

Christ Our Righteousness



Thirteenth Sabbath Overflow Offering

March 30, 1974—Afro-Mideast Division

It is not difficult to write to the members of our worldwide Sabbath School family. We know each other pretty well. We support each other and encourage each other to the best of our ability. When the Afro-Mideast Division therefore comes to you this quarter with earnest requests for financial help, we are confident that you will help us.

We have chosen three projects that will benefit from your gifts at the end of this quarter. Not that we could not have come up with more projects, for we could; but rather we thought that we should concentrate on these three, which are:

1. *A mission station in West Ethiopia.* The plan is that this particular station should be placed close to the border with Sudan. This is the part of old Ethiopia where so many thousands of souls have been won for God's kingdom recently. This is where the field president baptized more than 1,500 souls last year, largely won by our faithful laymembers.

2. *A seminary for Tanzania.* We urgently need an evangelistic training center in Tanzania. A beautiful location has already been secured for this purpose. It lies in the highland some 15 miles from the town of Arusha. When this property became available, our local administration took advantage of it in anticipation of what the special Thirteenth Sabbath Overflow Offering will bring in. The funds will transform the property into a Seminary.

3. *A health center in Manama, Bahrain.* This, we believe, will be according to the "blueprint." Already much planning and preparation has gone into this project. The Middle East Union is looking with great expectation to the day when this project will be realized and another door entered.

So on behalf of the many thousands of us out here, I say: Thank you for your constant liberality. Thank you for easing our burdens by giving a really good Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

M. E. Lind
President
Afro-Mideast Division

Lessons for the Second Quarter of 1974

The title of the series is "News From Jesus"—a study on the book of Revelation.

First lesson, "The Author Identified." Memory verse, Revelation 1:17. Outline as follows: (1) Source of the Book. Rev. 1:1-3. (2) The Salutation. Rev. 1:4-5, first part. (3) The Doxology. Rev. 1:5, last part-7. (4) Identifications. Rev. 1:8-11. (5) The Divine Exalted Jesus. Rev. 1:12-16. (6) The Living Jesus. Rev. 1:17-20.

Second lesson, "Letters From Jesus I." Memory verse, Rev. 2:7. Outline as follows: (1) Ephesus I. Rev. 2:1-3. (2) Ephesus II. Rev. 2:4. (3) Ephesus III. Rev. 2:5, 6. (4) Ephesus IV. Rev. 2:7. (5) Smyrna I. Rev. 2:8-10. (6) Smyrna II. Rev. 2:11.

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

General Introduction

An outstanding characteristic of today's society is lawlessness, and a common teaching by Christian churches is that the law of God is no longer binding on men. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the way of life as God has revealed it is faith in Jesus leading to obedience to the commandments. It is the keeping of the "commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" that John the Revelator saw would characterize the saints in the last days. This message is particularly pertinent in today's world. It is precisely the remedy for the ills of our world and of the church that arise out of a negative attitude toward law.

The title of this quarter's lessons, "Christ our Righteousness," reflects this double, but inseparable, concern. It is a study of Christ who points us to the law, which is the definition of righteousness, and of the law that points us to Christ who is the only means by which the sinner can be in harmony with the law.

There is the constant risk that the proper relation between Christ and law shall not be recognized in a study of salvation by faith. It is this perspective of Christ in the law that is a root concept of the message we are proclaiming to the world. To remove, or tone down, the claims of the law will result in a sentimental religion, claiming Jesus as Lord, but failing to do His will. To remove, or tone down, the truth of salvation by faith in Jesus will result in a legalistic religion in which the believer is in the hopeless situation of seeking salvation by his own deeds.

Ellen G. White has stated the true relation between Jesus and the law as follows:

"Christ bore the curse of the law, suffering its penalty, carrying to completion the plan whereby man was to be placed where he could keep God's law, and be accepted through the merits of the Redeemer; and by His sacrifice glory was shed upon the law. . . .

"Christ is the sinner's advocate. Those who accept His gospel behold Him with open face. They see the relation of His mission to the law, and they acknowledge God's wisdom and glory as revealed by the Saviour. The glory of Christ is revealed in the law, which is a transcript of His character, and His transforming efficacy is felt upon the soul until men become changed to His likeness. They are made partakers of the divine nature, and grow more and more like their Saviour, advancing step by step in conformity to the will of God, till they reach perfection.

"The law and the gospel are in perfect harmony. Each upholds the other. In all its majesty the law confronts the conscience, causing the sinner to feel his need of Christ as the propitiation for sin. The gospel recognizes the power and immutability of the law. 'I had not known sin, but by the law,' Paul declares (Rom. 7:7). The sense of sin, urged home by the law, drives the sinner to the Saviour. In his need man may present the mighty arguments furnished by the cross of Calvary. He may claim the righteousness of Christ; for it is imparted to every repentant sinner."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 240, 241.

During this quarter we invite your careful study of Jesus and the law of God.

The Blessing of Daily Study

"Every day some portion of time should be appropriated to the study of the lessons, not merely in learning to mechanically repeat the words, while the mind does not comprehend the meaning; but to go to the very foundation, and become familiar with what is brought out in the lesson."—"Counsels on Sabbath School Work," page 53.

My Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

(signed)

The regular adult Sabbath School lessons and regular Sabbath School World Mission Report are available free each month in Braille and 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ rpm records to blind and physically handicapped persons who cannot read normal inkprint. This includes individuals who because of arthritis, multiple sclerosis, paralysis, accidents, old age, and so forth, cannot hold or focus on normal inkprint publications. Contact the Christian Record Braille Foundation, Box 6097, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. Righteousness
2. The Call to Righteousness
3. The Righteous Jesus
4. The Purpose of the Cross
5. Accepting God's Provision
6. Christ's Imputed Righteousness
7. Christ's Imparted Righteousness
8. Cooperation With God
9. Faith and Salvation
10. Christ's Righteousness in Symbols
11. Christ's Righteousness in Parables
12. The Third Angel's Message
13. The Final Conflict

Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly (regular edition), No. 315, January-March, 1974. 35 cents a single copy, \$1.40 a year (four issues); no additional charge to countries requiring extra postage. Published in the U.S.A., by Pacific Press Publishing Association (a corporation of S.D.A.), 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042. Second-class mail privileges authorized at Mountain View, California. Form 3579 requested. When a change of address is desired, please be sure to send both old and new addresses.

Copyright 1973 by Pacific Press Publishing Association

Cover photo by Henry Rasmussen

Righteousness

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. 1:30.

During this quarter the word "righteousness" will be very prominent. It is the purpose of this lesson to clarify the meaning of righteousness as the term is used in the Bible. In order to do this, an overview of righteousness is given first. Therefore, this week we touch on some elements of this subject that will be expanded later in the quarter.

Both the Hebrew and the Greek words

translated as "righteousness" in the King James Version of the Bible have a background of usage that is not limited to religion. A general definition that covers both Hebrew and Greek meanings, and leaves out many connotations, is "the state of being in the right." Two synonyms for righteousness are "rectitude" and "uprightness."

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Meaning of Righteousness**
Gen. 7:1
2. **Description of Righteousness**
Ps. 119:172
3. **Source of Righteousness**
1 John 4:8
4. **Jesus and Righteousness**
John 14:9
5. **Relationship With God**
Isa. 59:2
6. **Corrected Conduct**
Rom. 6:13

"The Great Standard of Righteousness," an article written by Ellen G. White, is printed at the end of this lesson for supplementary reading. It was originally printed in the *Review and Herald*.

"The righteousness which Christ taught is conformity of heart and life to the revealed will of God. Sinful men can become righteous only as they have faith in God and maintain a vital connection with Him. Then true godliness will elevate the thoughts and ennoble the life. Then the external forms of religion accord with the Christian's internal purity. Then the ceremonies required in the service of God are not meaningless rites, like those of the hypocritical Pharisees."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 310.

Part 1
MEANING OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Gen. 7:1

The first use of one of the forms of the Hebrew word in the Old Testament which is translated as "righteous" or "righteousness" is in Gen. 7:1.

"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."

Noah is here called "righteous" and all the rest of the world were living in wickedness. (Gen. 6:5, 8.) Throughout the Bible the words "wickedness" and "righteousness" are used for opposite meanings.

What does John point to as the evidence of a righteous person? 1 John 3:7.

While the context of a word must determine its particular shade of meaning, a word has a basic meaning that can be stated objectively, as in a dictionary. The idea of "righteousness" is right conduct with reference to a norm, and "wickedness" is wrong conduct in relation to the same norm.

"Righteousness is right doing, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are revealed by what we do. The works show whether the faith is genuine."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 312.

Note the use of the words "righteous" and "wicked" in Ezekiel 33:18, 19.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I see my conduct as God sees it?

"The reason why God's people are not more spiritually minded and have not more faith, I have been shown, is because they are narrowed up with selfishness. . . . It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is not the numerous prayers, but the right-doing, doing the right thing and at the right time. It is to be less self-caring and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 36.

"Righteousness is holiness, likeness to God, and 'God is love.' 1 John 4:16. It is conformity to the law of God, for 'all Thy commandments are righteousness' (Psalm 119:172), and 'love is the fulfilling of the law' (Romans 13:10). Righteousness is love, and love is the light and the life of God. The righteousness of God is embodied in Christ. We receive righteousness by receiving Him."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 18.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 91-95.

Part 2
DESCRIPTION OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Ps. 119:172

What, according to the psalmist, constitutes, righteousness?
"My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."

"Righteousness is defined by the standard of God's holy law, as expressed in the ten precepts given on Sinai."—*Steps to Christ*, page 61.

"God has a law, and it is the great standard of righteousness. Everyone who has presumed upon the mercy of God, and practiced iniquity, will be judged according to his works."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 448.

Thus the norm for the right conduct of the believer is the law of God. This righteousness is not based on what appears to man to be right-doing, but on the revelation of a universal principle expressed in the Ten Commandments.

What principle, as Jesus pointed out, underlies the law?
Mark 12:30, 31.

It is the same to speak of loving conduct as to speak of right conduct, but love as defined by God's law.

"We are not to be dwarfed in any kind of service for God. Whatever He has lent us is to be used intelligently for Him. The man who exercises his faculties will surely strengthen them; but he must seek to do his best. There is need of intelligence and educated ability to devise the best methods in farming, in building, and in every other department, that the worker may not labor in vain. . . .

"It is the duty of every worker not merely to give his strength but his mind and intellect to that which he undertakes to do."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1112.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the result of comparing my conduct with the spiritual meaning of the law?

"God requires at this time just what He required of the holy pair in Eden, perfect obedience to His requirements. His law remains the same in all ages. The great standard of righteousness presented in the Old Testament is not lowered in the New. It is not the work of the gospel to weaken the claims of God's holy law, but to bring men up where they can keep its precepts."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1073.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matt. 5:22, pages 55-58.

Part 3
SOURCE OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS
1 John 4:8**"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."**

"God is love. The Greek construction does not make 'God' and 'love' identical as the English translation may appear to do. Rather love is set forth as an essential quality or attribute of God. The decisive proof that a man that 'loveth not' lacks a knowledge of God is contained in the phrase 'God is love.' He who does not love proves that he is not personally acquainted with the basic quality in God's nature. In his simple but sublime statement John reaches the zenith of Christian belief."
—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 664.

Yesterday we noted that the law is based on love. Add to that the fact that God is love and it becomes clear that in God's law there was put into words the principle of God's character. The law reflects to man what God is like, and as man keeps God's law by His grace, he becomes Godlike.

"God's law is the transcript of His character. It embodies the principles of His kingdom. He who refuses to accept these principles is placing himself outside the channel where God's blessings flow."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 305.

The purpose of the law is not that it be a thing in itself, but rather that the believer accept it as the voice of God, as it was really given on Sinai, the expression of God's personal will for all mankind.

"The law is to be presented to its transgressors, not as something apart from God, but rather as an exponent of His mind and character. As the sunlight cannot be separated from the sun, so God's law cannot be rightly presented to man apart from the divine Author."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 371.

