disciple, “Follow Me.” Peter was not disheartened by the revelation. He felt willing to suffer any death for his Lord.

Heretofore Peter had known Christ after the flesh, as many know Him now; but he was no more to be thus limited. He knew Him no more as he had known Him in his association with Him in humanity. He had loved Him as a man, as a heaven-sent teacher; he now loved Him as God. He had been learning the lesson that to him Christ was all in all. Now he was prepared to share in his Lord’s mission of sacrifice. When at last brought to the cross, he was, at his own request, crucified with his head downward. He thought it too great an honor to suffer in the same way as his Master did. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 815.

As Peter walked beside Jesus, he saw that John was following. A desire came over him to know his future, and he “saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me.” Peter should have considered that his Lord would reveal to him all that it was best for him to know. It is the duty of everyone to follow Christ, without undue anxiety as to the work assigned to others. In saying of John, “If I will that he tarry till I come,” Jesus gave no assurance that this disciple should live until the Lord’s second coming. He merely asserted His own supreme power, and that even if He should will this to be so, it would in no way affect Peter’s work. The future of both John and Peter was in the hands of their Lord.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 816.

We shall find that we must let loose of all hands except the hand of Jesus Christ. Friends will prove treacherous and will betray us. . . . But we may trust our hand in the hand of Christ amid darkness and peril.

The only way in which men will be able to stand firm in the conflict is to be rooted and grounded in Christ. They must receive the truth as it is in Jesus. And it is only as the truth is presented thus that it can meet the wants of the soul. The preaching of Christ crucified, Christ our righteousness, is what satisfies the soul’s hunger.

—*Last Day Events*, pp. 150, 151.

Tuesday, December 24: Light and Darkness

The Jewish leaders had studied the teachings of the prophets concerning the kingdom of the Messiah; but they had done this, not with a sincere desire to know the truth, but with the purpose of finding evidence to sustain their ambitious hopes. When Christ came in a manner contrary to their expectations, they would not receive Him; and in order to justify themselves, they tried to prove Him a deceiver. When once they had set their feet in this path, it was easy for Satan to strengthen their opposition to Christ. The very words that should have been received as evidence of His divinity were interpreted against Him. Thus they turned the truth of God into a lie, and the more directly the Saviour spoke to them in His works of mercy, the more determined they were in resisting the light.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 212.

Holding up Christ as our only source of strength, presenting his matchless love in having the guilt of the sins of men charged to his account and his own righteousness imputed to man, in no case does away with the law or detracts from its dignity. Rather, it places it where the correct light shines upon and glorifies it. This is done only through the light reflected from the cross of Calvary. The law is complete and full in the great plan of salvation, only as it is presented in the light shining from the crucified and risen Saviour. This can be only spiritually discerned. It kindles in the heart of the beholder ardent faith, hope, and joy that Christ is his righteousness. This joy is only for those who love and keep the words of Jesus, which are the words of God.—*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 176.

Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. John 12:35.

This is the warning we would give to you who claim to believe the truth. “Yet a little while is the light with you.” We would ask you to consider the shortness of human life, how swiftly time is passing. Golden opportunities and privileges are within our reach. The plenteous, abundant mercy of God is waiting your demand upon its richest treasures. The Saviour is waiting to dispense His blessings freely, and the only question is, Will you accept them? The rich provisions have been made, and light is shining in a variety of ways; but this light will lose its preciousness to those who do not appreciate it, who do not accept and respond to it, or, having received it, do

not pass the light along to others.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 87.

Wednesday, December 25: Theology From “Above” or From “Below”

He who blessed the nobleman at Capernaum is just as desirous of blessing us. But like the afflicted father, we are often led to seek Jesus by the desire for some earthly good; and upon the granting of our request we rest our confidence in His love. The Saviour longs to give us a greater blessing than we ask; and He delays the answer to our request that He may show us the evil of our own hearts, and our deep need of His grace. He desires us to renounce the selfishness that leads us to seek Him. Confessing our helplessness and bitter need, we are to trust ourselves wholly to His love.

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

If we would have the spirit and power of the third angel’s message, we must present the law and the gospel together, for they go hand in hand. As a power from beneath is stirring up the children of disobedience to make void the law of God, and to trample upon the truth that Christ is our righteousness, a power from above is moving upon the hearts of those who are loyal, to exalt the law, and to lift up Jesus as a complete Saviour. Unless divine power is brought into the experience of the people of God, false theories and ideas will take minds captive, Christ and His righteousness will be dropped out of the experience of many, and their faith will be without power or life. . . .

The burden of our message is not only the commandments of God, but the faith of Jesus. A bright light shines upon our pathway today, and it leads to increased faith in Jesus. We must receive every ray of light, and walk in it, that it may not be our condemnation in the judgment. Our duties and obligations become more important as we obtain more distinct views of truth. Light makes manifest and reprove the errors that were concealed in darkness; and as light comes, the life and character of men must change correspondingly, to be in harmony with it. Sins that were once sins of ignorance, because of the blindness of the mind, can no more be indulged in without incurring guilt. As increased light is given, men must be reformed, elevated, and refined by it, or they will be more perverse and stubborn than before the light came.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 161, 162.

Thursday, December 26: Abiding in Jesus

“I am the vine, ye are the branches.” Can we conceive of a more intimate relation to Christ than this? The fibers of the branch are almost identical with those of the vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the trunk to the branches is unobstructed and constant. The root sends its nourishment through the branch. Such is the true believer’s relation to Christ. He abides in Christ, and draws his nourishment from Him.

This spiritual relation can be established only by the exercise of personal faith. This faith must express on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. Our will must be wholly yielded to the divine will; our feelings, desires, interests, and honor, identified with the prosperity of Christ’s kingdom and the honor of His cause, we constantly receiving grace from Him, and Christ accepting gratitude from us.—*My Life Today*, p. 11.

Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and

last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, “I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.” Psalm 16:8.

Do you ask, “How am I to abide in Christ?” In the same way as you received Him at first. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” “The just shall live by faith.” Colossians 2:6; Hebrews 10:38. You gave yourself to God, to be His wholly, to serve and obey Him, and you took Christ as your Saviour. You could not yourself atone for your sins or change your heart; but having given yourself to God, you believe that He for Christ’s sake did all this for you. By faith you became Christ’s, and by faith you are to grow up in Him—by giving and taking. You are to give all,—your heart, your will, your service,—give yourself to Him to obey all His requirements; and you must take all,—Christ, the fullness of all blessing, to abide in your heart, to be your strength, your righteousness, your everlasting helper,—to give you power to obey.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 68, 69.

The strength of every soul is in God and not in man. Quietness and confidence is to be the strength of all who give their hearts to God. Christ has not a casual interest in us but an interest stronger than a mother for her child. Our Saviour has purchased us by human suffering and sorrow, by insult, reproach, abuse, mockery, rejection, and death. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. He will make you secure under His protection. . . . Our weakness in human nature will not bar our access to the heavenly Father, for He [Christ] died to make intercession for us.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 77.

Friday, December 27: For Further Reading

The Upward Look, “Keep Looking Up,” p. 268;
Our High Calling, “A Safe Guide,” p. 16.