Man cannot understand the law if he looks at it as a code standing alone.

"Those who study this lesson [of the good Samaritan] aright will see that in order to keep the law it is necessary to have a knowledge of God; for the law is a transcript of his character, and his character is love."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Sept. 13, 1906.

The true revelation of righteousness comes through the combination of the law and the knowledge of God. Tomorrow we will note that the knowledge of God comes through Jesus.

THINK IT THROUGH**How can I know what is right conduct and do it?**

"Christ bore the curse of the law, suffering its penalty, carrying to completion the plan whereby man was to be placed where he could keep God's law, and be accepted through the merits of the Redeemer; and by His sacrifice glory was shed upon the law."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 240.

FURTHER STUDY*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 216-220.

Part 4
JESUS AND
RIGHTEOUSNESS
John 14:9**What revelation was made by the life of Jesus?**

"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, Shew us the Father?"

"Christ alone was able to represent the Deity. He who had been in the presence of the Father from the beginning, He who was the express image of the invisible God, was alone sufficient to accomplish this work. No verbal description could reveal God to the world. Through a life of purity, a life of perfect trust and submission to the will of God, a life of humiliation such as even the highest seraph in heaven would have shrunk from, God Himself must be revealed to humanity. In order to do this, our Saviour clothed His divinity with humanity. He employed the human faculties, for only by adopting these could He be comprehended by humanity. Only humanity could reach humanity. He lived out the character of God through the human body which God had prepared for Him. He blessed the world by living out in human flesh the life of God, thus showing that He had the power to unite humanity to divinity."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 924.

Both the law and Jesus reveal the righteousness that God designed that man should possess, and both are based on how God Himself relates to the universe. These two revelations of righteousness belong together and must never be separated. "The law and the gospel are so blended that the truth cannot be presented as it is in Jesus, without blending these subjects in perfect agreement. The law is the gospel of Christ veiled; the gospel of Jesus is nothing more or less than the law defined, showing its far-reaching principles."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890.

The written law provided the divine objective standard by which Jesus lived. If no law preceded Him, how could it be seen by men that He was righteous? The life of Jesus provided the human life in which the law was perfectly displayed. If He had not lived the law how would it be fully known what is the content of a righteous human life?

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I blend Jesus and the law together in my daily life?

In 1890 Ellen G. White wrote: "As a people, we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and . . . trust not in our own merits at all."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, March 11, 1890.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 467-469.

Part 5
RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD
Isa. 59:2

What does Isaiah state to have been the result of Judah's sins?

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

Sin, disobedience of the law, separates man from God. Man before sin had an unbroken relationship with God. Every sin is not only a breaking of the law, but also an act of disloyalty to God. (See *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 218.) Wrong conduct, judged by the law, not only makes one an unrighteous person for the record, both in heaven's books and in his own body, but it also changes the relationship between man and God. A sinner alone cannot mend his conduct sufficiently to be the kind of person he would have been if he had not sinned, so man cannot come to God on the basis of his corrected conduct. But God through the cross has arranged that the relationship that He originally planned to have with each person can be established when the sinner has faith in Jesus whose life presents the ideal conduct. This faith in Jesus and His ideal conduct is accepted by God in the place of the faulty conduct of the sinner, and a basis is thus provided for the new relationship between God and the sinner. This ideal conduct of Jesus is Christ's righteousness and the establishment of the relationship is justification.

"We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make, are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. Christ satisfied the demands of the law in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 363, 364.

THINK IT THROUGH

What prompts my good conduct—the desire to be well thought of, or the desire to honor God and be loyal to Him?

"God's dear Son died that He might impute unto man His own righteousness, and not that he might be at liberty to break God's holy law, as Satan tries to make men believe. Through faith in Christ, man may be in possession of moral power to resist evil."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 317.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, Bk. 1, pp. 308, 310.

Part 6
CORRECTED
CONDUCT
Rom. 6:13

What is Paul's command to the person who has been justified?

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

The new relationship with God puts man in a position to receive from God, by the Spirit, power to correct his conduct. It is sin that breaks the ideal relationship between God and man; thus in order to perpetuate the new relationship, the believer must renounce sinful conduct and accept as his own ideal the perfect conduct of Jesus. As he seeks to copy the conduct of Jesus, his own conduct is corrected, step by step. This correction of conduct is sanctification. The faith in Jesus by which the new relationship with God was formed serves also as the means of conduct correction. When distinctions are made between justification and sanctification it is not possible to say that the believer is saved by one and not by the other, for the relationship and the conduct are two parts of that which is the ground of our salvation—the righteousness of Jesus Christ. For salvation the relationship and the correction of conduct must move on together—the corrected conduct perpetuating the relationship, and the relationship covering the imperfections of the conduct that exist in spite of one's best efforts. The real key here is that the believer be relating to God in loyalty and good faith, putting forth his best efforts to correct his conduct, and not using the relationship with God to cover up unrepentance.

"Christ looks at the spirit, and when He sees us carrying our burden with faith, His perfect holiness atones for our shortcomings. When we do our best, He becomes our righteousness. It takes every ray of light that God sends to us to make us the light of the world."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 368.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does the righteousness of Jesus become my righteousness?

"When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him, and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 382.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, Bk. 1, pp. 317, 318.

THE GREAT STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ellen G. White

Christ gave His life to redeem humanity, and He calls upon men and women to make every sacrifice in their power to glorify God by placing light in contrast with darkness. Christ gave His life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God's law, not to create a lower standard, but to maintain justice, and to give man a second probation. No one can keep God's commandments except in Christ's power. He bore in His body the sins of all mankind, and He imputes His righteousness to every believing child.

Christ is our example in all things. He has magnified the law and made it honorable. By His unwavering obedience He testified to the truth that God's law is the standard of righteousness for all men. God requires of man nothing that is impossible for him to do. He "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Possessing our nature, though unstained by sin, and tempted in all points like as we are, Christ kept the law, proving beyond controversy that man also can keep it.

The fiat has gone forth, "The wages of sin is death." The sinner must feel his guiltiness, else he will never repent. He has broken the law, and in so doing has placed himself under its condemnation. The law has no power to pardon the transgressor, but it points him to Christ Jesus, who says to him, I will take your sin and bear it myself, if you will accept me as your substitute and surety. Return to your allegiance, and I will impute to you my righteousness. You will be made complete in me.

Sin is the transgression of the law. God declares, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of

thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Notwithstanding all the profession of lip and voice, if the character is not in harmony with the law of God, those making profession of godliness bear evil fruit.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven,"—the will made known in the Ten Commandments, given in Eden when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, and spoken with an audible voice from Sinai. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Many mighty works are done under the inspiration of Satan, and these works will be more and more apparent in the last days.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

The mischief done by the professed believers in God who are not doers of

the Word, can not be estimated. Their lawless, unholy principles corrupt many, leading them away from the path of obedience.

A life of conformity to the Christ-life can not be a life of disobedience to God's commands. The lawyer who questioned Christ concerning the law, in answering his own question, said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." "Thou hast answered right," Christ said; "this do, and thou shalt live." Sin can not reign in the life of the one who loves God supremely. Obedience to God is the fruit borne by love. Christ is not at war with Christ, and love to our neighbor prevents us from working ill to him. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." The law of God lays its claim upon the whole man. There is no period of time when the law does not make this demand upon every son and daughter of Adam.

Complete obedience is the only condition that meets the requirement of the law. "God is not a man, that He should lie." God's law is the rule of His government. He says, "This do, and thou shalt live." But to the disobedient He says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." God has given the promise that those who obey His law will be rewarded, not only in the present life, but in the life to come. He declares just as decidedly that those who do not obey His requirements shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on them. By lips that never lie the obedient are blessed, and the disobedient are pronounced guilty.

There are only two classes in the world to-day, and only two classes will be recognized in the Judgment,—those who violate God's law, and those who keep His law. Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of

heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the Prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion.

When the judgment shall sit, and every one shall be judged by the things written in the books, the authority of God's law will be looked upon in a light altogether different from that in which it is now regarded by the Christian world. Satan has blinded their eyes and confused their understanding, as he blinded and confused Adam and Eve, and led them into transgression. The law of Jehovah is great, even as its Author is great. In the Judgment it will be recognized as holy, just, and good in all its requirements. Those who transgress this law will find that they have a serious account to settle with God; for His claims are decisive.

Christ has borne our sins in His own body, and those who accept Him as a personal Saviour are free from the penalty of the law. Jesus has been made the propitiation for our sin, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. "Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."

To the obedient child of God the commandments are a delight. David declares, "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end. I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love. Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word. Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God. . . . I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."

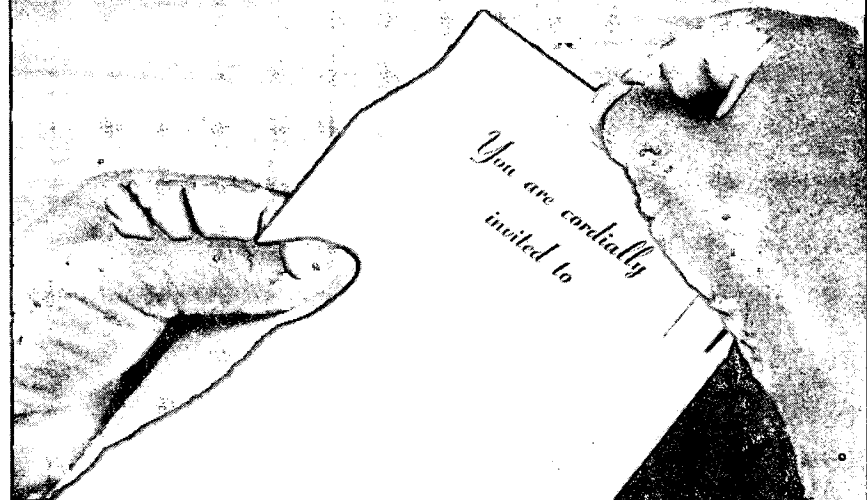
Did the contempt shown to the law of God extinguish David's loyalty? Hear

his words. He calls upon God to interfere and vindicate His honor, to show that there is a God, that there are limits to His forbearance. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work," he says, "for they have made void thy law."

David saw the divine precepts thrown aside, and obstinacy and rebellion increasing. But he was not swept away by the prevalence of apostasy. The scorn and contempt cast upon the law did not lead him to refrain from vindicating the law. On the contrary, his reverence for the law of Jehovah increased as he saw the disregard and contempt shown for it by others. "They have made void thy

law," he exclaims. "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way."

As man studies and contemplates the precious statutes of the Most High, as he meditates upon them, and realizes their value, he exclaims: "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. . . . Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."—*Review and Herald*, May 7, 1901.



The Call to Righteousness

"Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come." Isa. 45:24.

Inasmuch as only God can heal the broken relationship of man with Him, it is to God that man must go for righteousness. He is invited to seek for it and is called blessed if he hungers and thirsts for it. In these invitations there

is a promise that to the earnest seeker there will come a satisfying of the longing of his heart.

Christ is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. To him man is to look for "righteousness and strength." As he looks to the one and only Saviour he must look away from himself and his own inadequacy to heal the relationship with God by his own means and works. As he looks to Jesus a transformation will be begun. If he continues to look to Jesus this transformation will not cease until he is completely renewed in the image of God.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Man's Inadequacy**
Dan. 9:7-10
2. **First Things First**
Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 6:11
3. **Blessed Are They**
Matt. 5:6
4. **Our Righteousness Is of God**
Isa. 54:17
5. **Christ, Our Righteousness**
Jer. 23:5, 6
6. **Accepting the Invitation**
Ps. 5:8; 23:3; 4:1

"Christ Our Hope," an article written by Ellen G. White, is printed at the end of this lesson for supplementary reading. It was originally printed in the *Review and Herald*.

Part 1
MAN'S
INADEQUACY
Dan. 9:7-10

"O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee. . . . To us belongeth confusion of faces, . . . because we have sinned against thee. . . . Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets."

The prayer of Daniel is a confession of the sins of Israel that had caused their captivity. The prophet recalls that God's acts have been righteous, but he finds no cause for merit or special consideration for his people. On the one side stands God's righteousness; on the other, Israel's prolonged record of sin. Daniel intercedes, saying, "For we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies." Dan. 9:18. This experience illustrates the relation of the whole human family with God.

To what did an earlier prophet compare the righteousness of Judah? Isa. 64:6.

How many have failed to maintain God's standard of righteousness? Rom. 3:10-12.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is my spiritual condition apart from Christ? See John 15:5.

"Writing to the Philippians, he [Paul] describes his experience before and after his conversion. 'If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh,' he says, 'I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.' Phil. 3:4-6.

"After his conversion his testimony was: 'Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.' Phil. 3:8, 9, ARV.

"The righteousness that heretofore he had thought of so much worth was now worthless in his sight."—*The Story of Redemption*, page 311.

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, Bk. 1, pp. 340-341.

Part 2
FIRST THINGS FIRST
Matt. 6:33
1 Tim. 6:11

What is to be given priority in the life of the follower of Jesus?

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

We are to give first place to seeking "the kingdom of God and His righteousness" and do it with all our hearts. Jer. 29:12, 13. It is easy to become absorbed in the cares of life and in the acquisition of material things. We must remember "that man doth not live by bread only." Deut. 8:3.

"I [Jesus] have come to open to you the kingdom of love and righteousness and peace. Open your hearts to receive this kingdom, and make its service your highest interest. Though it is a spiritual kingdom, fear not that your needs for this life will be uncared-for. If you give yourself to God's service, He who has all power in heaven and earth will provide for your needs."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 99.

How abundantly did God promise to provide the blessing of righteousness to Israel if they would seek Him? Hosea 10:12.

What is the Lord's attitude toward those who seek righteousness? Prov. 15:9.

THINK IT THROUGH

What proportion of my time and energy do I give to material gain, and how much attention do I give to my relationship with God?

"All who choose Christ's kingdom of love and righteousness and peace, making its interest paramount to all other, are linked to the world above, and every blessing needed for this life is theirs. In the book of God's providence, the volume of life, we are each given a page. That page contains every particular of our history; even the hairs of the head are numbered. God's children are never absent from His mind."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 313.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matt. 6:33, pages 98-100.

Part 3
BLESSED ARE THEY
Matt. 5:6

What is the prerequisite to being filled with righteousness?

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Just as hunger and thirst arise out of the physical needs of the human beings, so the hunger and thirst after righteousness arise out of spiritual needs. But contrary to the case of man's physical hunger, man does not himself produce a spiritual hunger. It is the Holy Spirit that produces the hunger as well as satisfies it.

"He who desires the truth in his heart, who longs for the working of its power upon the life and character, will be sure to have it. Says the Saviour, 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.'" —*That I May Know Him*, page 10.

"If you have a sense of need in your soul, if you hunger and thirst after righteousness, this is an evidence that Christ has wrought upon your heart, in order that He may be sought unto to do for you, through the endowment of the Holy Spirit, those things which it is impossible for you to do for yourself. We need not seek to quench our thirst at shallow streams; for the great fountain is just above us, of whose abundant waters we may freely drink, if we will rise a little higher in the pathway of faith."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 19.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the meaning of hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

"Not by painful struggles or wearisome toil, not by gift or sacrifice, is righteousness obtained; but it is freely given to every soul who hungers and thirsts to receive it. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat, . . . without money and without price.' . . .

"No human agent can supply that which will satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. But Jesus says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.' 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.' Revelation 3:20; John 6:35."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pages 18, 19.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matt. 5:6, pages 18-21.

Part 4
OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS
IS OF GOD
Isa. 54:17

What promises are made to God's servants in the following passage?

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

"No Weapon . . . God will care for His own and vindicate them before their enemies. Neither evil men nor demons can prevail against them (see Isa. 50:8, 9; Zech. 3:1, 2).

"Servants of the Lord. That is, the people of Israel. . . .

"Their righteousness. More exactly, 'their vindication.' God will vindicate the cause of His servants. When the enemy accuses them and fights against them He will pronounce them innocent and deliver them."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 295.

"In his own strength man is strengthless; but in the might of God he may be strong to overcome evil and to help others to overcome. Satan can never gain advantage of him who makes God his defense. 'Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.' Isaiah 45:24.

"Fellow Christian, Satan knows your weakness; therefore cling to Jesus. Abiding in God's love, you may stand every test. The righteousness of Christ alone can give you power to stem the tide of evil that is sweeping over the world. Bring faith into your experience. Faith lightens every burden, relieves every weariness. Providences that are now mysterious you may solve by continued trust in God. Walk by faith in the path He marks out. Trials will come, but go forward. This will strengthen your faith and fit you for service."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 175.

What promises made to Israel may be claimed by us also? Isa. 41:10.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why must my righteousness come from God?

"As we discern the perfection of our Saviour's character we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. The more we know of God, the higher will be our ideal of character and the more earnest our longing to reflect His likeness. A divine element combines with the human when the soul reaches out after God."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 19.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pages 53-55.

Part 5
CHRIST, OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Jer. 23:5, 6

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

This passage was written by the prophet following his denunciation of Jehoiakim and his son Coniah or Jehoiachin. It was a time of instability in government, for in a period of about three months there were three kings of Judah, and the impotence of these was demonstrated by Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jerusalem resulting in the death of Jehoiakim, the capture of Jehoiachin, and the enthronement by the Babylonians of Zedekiah. The meaning of the latter's name was “the Lord my righteousness,” or “the Lord is righteous.” Under these circumstances Jeremiah predicts the coming of the Messiah-King whose name would be THE LORD IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (RSV). This name affirms that in Christ is the righteousness that human beings need and can find in no other source.

Yes, the Lord is the source of righteousness, and this righteousness is for us. But not all are willing to admit that they stand in need of this righteousness.

What name was to be applied to Jerusalem when the Branch had come? Jer. 33:15, 16.

THINK IT THROUGH

If I were to name my house according to the loyalty of the members of the household, what could I call it? Would it be appropriate to name it “The Lord Is Our Righteousness?”

“On the Saviour's coronation day He will not acknowledge as His any who bear spot or wrinkle. But to His faithful ones He will give crowns of immortal glory. Those who would not that He should reign over them will see Him surrounded by the army of the redeemed, each bearing the sign, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. They will see the head once crowned with thorns crowned with a diadem of glory.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 1157.

FURTHER STUDY

Prophets and Kings, pages 425-428.

Part 6
ACCEPTING THE
INVITATION
Ps. 5:8; 23:3; 4:1

"Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face."

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness."

In this and the former lesson a large number of passages from the Old Testament have been brought in. We often hear the testimony of the New Testament on the subject of "Christ, Our Righteousness," and may forget that the Old Testament contains many messages on this vital subject.

The 119th Psalm gives eloquent expression to the subject of God's righteousness. Note the following:

"Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments." Verse 137.

"Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth." Verse 142.

"My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness." Verse 172.

In the same psalm the writer records his response to his contemplation of God's righteousness:

"Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness." Verse 40.

"Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight." Verse 35.

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Verse 18.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are there ways in which my attitudes do not harmonize with the plea "Make me to go in the path of thy commandments"? Ps. 119:35. How can I make this request a reality?

"David, in the beauty and vigor of his young manhood, was preparing to take a high position with the noblest of the earth. His talents, as precious gifts from God, were employed to extol the glory of the divine Giver. His opportunities of contemplation and meditation served to enrich him with that wisdom and piety that made him beloved of God and angels. As he contemplated the perfections of his Creator, clearer conceptions of God opened before his soul. Obscure themes were illuminated, difficulties were made plain, perplexities were harmonized, and each ray of new light called forth fresh bursts of rapture, and sweeter anthems of devotion, to the glory of God and the Redeemer."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 642.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 502-504.

CHRIST OUR HOPE

Ellen G. White

There is no excuse for any one in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. We are living in perilous times, and it does not become us to accept everything claimed to be truth without examining it thoroughly; neither can we afford to reject anything that bears the fruits of the Spirit of God; but we should be teachable, meek and lowly of heart.

There are those who oppose everything that is not in accordance with their own ideas, and by so doing they endanger their eternal interest as verily as did the Jewish nation in their rejection of Christ. The Lord designs that our opinions shall be put to the test, that we may see the necessity of closely examining the living oracles to see whether or not we are in the faith. Many who claim to believe the truth have settled down at their ease, saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." But Jesus says to these self-complacent ones, Thou "knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Let us individually inquire, Do these words describe my case? If so, the True Witness counsels us, saying, "Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see."

From the description of the Laodi-

ceans, it is evident that many were deceived in their estimate of their spiritual condition. They regarded themselves as rich, as possessing all the knowledge and grace that was needed; but yet they lacked the gold of faith and love, the white raiment of Christ's righteousness. They were destitute and poverty-stricken, walking in sparks of their own kindling, and preparing to lie down in sorrow. Jesus says to them, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works [when the glow of the love of God was upon you]; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." This warning would not be given if there were no danger of failure on the part of those who profess to be the children of God.

In unmistakable language our position is presented before us. Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfections make it impossible that we should appear before God, unless we are clothed in Christ's spotless righteousness. We are to be found in him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is through Christ.

But there is hope for every one; 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." If the love of God is not appreciated, and does not become an abiding principle in the hard heart to soften and subdue the soul, we are utterly lost. The Lord has no reserve power with which to influence man. He can give no greater manifestation of his love than that which he has given.

Heaven's richest gift has been freely offered for your acceptance. If the exhibition of the love of Jesus does not melt and subdue your heart, by what means can you be reached? Has the love of Christ failed to bring forth an earnest response of love and gratitude? Then let it not remain in this condition of hardness another day. Open your heart, and receive Christ, the best gift of heaven. Let not cruel unbelief lead you to refuse the heaven-sent gift. Let not Christ say of you, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

The heart of Christ is constantly drawn out in sympathy toward fallen man. While upon earth, his only mission was to save sinners. He had a deep abhorrence of sin, while exercising the tenderest compassion toward the sinner. He was grieved and wounded at heart because men failed to value and accept his love. The Majesty of heaven veiled his divinity in humanity, and passed from place to place through towns and cities, teaching the truth and working miracles, and though multitudes flocked to hear him, few were in sympathy with the lessons of truth he presented, which alone could save the soul.

How few have any conception of the anguish which rent the heart of the Son of God during his thirty years of life upon earth. The path from the manger to Calvary was shadowed by sorrow and grief. He was the man of sorrows, and and endured such heartache as no human language can portray. He could have said in truth, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." His suffering was the deepest anguish of the soul; and what man could have sympathy with the soul anguish of the Son of the infinite God? Hating sin with a perfect hatred, he yet gathered to his soul the sins of the whole world, as he trod the path to Calvary, suffering the penalty of the transgressor. Guiltless, he bore the punishment of the guilty; innocent, yet offering himself to bear the penalty of the transgression of the law of God. The punishment of the sins of every soul was borne by the

Son of the infinite God. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer. He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. In assuming the nature of man, he placed himself where he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, that by his stripes we might be healed.

In his humanity Christ was tried with as much greater temptation, with as much more persevering energy than man is tried by the evil one, as his nature was greater than man's. This is a deep mysterious truth, that Christ is bound to humanity by the most sensitive sympathies. The evil works, the evil thoughts, the evil words of every son and daughter of Adam press upon his divine soul. The sins of men called for retribution upon himself; for he had become man's substitute, and took upon him the sins of the world. He bore the sins of every sinner; for all transgressions were imputed unto him, though "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Though the guilt of sin was not his, his spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" It is at the peril of our souls that we neglect the prescribed conditions under which we are called to work our own salvation. It is only through Christ, who was made sin for us, that we can work out our own salvation; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. We are to co-operate heartily with God, by faith laying hold of the righteousness of Christ, which alone can save. The only way by which we may be saved is by becoming workers together with God. It is through the co-operation of man with God that the believer may come off victorious. We shall not be found guiltless if we are content to float along in the current of the world, submitting the question of our soul's salvation to those who teach the traditions of men and rely upon supposed evidences. Every soul is to put

himself to the task of searching out the truth as it is in Jesus, to know it for himself by the study of the sure word of God. We are not to ask, What is the popular opinion? What saith brother A. or brother B. or any other man? What saith the fathers? But what saith the Lord our God in regard to the saving of the soul? And when we have found what saith the Scriptures, let us act upon the written word; for it is perilous to sit in judgment on the words of inspiration. That which has been written is for our instruction, admonition, and comfort.

Christ is the originator of divine truth. He knew the height and depth, length and breadth and fullness of the compassion of divine love, as no mortal man can know it. He knows the blessedness that sinners are refusing when they reject divine light, the horrors that will come upon the soul that refuses the truth of heaven. A heavenly feast has been spread for the hungry, but they refuse to eat. Christ alone knows what means the exceeding weight of glory which those who rebel against God, refuse to receive. The work of Christ upon earth was to seek and save that which was lost. Ever before him, he saw the result of his mission, although the baptism of blood must first be received, although the weight of sins of the world was to gather upon his innocent soul, although the shadow of an unspeakable woe was ever over him; yet for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame. He endured all this that sinful man might be saved, that he might be elevated and ennobled, and have a place with him upon his throne.

Men are contaminated with sin, and they cannot have an adequate conception of the heinous character of the evil which they cherish. Because of sin, the Majesty of heaven was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Voluntarily our divine substitute bared his soul to the sword of justice, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life. Said Christ: "I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me,

but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." No man of earth nor angel of heaven could have paid the penalty of sin. Jesus was the only one who could save rebellious man. In him divinity and humanity were combined, and this was what gave efficiency to the sacrifice made on Calvary's cross. Here it was that mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other.

Christ is called "the Lord our righteousness," and through faith, each one should be able to say, "The Lord my righteousness." When faith lays hold upon this gift of God, the praise of God will be upon our lips, and we shall be able to say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Then we shall be able to tell the lost concerning the plan of salvation, that while the world was lying under the curse of the law, meriting death, the Lord presented terms of mercy to the fallen and hopeless sinner, and brought out the meaning and value of his grace. Grace is unmerited favor. The angels, who know nothing of sin, do not understand what it is to have grace exercised toward them; but our sinfulness calls for the exercise of grace from a merciful God. It was grace that sent us our Saviour to seek us as wanderers and bring us back to his fold.

No works that the sinner can do will be efficacious in saving his soul. Obedience was always due to the Creator; for he endowed man with attributes for his service. God requires good works from man always; but good works cannot avail to earn salvation. It is impossible for man to save himself. He may deceive himself in regard to this matter; but he cannot save himself. Christ's righteousness alone can avail for his salvation, and this is the gift of God. This is the wedding garment prepared for you in which you may be a welcome guest at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Let faith take hold of Christ without delay, and you will be a new creature in Jesus, a light to the world.—*Review and Herald*, December 20, 1892.

The Righteous Jesus



"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. 8:3.

The second member of the Godhead came into our world to reveal the righteous character of God. For this revelation to have meaning to human beings it had to be done by a human being, and so the Son of God was born into our world as a member of the human family, and He lived in this world as we live in it.

"Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when he came to earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon him, he was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed."—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, June 11, 1874.

Jesus' revelation of what righteousness means in human existence was not carried out in ideal conditions or by a physically ideal being, but in man's real circumstances.

In our lesson this week we will study about Jesus, and what His life on earth means to us today.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Jesus Was God**
John 8:58
2. **Results**
Col. 2:9, 10
3. **Jesus Was Man**
Phil. 2:5-7
4. **Mutual Understanding**
Heb. 2:17
5. **Jesus Was Tempted**
Heb. 4:15
6. **Man Need Not Sin**
Rom. 8:3

Part 1
JESUS WAS GOD
John 8:58

What was Jesus' claim about His identity?

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

Ellen G. White notes that these words were spoken by Jesus "with solemn dignity," and she then comments:

"Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, 'whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.' Micah 5:2, margin."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 469, 470.

Could men know by looking at Jesus that He was God? Phil. 2:6, 7.

"The faith of men in Christ as the Messiah was not to rest on the evidences of sight, and they believe on Him because of His personal attractions, but because of the excellence of character found in Him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 904.

What was Paul's claim about Jesus' identity? Col. 2:9.

"In Christ is gathered all the glory of the Father. In Him is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God are expressed in His character. . . .

"We are not to praise the gospel, but praise Christ. We are not to worship the gospel, but the Lord of gospel. Christ is a perfect representation of God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 907.

THINK IT THROUGH

How could I recognize that Jesus was God if I were in His earthly presence?

"Christ had not ceased to be God when He became man. Though He had humbled Himself to humanity, the Godhead was still His own. Christ alone could represent the Father to humanity, and this representation the disciples had been privileged to behold for over three years."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 663, 664.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 207-210.

**Part 2
RESULTS**

Col. 2:9, 10, RSV

According to Paul what benefit has come to the believer from Christ's Godship?

"For in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fulness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority."

"What a thought is this! In Christ 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him.' Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. The Spirit conforms the renewed soul to the model, Jesus Christ."—*Messages to Young People*, pages 55, 56.

What was one result, which Jesus illustrated by a ladder, of His coming into this world? John 1:51.

This illustration is based on the story of Jacob's dream recorded in Genesis 28:10-17. Jesus identified Himself as the ladder. He is the means by which man is brought into contact with divinity. "The top of the ladder, reaching into heaven, represents the divine power of Christ, who grasps the Infinite and thus links earth to heaven and finite man to the infinite God. Through Christ the communication is opened between God and man."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 280.

Because Jesus is God, He is able to bring to man divine power to conquer sin. Without the divine Jesus there would not have been any communication from God to man—no angels, no Spirit, no Scriptures—and this world would have had no knowledge of truth to combat Satan's lies about God, and no power to resist his temptations. The information and power that man needs is supplied by his divine Saviour, who is symbolized as a ladder from earth to heaven.

What happens in the life of one who by faith is righteous? 2 Peter 1:1-4.

"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."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 123.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I personally obtain the divine power that Jesus came into this world to make available to men?

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 183, 184.

Part 3
JESUS WAS MAN
Phil. 2:5-7, RSV

What word does Paul use to describe the completeness with which Jesus gave up the form and position of God?

"Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

"When we want a deep problem to study, let us fix our minds on the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven—the incarnation of the Son of God. . . .

"The whole world was His, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' [Heb. 2:14-18 quoted.]"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 904.

What change did John say took place in the Word? John 1:14.

"Christ did not make-believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. 'As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.' He was the Son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the man Christ Jesus."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1130.

"It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. . . .

"He [the Father] permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 49.

THINK IT THROUGH

Of what importance is it to me that Jesus was a man?

"For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 117.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 63-65, 69, 70.

Part 4
MUTUAL
UNDERSTANDING
Heb. 2:17

What reason is given in Hebrews 2:17 for Jesus becoming human?

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

"In Christ were united the divine and the human—the Creator and the creature. The nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, and the nature of Adam, the transgressor, meet in Jesus—the Son of God, and the Son of man. And having with His own blood paid the price of redemption, having passed through man's experience, having in man's behalf met and conquered temptation, having, though Himself sinless borne the shame and guilt and burden of sin, He becomes man's Advocate and Intercessor. What an assurance here to the tempted and struggling soul, what an assurance to the witnessing universe, that Christ will be 'a merciful and faithful high priest!'"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 926.

"For our sake Jesus emptied Himself of His glory; He clothed His divinity with humanity that he might touch humanity, that His personal presence might be among us, that we might know that He was acquainted with all our trials, and sympathized with our grief, that every son and daughter of Adam might understand that Jesus is the friend of sinners."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 927.

It is not that God could not understand man's situation, but there needed to be a way by which man was assured that God understood. Jesus by His human experience provides the ground for man's faith in a God who understands man's needs.

What result of Jesus' humanity is inferred in John 14:9?

THINK IT THROUGH

Was there anything about human life that Jesus did not understand before He became a man? Why did He become a man?

"He came in humility, in order that the humblest being upon the face of the earth could have no excuse because of his poverty, or ignorance, and say, Because of these things, I cannot obey the law of Jehovah. Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity. . . . In His humanity He understood all the temptations that will come to man."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 925.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 328-332.

Part 5
JESUS WAS
TEMPTED
Heb. 4:15

In what way was Jesus' experience with temptation the same as ours? How was it different?

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

"Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1081.

"The temptations to which Christ was subjected were a terrible reality. As a free agent, He was placed on probation, with liberty to yield to Satan's temptations and work at cross-purposes with God. If this were not so, if it had not been possible for Him to fall, He could not have been tempted in all points as the human family is tempted."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1082.

What encouragement can we gain from Christ's experience of temptation? Heb. 12:3, 4.

"Satan made stronger attacks upon Christ than he will ever make upon us. There was much at stake with him, whether Christ or himself should be conqueror. . . . You can never be tempted in so determined and cruel a manner as was our Saviour. Satan was upon His path every moment."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, page 156.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what way can it be said that Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, when many attractions of the world did not exist in His earthly lifetime?

"If He [Jesus] did not have man's nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man's behalf."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1082.

"If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 117.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 114-119.

Part 6

MAN NEED NOT SIN

Rom. 8:3

What was proved by Jesus' sinless life?

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

"Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and standing as man's representative, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 926.

"The Saviour's life of obedience maintained the claims of the law; it proved that the law could be kept in humanity, and showed the excellence of character that obedience would develop."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 309.

What outstanding feature of Christ's life is to be a source of encouragement to man? John 16:33.

As Jesus has overcome the world, so we, in the power of the Spirit made available by virtue of Christ's victory, can overcome the world. Satan has at least one more accusation that he can make against Jesus. It is that Christ's experience in overcoming all temptation successfully was a unique experience that cannot be duplicated by ordinary believers. But the message of Jesus to us is that what He did, we also can do.

"To every one who surrenders fully to God is given the privilege of living without sin, in obedience to the law of heaven."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Sept. 27, 1906.

"Exact obedience is required, and those who say that it is not possible to live a perfect life throw upon God the imputation of injustice and untruth."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Feb. 7, 1957.

Through believers who trust fully in Jesus to give them victory over all sin Jesus will answer Satan's last lying charge.

THINK IT THROUGH

Can hereditary weaknesses be overcome in this life?

"Those who put their trust in Christ are not to be enslaved by any hereditary or cultivated habit or tendency. Instead of being held in bondage to the lower nature, they are to rule every appetite and passion. God has not left us to battle with evil in our own finite strength. Whatever may be our inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong, we can overcome through the power that He is ready to impart."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pages 175, 176.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 3, pp. 371, 372; *The Desire of Ages*, page 309.

**"Few give
thought to the
suffering that
sin has caused**

**our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's
agony; but that suffering did not begin or end
with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is
a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that,
from its very inception, sin has brought to the
heart of God.**

**Every departure
from the
right, every
deed of cruelty,
every failure of
humanity to
reach His
ideal, brings
grief to Him."
—"Education,"
page 263.**

The Purpose of the Cross

**"In this was manifested the love of
God toward us, because that God sent
his only begotten Son into the world,
that we might live through him. Herein
is love, not that we loved God, but that
he loved us, and sent his Son to be
the propitiation for our sins." 1 John
4:9, 10.**

A cross is a repulsive, frightening thing. It has the same significance as the gallows, the guillotine, the electric chair, the firing squad, or the gas chamber. Yet we today see it as a symbol of the mercy and grace of God. What has changed its meaning? The execution of Jesus of Nazareth. He was innocent not only before the laws of the nation, but more importantly even before the law of God. The Christian meaning of the cross depends on a prior belief in who Jesus was and what His death meant.

On the cross Christ suffered and died a voluntary death. He gave all that He had to reveal the true nature of God's character. On the cross God went on record for all time that He loves His creatures.

Calvary was the price that Heaven paid to win man back to allegiance to his Maker. The infinite sacrifice of the cross was God's means of reconciling man with Himself.

The Father and the Son "had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 834.

From the cross emanates a mysterious power that draws men heavenward.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. Sin's Results**
Rom. 8:7; James 4:4
- 2. Reconciliation**
2 Cor. 5:19
- 3. Misrepresentation Corrected**
John 3:16, 17
- 4. Attraction**
Hosea 11:4; John 12:32, 33
- 5. Transforming Power**
2 Cor. 3:18
- 6. The Invitation**
Matt. 11:28; John 7:37; 6:37

Part 1
SIN'S RESULTS

Rom. 8:7; James 4:4

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

What is the meaning in James 4:4 of the expression "a friend of the world"?

When Adam and Eve sinned, they turned their backs upon God. They had been deceived into thinking that God did not have their best interests at heart.

The basic question that Adam and Eve faced when tempted was "Whom shall we believe?" God had given them evidence in the provision for their life and happiness that He was concerned for their welfare. Satan presented only words and the spectacle of a talking serpent. But Satan's words aroused the couple's interest in themselves, and it became pleasant to believe the serpent and restrictive to believe God. When they believed the serpent's words, they placed themselves in opposition to God's words and became God's enemies.

"The earth was dark through misapprehension of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 22.

What are the results of sin in the relationship between man and God? Isa. 59:2.

"Adam, in his innocence, had enjoyed open communion with his Maker; but sin brought separation between God and man, and the atonement of Christ alone could span the abyss and make possible the communication of blessing or salvation from heaven to earth."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 67.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the danger of regarding God's rules as only restrictions? How should I regard God's law?

"But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed. The broken law of God demanded the life of the sinner. In all the universe there was but one who could, in behalf of man, satisfy its claims. Since the divine law is as sacred as God Himself, only one equal with God could make atonement for its transgression. None but Christ could redeem fallen man from the curse of the law and bring him again into harmony with Heaven. Christ would take upon Himself the guilt and shame of sin—sin so offensive to a holy God that it must separate the Father and His Son. Christ would reach to the depths of misery to rescue the ruined race."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 63.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 498-501.

Part 2
RECONCILIATION
2 Cor. 5:19, RSV

In the doctrine of reconciliation who is reconciled to whom?

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."

God has never been man's enemy. His opposition is against sin, not people. Since the fall, man has consistently been at enmity with God, and God's offer of reconciliation is really His recognition that man can be separated from sin, and thus no longer at enmity with God.

Man's sin, from which he can be separated, was the result of believing a misrepresentation of God's attitude toward His creatures. Could man be shown the correct view of God's character, and believe it, then a restoration of friendship between man and God would be possible. Christ came to earth to reveal to man God's love for him, and to provide evidence, by His own self-sacrifice, on which man could base his belief in the kind of God Jesus revealed.

"Reconciliation means that every barrier between the soul and God is removed, and that the sinner realizes what the pardoning love of God means. By reason of the sacrifice made by Christ for fallen men, God can justly pardon the transgressor who accepts the merits of Christ. Christ was the channel through which the mercy, love, and righteousness might flow from the heart of God to the heart of the sinner."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 396.

By what event is man reconciled to God? Rom. 5:10; 1 Peter 3:18.

THINK IT THROUGH

If I believe that God is my friend what effect will this belief have on my attitude toward God's rules for my life?

"Through Christ, restoration as well as reconciliation is provided for man. The gulf that was made by sin has been spanned by the cross of Calvary. A full, complete ransom has been paid by Jesus, by virtue of which the sinner is pardoned, and the justice of the law is maintained. All who believe that Christ is the atoning sacrifice may come and receive pardon for their sins; for through the merit of Christ, communication has been opened between God and man."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 363.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 501-504.

Part 3
MISREPRESENTA-
TION CORRECTED
John 3:16, 17

What two facets of God's character are implied in John 3:17?

"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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

The cross demonstrates that God is merciful to man, because a member of the Godhead became a man and willingly died in the process of showing man what God is like. On the other hand the cross demonstrates God's judgment on sin because the Father separated Himself from Jesus, as though Jesus were a sinner, refusing to change the law even to save the Son.

"The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! . . . The gift of God in His beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of His law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, p. 1132.

THINK IT THROUGH

How often do my thoughts turn to the great sacrifice that has been made for my redemption? It is "the expression of an incomprehensible love."

"By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.' John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 25, 26.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 651, 652.

Part 4
ATTRACTION
Hosea 11:4, RSV
John 12:32, 33

What thought do the following texts have in common?

"I led them with cords of compassion, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws, and I bent down to them and fed them."

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."

These texts speak only of the divine action in drawing men and not of men's response. Through the atonement there has been provided in this world a universal attraction to Jesus. This attraction is not necessarily to the Man Jesus of Nazareth (see *The Desire of Ages*, page 638) but always to the principles by which He lived, and by the Spirit which He has sent in His place.

While the attraction is universal, the response is only from a "little flock."

"Christ came to manifest the love of God to the world, to draw the hearts of all men to Himself. He said, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me' (John 12:32). . . . By the manifestation of His love, by the entreating of His Spirit, He woos men to repentance. . . . It is that men may understand the joy of forgiveness, the peace of God, that Christ draws them through the manifestation of His love. If they respond to His drawing, yielding their hearts to His grace, He will lead them on step by step, to a full knowledge of Himself, and this is life eternal."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 323, 324.

"In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction; for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection. Yea, more, it was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1113.

THINK IT THROUGH

When men look to the cross, what is it that draws them away from a life of sin? Have I responded to that drawing power?

"As the student of the Bible beholds the Redeemer, there is awakened in the soul the mysterious power of faith, adoration, and love."—*Education*, page 192.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "God's Love for Man," pages 13-15, 27.

Part 5
TRANSFORMING
POWER
2 Cor. 3:18

In the following verse, what two elements does Paul state are the means of change in the human heart?

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

"By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of His purity. It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. He passes from death unto life, he becomes spiritual and discerns spiritual things. The wisdom of God enlightens his mind, and he beholds wondrous things out of His law. As a man is converted by the truth, the work of transformation of character goes on. He has an increased measure of understanding. In becoming a man of obedience to God, he has the mind of Christ, and the will of God becomes His will."
—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 338.

What outstanding example is given us of the transforming power of Christ? Acts 9:1-6.

"In that hour of heavenly illumination Saul's mind acted with remarkable rapidity. The prophetic records of Holy Writ were opened to his understanding. He saw that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, had been foretold by the prophets and proved Him to be the promised Messiah. Stephen's sermon at the time of his martyrdom was brought forcibly to Saul's mind, and he realized that the martyr had indeed beheld 'the glory of God' when he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' Acts 7:55, 56. The priests had pronounced these words blasphemy, but Saul now knew them to be truth.

"What a revelation was all this to the persecutor! Now Saul knew for a certainty that the promised Messiah had come to this earth as Jesus of Nazareth and that He had been rejected and crucified by those whom He came to save."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 115, 116.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I view the crucified One? Am I beholding Him sufficiently to know what He is like and to grow more like Him?

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 759-761.

Part 6
THE INVITATION
Matt. 11:28
John 7:37; 6:37

In each of the following texts, what is the action of the person?

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

"The first step toward salvation is to respond to the drawing of the love of Christ. God sends message after message to men, entreating them to repentance, that He may forgive, and write pardon against their names."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 323.

What attitude of God expressed to Judah is always His attitude toward the sinner? Ezek. 33:11.

"The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent. . . .

"The Lord Jesus is constantly seeking to impress the sinner's mind and attract him to behold Himself, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. We cannot take a step toward spiritual life save as Jesus draws and strengthens the soul, and leads us to experience that repentance which needeth not to be repented of."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 390, 391.

THINK IT THROUGH

How would I feel if Christ were to come to my home in person?

"Oh, let us contemplate the amazing sacrifice that has been made for us! Let us try to appreciate the labor and energy that Heaven is expending to reclaim the lost, and bring them back to the Father's house. Motives stronger, and agencies more powerful, could never be brought into operation; the exceeding rewards for right-doing, the enjoyment of heaven, the society of the angels, the communion and love of God and His Son, the elevation and extension of all our powers throughout eternal ages—are these not mighty incentives and encouragements to urge us to give the heart's loving service to our Creator and Redeemer?"—*Steps to Christ*, page 21.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 328-332.

LESSON 5

January 27 to
February 2

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
1 John 1:8, 9.

The Holy Spirit will work a complete transformation, or conversion, in the life of the person who is attached to the cross. This change will be seen by true repentance for and a turning away from sin. Where necessary, restitution will be made.

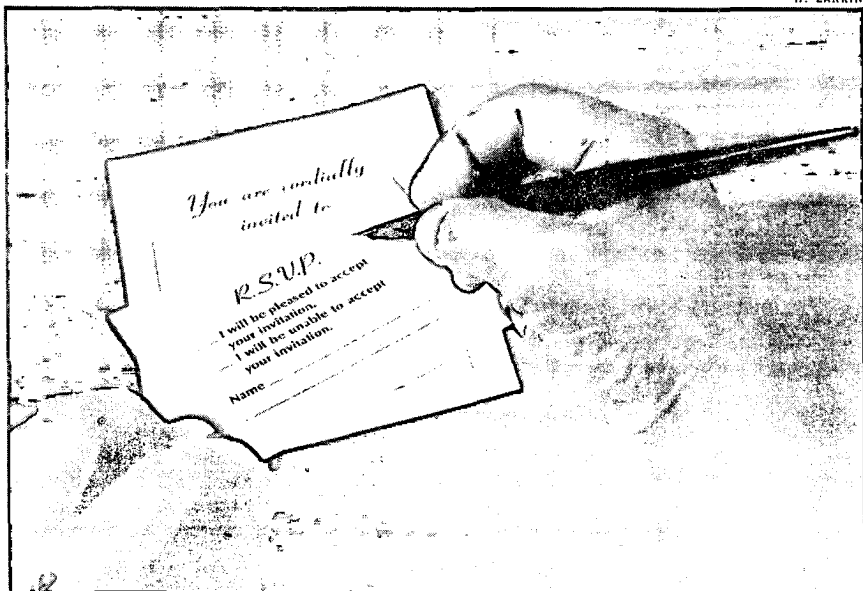
By faith man will lay hold of God's promises for forgiveness and for strength to live the new life he has chosen. He will desire also to give public testimony of his new experience by seeking baptism. Through baptism he will pledge, by God's grace, to remain steadfast in the new life that he has chosen.

Accepting God's Provision

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Source of Salvation
2 Tim. 3:15
2. Repentance and Conversion
Acts 3:19
3. Confession
1 John 1:8, 9
4. Faith
Mark 1:15
5. Restitution
Ezek. 33:15
6. Baptism
Acts 2:37, 38

H. LARKIN



Part 1
SOURCE OF
SALVATION
2 Tim. 3:15

In writing to Timothy, what place did Paul give to the Scriptures in relation to salvation?

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

How vital is a knowledge of Christ? John 17:3.

"We should not take the testimony of any man as to what the Scriptures teach, but should study the words of God for ourselves. If we allow others to do our thinking, we shall have crippled energies and contracted abilities. The noble powers of the mind may be so dwarfed by lack of exercise on themes worthy of their concentration as to lose their ability to grasp the deep meaning of the word of God. The mind will enlarge if it is employed in tracing out the relation of the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture and spiritual things with spiritual."—*Steps to Christ*, pages 89, 90.

"We should exert all the powers of the mind in the study of the Scriptures and should task the understanding to comprehend, as far as mortals can, the deep things of God; yet we must not forget that the docility and submission of a child is the true spirit of the learner."—*The Great Controversy*, page 599.

"Jesus said of the Old Testament Scriptures,—and how much more is it true of the New,—'They are they which testify of Me,' the Redeemer, Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. John 5:39. Yes, the whole Bible tells of Christ. From the first record of creation—for 'without Him was not anything made that was made'—to the closing promise, 'Behold, I come quickly,' we are reading of His works and listening to His voice. John 1:3; Revelation 22:12. If you would become acquainted with the Saviour, study the Holy Scriptures."—*Steps to Christ*, page 88.

THINK IT THROUGH

How important is the study of the Scriptures in the light of this lesson?

"We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins. As we thus contemplate heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger, and our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more and more mixed with faith and love. They will be intelligent and fervent. There will be more constant confidence in Jesus, and a daily, living experience in His power to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."—*Steps to Christ*, page 89.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Hidden Treasure," pages 111-114.

Part 2
REPENTANCE AND
CONVERSION
Acts 3:19

What follows after repentance and conversion?

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

Why is repentance imperative? Acts 17:30, 31.

What two kinds of repentance does Paul write of to the Corinthians and in what way do they differ? 2 Cor. 7:10.

Repentance is "the first step toward obedience"—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Aug. 13, 1894. The repentant person has turned his back on his old disobedient way of life and has committed himself to live a life of obedience to the Lord.

"Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see its sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in the life."—*Steps to Christ*, page 23.

"The Bible does not teach that the sinner must repent before he can heed the invitation of Christ, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' Matthew 11:28. It is the virtue that goes forth from Christ, that leads to genuine repentance. Peter made the matter clear in his statement to the Israelites when he said, 'Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.' Acts 5:31. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ."—*Steps to Christ*, page 26.

THINK IT THROUGH

What does the apostle Paul mean when he speaks of crucifying the "old man"? (Gal. 2:20). What part does it have in conversion?

"What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise. You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can *choose* to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure."—*Steps to Christ*, page 47.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Repentance," pages 31-36.

Part 3
CONFESSION
1 John 1:8, 9

On what condition does God promise forgiveness to the sinner?

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Confession is not a virtuous act in itself, as one may confess for the wrong reason. "Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 640. Confession is really a part of repentance. It is the admission of guilt, and repentance is the rejection of the act of which one is guilty.

What are the conditions for receiving God's mercy? Prov. 28:13.

What was God's response to David's confession? Ps. 32:5 (last part).

"True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only; they may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a public character, and should then be as publicly confessed. But all confession should be definite and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty."—*Steps to Christ*, page 38.

THINK IT THROUGH

It will help my brother to confess his faults if I can take some of the blame to myself.

"How mistaken are those who imagine that confession of sin will detract from their dignity, and lessen their influence among their fellow men. Clinging to this erroneous idea, though seeing their faults, many fail to confess them, but rather pass by the wrongs they have done others, so embittering their own lives, and shadowing the lives of others. It will not hurt your dignity to confess your sins. Away with this false dignity. Fall on the Rock and be broken, and Christ will give you the true and heavenly dignity. Let not pride, self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep anyone from confessing his sin."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, pp. 326, 327.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Confession," pages 37-41.

Part 4
FAITH
Mark 1:15

What two virtues did Jesus place side by side?

"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Repentance alone cannot bring salvation, since repentance is realigning one's life with the law, and the law cannot save. Combined with repentance there must be belief—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But faith in Jesus cannot take the place of repentance. Salvation is granted to the sinner as he both repents of breaking the law and exercises faith in Jesus. The two must never be separated. They belong together.

One of the great promises of the Bible is found in 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." But after having made sincere confession of our sins, how can we be sure that God will keep His promise? We hear no proclamation from heaven; we do not see the angels write forgiveness on the heavenly records. It is faith that makes it sure. God has promised, and when we meet the condition, God is faithful. He can be trusted.

Satan "had tempted the woman [Eve] to distrust God's love, to doubt His wisdom, and to transgress His law."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 57. At the cross evidence was given to the world sufficient to remove all doubt and distrust of God's love.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I trust the word of people who are interested in my welfare and who have made sacrifices that I might get ahead? What lesson can I learn from this that will strengthen my trust in my heavenly Father and in His Word?

"You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this *because He has promised*. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours."—*Steps to Christ*, pages 49, 50.

"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."—*Steps to Christ*, page 51.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Faith and Acceptance," pages 49-55.

Part 5
RESTITUTION
Ezek. 33:15

What besides future obedience does God require of the converted person?

"If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die."

"If we have injured others through any unjust business transaction, if we have overreached in trade, or defrauded any man, even though it be within the pale of the law, we should confess our wrong, and make restitution as far as lies in our power. It is right for us to restore not only that which we have taken, but all that it would have accumulated if put to a right and wise use during the time it has been in our possession."
—*The Desire of Ages*, page 556.

What provision was made in ancient Israel for restitution to a person one had wronged? Num. 5:6, 7.

If the offended party could not be located, what procedure was to be followed? Num. 5:8.

After his conversion, what was the reaction of Zacchaeus to his fraud? Luke 19:8, 9.

"You cannot make every case right, for some whom you have injured have gone into their graves, and the account stands registered against you. In these cases the best you can do is to bring a trespass offering to the altar of the Lord, and He will accept and pardon you. But where you can, you should make reparation to the wronged ones."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 339.

How have some robbed God? Mal. 3:8-10.

"There are many who will not be blessed till they make restitution of the tithe which they have withheld. God is waiting for you to redeem the past. The hand of the holy law is laid upon every soul who enjoys God's benefits. Let those who have kept back their tithe make an accurate reckoning, and bring to the Lord that of which they have robbed His work."
—*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 87.

THINK IT THROUGH **What restitution do I need to make? Read Psalm 139:23, 24.**

FURTHER STUDY *The Desire of Ages*, pages 552, 556.

Part 6
BAPTISM
Acts 2:37, 38

On the day of Pentecost what did Peter indicate was to follow repentance?

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

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

Of what is baptism a symbol? Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.

"In baptism we are given to the Lord as a vessel to be used. Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Self is by profession dead to a life of sin. The waters cover the candidate, and in the presence of the whole heavenly universe the mutual pledge is made. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, man is laid in his watery grave, buried with Christ in baptism, and raised from the water to live the new life of loyalty to God. The three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present."—Ellen G. White *Comments*, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1074.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is accomplished by baptism?

"Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing.' And to them is fulfilled the promise: 'I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.' 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 91.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pages 107-111.

Christ's Imputed Righteousness

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. 4:6-8.

In the plan of redemption it was decided that Christ would take upon Himself man's sin and suffer the penalty that would otherwise fall upon the sinner. Thus God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

When the Father accepts Christ's righteous life in place of man's life of sin, man stands justified—his sins are forgiven; he is counted as though he had never sinned.

The same power that has drawn the sinner to Christ in repentance and faith transforms his life and makes him a loyal and obedient child of God.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Definition
Rom. 4:6-8
2. Source
Rom. 5:8, 9
3. Means
Gal. 2:16
4. Results I
Ps. 32:1, 2; Ps. 103:1-3
5. Results II
Rom. 5:1
6. Retaining Justification
1 Peter 2:24; Ps. 103:17, 18



H. LARKIN

Part 1
DEFINITION
Rom. 4:6-8**Read Rom. 4:6-8.**

In the above passage the apostle Paul wrote of those to whom God "imputeth righteousness" and equated this with the phrase "iniquities are forgiven." The Revised Standard Version uses the expression "reckons righteousness" for "imputeth righteousness."

Counted. Gr. *logizomai*. The same word is translated 'reckoned' (v. 4) and 'imputeth' (v. 6). In classical Greek and in the papyri the term was used in connection with the keeping of accounts. Abraham's faith was set down on the credit side for righteousness.—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 512.

"Be justified. Gr. *dikaioo*, 'to set right,' 'to regard as righteous,' 'to declare righteous,' 'to treat as being righteous,' 'to present as righteous.' The word occurs 39 times in the NT, 27 of these being in the writings of Paul. The significance of *dikaioo* is somewhat obscured by the translation 'to justify.' In the Greek *dikaioo*, 'to justify,' *dikaios*, 'righteous,' *dikaio-sune*, 'righteousness,' are all built on the same root and the relationship between the three is clearly seen.—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 500.

"Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God's forgiving grace."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1071.

THINK IT THROUGH

A little girl once came to Mrs. White speaking for a group of children. She said, "Will you please ask the minister to speak easy words that we can understand? . . . We do not understand large words, like 'justification.' . . . We do not know what these words mean."—"Counsels to Teachers," page 254. How would I explain "justification" to children?

"Pardon and justification are one and the same thing. Through faith, the believer passes from the position of a rebel, a child of sin and Satan, to the position of a loyal subject of Christ Jesus, not because of an inherent goodness, but because Christ receives him as His child by adoption. The sinner receives the forgiveness of his sins, because these sins are borne by his Substitute and Surety. The Lord speaks to His heavenly Father, saying: 'This is My child. I reprieve him from the condemnation of death, giving him My life insurance policy—eternal life—because I have taken his place and have suffered for his sins. He is even My beloved son.' Thus man, pardoned, and clothed with the beautiful garments of Christ's righteousness, stands faultless before God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1070.

FURTHER STUDY*The Desire of Ages*, pages 267-271.

Part 2
SOURCE
Rom. 5:8, 9

What has made justification possible? Rom. 5:8, 9.

"I would call on all who would win heaven, to take warning. Do not devote your precious probationary time to sewing together fig leaves to cover the nakedness which is the result of sin. As you look into the Lord's great moral looking glass, His holy law, His standard of character, do not for a moment suppose that it can cleanse you. There are no saving properties in the law. It cannot pardon the transgressor. The penalty must be exacted. The Lord does not save sinners by abolishing His law, the foundation of His government in heaven and in earth. The punishment has been endured by the sinner's substitute. Not that God is cruel and merciless, and Christ so merciful that He died on Calvary's cross to abolish a law so arbitrary that it needed to be extinguished, crucified between two thieves. The throne of God must not bear one stain of crime, one taint of sin. In the councils of heaven, before the world was created, the Father and the Son covenanted together that if man proved disloyal to God, Christ, one with the Father, would take the place of the transgressor, and suffer the penalty of justice that must fall upon him."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1070.

What elements of vicarious sacrifice are taught in Isaiah 53? How does this relate to justification? Isa. 53:5, 6.

What does the Passover teach about justification? Ex. 12:7, 12, 13.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I apply the blood of Christ to the doorposts of my heart?

"The Passover was to be both commemorative and typical, not only pointing back to the deliverance from Egypt, but forward to the greater deliverance which Christ was to accomplish in freeing His people from the bondage of sin. The sacrificial lamb represents 'the Lamb of God,' in whom is our only hope of salvation. Says the apostle, 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.' 1 Corinthians 5:7. It was not enough that the paschal lamb be slain; its blood must be sprinkled upon the doorposts; so the merits of Christ's blood must be applied to the soul. We must believe, not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 277.

FURTHER STUDY

Patriarchs and Prophets, pages 278, 279.

**Part 3
MEANS**

On what condition does God justify the sinner? By what can one not be justified?

Gal. 2:16, RSV

"Yet [we] who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified."

When Paul places emphasis on God's part in making justification possible he uses such expressions as "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24), and "justified by his blood" (Rom. 5:9), or "the gift of righteousness" (Rom. 5:17).

When Paul shows what man must do to appropriate the provision that has been made for him through Christ's sacrifice, he uses such expressions as "justified by faith" (Rom. 3:28; Rom. 5:1), and "his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5).

"The sinner must come in faith to Christ, take hold of His merits, lay his sins upon the Sin Bearer, and receive His pardon. It was for this cause that Christ came into the world. Thus the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the repenting, believing sinner. He becomes a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King, an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 215.

"Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception. If you would understand it, you must cease haggling over your pet ideas, and with humble hearts survey the atonement.

"This matter is so dimly comprehended that thousands upon thousands claiming to be sons of God are children of the wicked one, because they will depend on their own works. God always demanded good works, the law demands it, but because man placed himself in sin where his good works were valueless, Jesus' righteousness alone can avail. . . .

"All that man can possibly do toward his own salvation is to accept the invitation, 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' No sin can be committed by man for which satisfaction has not been met on Calvary. Thus the cross, in earnest appeals, continually proffers to the sinner a thorough expiation."—Ellen G. White *Comments, SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1071.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is faith? Distinguish between faith and intellectual belief.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 347, 348.

Part 4
RESULTS I
Ps. 32:1, 2
Ps. 103:1-3

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

David had sinned, but God had forgiven him, and this brought great joy to David. David closes Psalm 32, with a call to rejoicing. "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."

How does the Bible illustrate the reality of the forgiveness of sin? Ps. 103:12; Micah 7:19.

When an individual asks for forgiveness of sins, what should be his attitude toward others? Matt. 6:12. See also Eph. 4:32.

"God in Christ gave Himself for our sins. He suffered the cruel death of the cross, bore for us the burden of guilt, 'the just for the unjust,' that He might reveal to us His love and draw us to Himself. And He says, 'Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.' Ephesians 4:32, RV. Let Christ, the divine Life, dwell in you and through you reveal the heaven-born love that will inspire hope in the hopeless and bring heaven's peace to the sin-stricken heart. As we come to God, this is the condition which meets us at the threshold, that, receiving mercy from Him, we yield ourselves to reveal His grace to others."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pages 114, 115.

THINK IT THROUGH

How is one assured that God has forgiven him?

"But forgiveness has a broader meaning than many suppose. When God gives the promise that He 'will abundantly pardon,' He adds, as if the meaning of that promise exceeded all that we could comprehend: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.' Isaiah 55:7-9. God's forgiveness is not merely a judicial act by which He sets us free from condemnation. It is not only forgiveness *for* sin, but reclaiming *from* sin. It is the outflow of redeeming love that transforms the heart."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 114.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Lost and Is Found," pages 203-206.

Part 5
RESULTS II
Rom. 5:1

What does Paul state is the result of justification?

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the paragraph of Rom. 5:1-5 the apostle Paul wrote of several results of justification. (1) "We have peace with God," v. 1; (2) "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God," v. 2; and (3) "we glory in tribulations," v. 3. In the *SDA Bible Commentary* on these verses it is pointed out that the reading that best reflects the thought of the Greek and the context in the first two instances is "let us go on having peace," and "let us go on rejoicing." This rejoicing is in both hope and trouble. Paul closes by stating that the hope of the justified believer is a real hope because the believer has received the Holy Spirit. Peace, rejoicing in hope and tribulation, and receiving the Spirit are results of justification.

"Paul's association of peace with justification by faith makes it still clearer that justification is no mere adjustment of a sinner's legal status with God. . . . Forgiveness alone does not necessarily bring peace. The man who has been pardoned for some crime may feel a sense of gratitude toward his benefactor, but at the same time he may also be filled with such shame and embarrassment that he seeks to avoid the company of even the one who pardoned him. Though pardoned, he may feel hardly better than a released criminal. His self-respect is gone, and there is little motivation for a life of righteousness.

"If justification meant no more than that, it would actually work against God's plan for our restoration. The only way in which the divine image can be restored in fallen man is by a confident and loving fellowship with Christ by faith."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 523.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are some implications of having peace with God?

FURTHER STUDY

Selected Messages, Bk. 1, pp. 394-398.

Part 6
RETAINING
JUSTIFICATION
1 Peter 2:24
Ps. 103:17, 18

"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."

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them."

What admonition did Christ give to the woman who was taken in sin? John 8:11.

"Christ is our hope and our refuge. His righteousness is imputed only to the obedient."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1072.

"God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 366.

"As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit. . . . It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 397.

If man, while making his best efforts, falls short of God's standard, what provision has been made for him? 1 John 2:1, 2.

"When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him, and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 382.

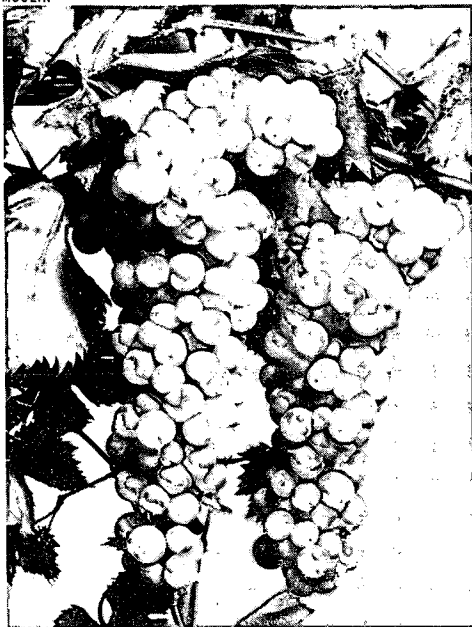
THINK IT THROUGH

What will be the result of excusing one's failures on the basis of God's promises of forgiveness?

"Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on His own account, for His character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character He offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, faith in Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, pp. 371, 372.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 460-462.



Christ's Imparted Righteousness

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15:5.

When Christ took humanity and lived a life free from sin, He opened the way for man to do the same. That which was impossible because of man's sinful nature, becomes possible through his union with Christ. This great truth of Christianity was expressed by the apostle Paul when he said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13).

For the Christian to live a life of obedience to God, he must maintain a living and abiding connection with Christ at all times. Christ must dwell in heart and mind.

The imparted righteousness of Christ comes to the believer through the Holy Spirit. The process of imparting Christ's righteousness to the believer is often

called sanctification. The state of the person who has received Christ's imparted righteousness is called holiness.

"In justification a man receives the Lord Jesus Christ, and in sanctification he learns to walk in harmony with His will (see Col. 2:6, 7), justification taking but a moment, and sanctification requiring a whole lifetime."—*SDA Bible Dictionary*, page 955.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Doing the Impossible**
Rom. 8:2-4
2. **Power Through Christ**
Rom. 1:16, 17
3. **Christ Within**
Rom. 8:9, 10
4. **Christ Sanctifies**
1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 10:10
5. **Results of Sanctification**
John 17:17
6. **Abiding in Christ**
1 John 2:28, 29

Part 1
DOING THE
IMPOSSIBLE
Rom. 8:2-4

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Paul presents two ways of looking at the law of God. When the sinner looks at the law, it convicts him of sin and condemns him to death, and Paul calls it the "law of sin and death." But when a person believes in Jesus Christ and receives His Spirit, he sees the law in a different light—it is the "law of the Spirit of life." A saving relationship with Jesus Christ changes man's relation to the law because he is no longer condemned—Jesus, through the Spirit, is enabling him to keep the law. Then that which was impossible will be made possible: "The righteousness of the law" will be "fulfilled in us." To show that it is possible for a human being to do this by God's grace, Christ came to this earth as a human being and lived a sinless life by combining divinity with humanity. We may also combine divinity with our humanity through the indwelling Christ; thus we too will be enabled to obey.

"As we discern the perfection of our Saviour's character we shall desire to become wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. The more we know of God, the higher will be our ideal of character and the more earnest our longing to reflect His likeness. A divine element combines with the human when the soul reaches out after God and the longing heart can say, 'My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him.' Ps. 62:5."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 19.

THINK IT THROUGH

God needs my cooperation that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus be able to operate in my life.

"Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3), He lived a sinless life. Now by His divinity He lays hold upon the throne of heaven, while by His humanity He reaches us. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 311, 312.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 760-762.

Part 2
POWER THROUGH
CHRIST
Rom. 1:16, 17

What two elements does Paul attribute to the gospel?

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

Salvation requires power. Man has no power in himself to overcome sinfulness. The whole current of his motives is, apart from divine help, self-centered. The good news is that Jesus Christ has the power to change the motives to be God-centered. One part of salvation is to restore man to loyalty to God. The power that produces this change is the Holy Spirit, the representative of Jesus. This power is provided to those who have faith in Jesus.

What does Paul call Christ? 1 Cor. 1:24.

"All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 92.

"The Spirit of God impresses the truth on the heart. The gospel is called the power of God unto salvation because God alone can make the truth a power which sanctifies the soul. He alone can render the cross of Christ triumphant."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 940.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why might some persons in Paul's day think that the gospel was something of which to be ashamed?

"Divine power will unite with our efforts, and as we cling to God with the hand of faith, Christ will impart to us His wisdom and His righteousness."—*Evangelism*, page 596.

"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."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 4, 1890.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matt. 5:48, pages 76-78.

Part 3
CHRIST WITHIN
Rom. 8:9, 10

How does Christ dwell in the believer's heart?

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

"It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart by faith, is the beginning of the life eternal."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 388.

"The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 671.

What is the purpose of Christ dwelling in the believer's heart? Eph. 3:17-19.

"Everything good in men and women is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit teaches us to reveal righteousness in our lives. The greatest work that can be done in our world is to glorify God by living the character of Christ. God will make perfect only those who will die to self. Those who are willing to do this can say, 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1109.

THINK IT THROUGH

What did Paul mean when he said: "I am crucified with Christ"? How can I make this a reality in my life?

"The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1074.

FURTHER STUDY

Steps to Christ, "Consecration," pages 45-48.

Part 4
CHRIST SANCTIFIES
1 Cor. 1:30
Heb. 10:10

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

In our text the apostle places the terms "righteousness" and "sanctification" side by side. They are closely related. "Righteousness" refers to the condition that the process of "sanctification" seeks to bring about, although the word "sanctification" can also be used to refer to this condition of righteousness.

"By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is 'holy, and just, and good,' a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: 'I have kept My Father's commandments.' 'I do always those things that please Him.' John 15:10; 8:29. The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.

"This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God."—*The Great Controversy*, page 469.

According to the apostle Peter, what is the result of sanctification? 1 Peter 1:2.

"Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. . . . As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place, there is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 340.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the elements that contribute to sanctification?

"The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to 'go on unto perfection;' to grow up 'unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' Says the apostle Paul: 'this one thing I do, . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Phil. 3:13, 14."—*The Great Controversy*, page 470.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pages 560-567.

Part 5
RESULTS OF
SANCTIFICATION
John 17:17**How are the results of sanctification achieved?****"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."**

Belief of the truth that God has revealed to men results in sanctification. The principles of God's character are the basic truth revealed, and as people believe the truth and practice it the principles of God's character are being fashioned into human personality. God is love; and Jesus taught that love to God and man sums up the whole law. As the believer is sanctified he is being made into a loving person patterned after the loving heavenly Father. This love in the Christian person is the same love as is in the character of God, revealed in Jesus Christ, and defined in the law. So the basic result of sanctification is love to God and man.

"Those who receive the Saviour become sons of God. . . . They are adopted into God's family, and they become conformed to His likeness, changed by His Spirit from glory to glory. From cherishing supreme love for self, they come to cherish supreme love for God and for Christ. . . . Accepting Christ as a personal Saviour, and following His example of self-denial—this is the secret of holiness."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1117.

How is the truth understood? John 16:13.

"Let a living faith run like threads of gold through the performance of even the smallest duties. Then all the daily work will promote Christian growth. There will be a continual looking unto Jesus. Love for Him will give vital force to everything that is undertaken. Thus through the right use of our talents, we may link ourselves by a golden chain to the higher world. This is true sanctification; for sanctification consists in the cheerful performance of daily duties in perfect obedience to the will of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, "Talents," page 360.

THINK IT THROUGH

As I compare my life with the life of Jesus, what deficiencies do I find in myself? What virtues do I find in Him that I desire to acquire?

"The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God and a submission of the will to His. . . . True meekness softens and subdues the heart, and gives the mind a fitness for the engrafted word. It brings the thoughts into obedience to Jesus Christ."—*The Sanctified Life*, pages 14, 15.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 469-474.

Part 6
ABIDING IN CHRIST
1 John 2:28, 29

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."

To abide in Jesus means to remain or stay in relationship with Him, just as a live branch has a close connection with the parent stalk. This connection must be maintained if the branch is to live. By maintaining a close relationship with Christ we can do righteousness, thus living the kind of life Jesus lived in this world. The parable of the vine, where the word "abide" is also used, is an illustration of sanctification.

How essential is it that the believer abide in Christ? John 15:5.

"'Abide in Me, and I in you.' Abiding in Christ means a constant receiving of His Spirit, a life of unreserved surrender to His service. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God. As the vine branch constantly draws the sap from the living vine, so are we to cling to Jesus, and receive from Him by faith the strength and perfection of His own character. . . .

"The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches. 'He that abideth in Me,' said Jesus, 'and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.' When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our life; not one will be missing."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 676.

THINK IT THROUGH

How does the mutual abiding of the believer and Christ take place?

"This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. Christ said, 'Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.' This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the root to the branches is unobstructed and constant. Separated from the vine, the branch cannot live. No more, said Jesus, can you live apart from Me. The life you have received from Me can be preserved only by continual communion. Without Me you cannot overcome one sin, or resist one temptation."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 676.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 674-677.

Cooperation With God

“The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.

“As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”

—“Christ’s Object Lessons,” pages 332, 333.

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” John 15:4.

This key text points to a mutual abiding, the believer in Jesus, and Jesus in the believer. Either side of this relationship cannot exist alone. The believer can do nothing in spiritual life without Jesus, and Jesus can accomplish nothing for man without his consent and cooperation.

If this mutuality does not exist salvation cannot be accomplished. The purpose of this lesson is to study how the believer abides in Christ. This is not to indicate that the believer’s works have

the least merit toward salvation, but only that he must cooperate with God and not be working against Him.

“While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works. God saves us under a law, that we must ask if we would receive, seek if we would find, and knock if we would have the door opened unto us.”—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 377.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. Cooperation**
John 15:4
- 2. Press Toward the Mark**
Phil. 3:12-14
- 3. Fight the Good Fight of Faith**
1 Tim. 6:12; Eph. 6:11-13
- 4. Feed on the Word**
Ps. 119:11; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17
- 5. Diligence in Prayer**
Ps. 37:5; Ps. 32:6; James 5:16
- 6. Endure Unto the End**
Matt. 24:13; James 1:12

“Co-operation,” an article written by Ellen G. White, is printed at the end of this lesson for supplementary reading. It was originally printed in the *Review and Herald*.

Part 1
COOPERATION
John 15:4

What is essential to fruit-bearing?

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

What does it mean to "abide in" Christ? On this subject Ellen G. White has written:

"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."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 229.

"A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 231.

In what way is the believer to relate to God? 1 John 1:7.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what areas of life is my cooperation with God delinquent?

"But though Christ is everything, we are to inspire every man to unwearied diligence. We are to strive, wrestle, agonize, watch, pray, lest we shall be overcome by the wily foe. For the power and grace with which we can do this comes from God, and all the while we are to trust in Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. Never leave the impression on the mind that there is little or nothing to do on the part of man; but rather teach man to cooperate with God, that he may be successful in overcoming."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 381.

"He [God] holds up before us the highest ideal, even perfection. He asks us to be absolutely and completely for Him in this world as He is for us in the presence of God."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 566.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 229-231.

Part 2
PRESS TOWARD
THE MARK
Phil. 3:12-14

What was the "one thing" that Paul states he did in his life?

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Read also 1 Cor. 9:24-27.

The apostle Paul compares the Christian life to an athletic contest. There is a race to be run and a prize to be won. In Hebrews 12:1, 2, he gives the secret of success in this race. To lay every weight and sin aside and perseveringly run the race, "looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our Faith." RSV.

"Such is not the case in the Christian warfare. Not one who complies with the conditions will be disappointed at the end of the race. Not one who is earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown of immortal glory. All may win who, through the power of divine grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ. The practice, in the details of life, of the principles laid down in God's word, is too often looked upon as unimportant—a matter too trivial to demand attention. But in view of the issue at stake, nothing is small that will help or hinder. Every act casts its weight into the scale that determines life's victory or defeat. And the reward given to those who win will be in proportion to the energy and earnestness with which they have striven."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 313, 314.

THINK IT THROUGH

We have noted resemblances between the Christian life and ancient games. What are the differences?

"It is not mimic battles in which we are engaged. We are waging a warfare upon which hang eternal results. We have unseen enemies to meet. Evil angels are striving for the dominion of every human being. Whatever injures the health, not only lessens physical vigor, but tends to weaken the mental and moral powers. Indulgence in any unhealthful practice makes it more difficult for one to discriminate between right and wrong, and hence more difficult to resist evil. It increases the danger of failure and defeat."—*The Ministry of Healing*, page 128.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pages 309-315.

Part 3**FIGHT THE GOOD
FIGHT OF FAITH**1 Tim. 6:12
Eph. 6:11-13**Why must there be a "fight of faith"?****"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."****"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."**

"God's servants are to put on every piece of the Christian armor. We are not wrestling simply with human foes. God calls upon every Christian to enter the warfare and fight under His leadership, depending for success on the grace and help of Heaven.

"We are to go forward in the strength of the Mighty One. Never are we to yield to Satan's attacks. Why should not we, as Christian warriors, stand against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world? God calls upon us to press forward, using the gifts entrusted to us. Satan will place temptation before us. He will try to overcome us by stratagem. But in the strength of God we are to stand firm as a rock to principle."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, pp. 219, 220.

This detailed counsel of the apostle Paul has in it the assurance of victory in the Christian warfare.

"When we lay hold of Christ by faith, our work has just begun. Every man has corrupt and sinful habits that must be overcome by vigorous warfare. Every soul is required to fight the fight of faith."—Ellen G. White *Comments*, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1111.

"Christ has given us no assurance that to attain to perfection of character is an easy matter. It is a conflict, a battle and a march, day by day."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, page 198.

THINK IT THROUGH**As I check each part of the Christian armor, do I find that I have put on all its parts?**

"A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace of Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 331.

FURTHER STUDY*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 307, 308, 502.

Part 4
FEED ON THE WORD
Ps. 119:11
2 Tim. 3:16, 17

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

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

The study of the Scriptures is profitable for more than just "doctrine," or a knowledge of salvation. In it we find "instruction in righteousness," or "discipline in right living." NEB. Such instruction, if acted upon, will bring forth "good works."

"Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons. But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus 'when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.' Isa. 59:19."—*The Great Controversy*, page 600.

What is to be our relationship to what we learn from the study of the Scriptures? James 1:21, 22.

What did Christ pray that the "Word" would do for His followers? John 17:17.

"As we meditate upon the perfections of the Saviour, we shall desire to be wholly transformed and renewed in the image of His purity. There will be a hungering and thirsting of soul to become like Him whom we adore."—*Steps to Christ*, page 89.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why is it essential to study the Word before the moment that help is needed?

"Jesus promised His disciples: 'The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.' John 14:26. But the teachings of Christ must previously have been stored in the mind in order for the Spirit of God to bring them to our remembrance in the time of peril. 'Thy word have I hid in mine heart,' said David, 'that I might not sin against Thee.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 600.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Things New and Old," pages 124-129.

Part 5
DILIGENCE IN

PRAYER

Ps. 37:5

Ps. 32:6

James 5:16

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

"For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him."

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Through prayer we make our wishes known to the heavenly Father. Through prayer we give thanks for blessings received. But more than this, through communion with heaven we keep in contact, yes, we maintain that union, which makes possible the reception of strength for every need in developing a righteous character.

"Give to God the most precious offering that it is possible for you to make; give Him your heart. He speaks to you saying, 'My son, My daughter, give Me thine heart.' . . . When clothed in My righteousness, through prayer, through watchfulness, through diligent study of My Word, you will be able to reach a high standard.'"—*Sons and Daughters of God*, page 98.

How constantly shall we seek the Lord? 1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 18:1; Eph. 6:18.

What assurance has Christ given that our prayers will be heard and answered? Matt. 7:7, 8; Matt. 21:22.

THINK IT THROUGH

What promises from the Bible in which God has assured you of strength from heaven to do the right thing can you remember at this moment?

"The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain grace and power to resist temptation."—*Steps to Christ*, pages 94, 95.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matthew 6:13, pages 116-119.

Part 6
ENDURE UNTO
THE END
Matt. 24:13
James 1:12

"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

The words of the wise man, that "the race is not to the swift" (Eccl. 9:11), could well apply to the Christian race.

"The work of salvation is not child's play, to be taken hold of at will and let alone at pleasure. It is the steady purpose, the untiring effort, that will gain the victory at last. It is he who endureth to the end that shall be saved."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, pp. 101, 102.

"Integrity, firmness, and perseverance are qualities which all should seek earnestly to cultivate; for they clothe the possessor with a power which is irresistible, a power which makes him strong to do good, strong to resist evil, strong to bear adversity."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 656.

What are those admonished to do who seek to live justly by faith? Heb. 10:35-39.

The Revised Standard Version of verse 36 reads: "For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised."

"We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the divine pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes: but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 337.

Near the close of Paul's life in what three points did he sum up his experience? To what did he look forward? 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

THINK IT THROUGH

By what means can I endure to the end?

"There is no halting place for us this side of heaven. None of us should be content with our present spiritual attainments. No one is living up to his opportunities unless he can show continual progress. He must be climbing, still climbing. It is the privilege of every Christian to grow up until he shall reach the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 308, 309.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pages 509-513.

CO-OPERATION

Ellen G. White

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The work of salvation is a work of co-partnership, a joint operation. No man can work out his own salvation without the aid of the Holy Spirit. The co-operation of divine and human forces is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make the most strenuous efforts to overcome the tempter, to subdue natural passions; but he is wholly dependent upon God for success in the work of overcoming the propensities that are not in harmony with correct principles. Success depends wholly upon willing obedience to the will and way of God. Character develops in accordance with conformity to the divine plan. But man must work in Christ's lines. He must be a laborer together with God. He must submit to God's training, that he may be complete in Christ.

God has originated and proclaimed the principles on which divine and human agencies are to combine in temporal matters as well as all spiritual achievements. They are to be linked together in all human pursuits, in mechanical and agricultural labor, in mercantile and scientific enterprises. In all lines of work it is necessary that there be co-operation between God and man. God has provided facilities with which to enrich and beautify the earth. But the strength and ingenuity of human agencies are required to make the very best use of the material. God had filled the earth with treasure, but the gold and silver are hidden in the earth, and the exercise of man's powers is required to secure this treasure which God has pro-

vided. Man's energy and tact are to be used in connection with the power of God in bringing the gold and silver from the mines, and trees from the forest. But unless by his miracle-working power God co-operated with man, enabling him to use his physical and mental capabilities, the treasures in our world would be useless.

We can not keep ourselves for one moment. "We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." We are utterly dependent upon God every moment of our lives.

God desires every human being in our world to be a worker together with him. This is the lesson we are to learn from all useful employment, making homes in the forest, felling trees to build houses, clearing land for cultivation. God has provided the wood and the land, and to man he has given the work of putting them in such shape that they will be a blessing. In this work man is wholly dependent upon God. The fitting of the ships that cross the broad ocean is not alone due to the talent and ingenuity of the human agent. God is the great Architect. Without his co-operation, without the aid of the higher intelligences, how worthless would be the plans of men. God must aid, else every device is worthless.

The human organism is the handiwork of God. The organs employed in all the different functions of the body were made by him. The Lord gives us food and drink, that the wants of the body may be supplied. He has given the earth different properties adapted to the growth of food for his children. He gives the sunshine and the showers, the early and the latter rain. He forms the clouds and sends the dew. All are his gifts. He

has bestowed his blessings upon us liberally. But all these blessings will not restore in us his moral image, unless we co-operate with him, making painstaking effort to know ourselves, to understand how to care for the delicate human machinery. Man must diligently help to keep himself in harmony with nature's laws. He who co-operates with God in the work of keeping this wonderful machinery in order, who consecrates all his powers to God, seeking intelligently to obey the laws of nature, stands in his God-given manhood, and is recorded in the books of heaven as a *man*.

God has given man land to be cultivated. But in order that the harvest may be reaped, there must be harmonious action between divine and human agencies. The plow and other implements of labor must be used at the right time. The seed must be sown in its season. Man is not to fail of doing his part. If he is careless and negligent, his unfaithfulness testifies against him. The harvest is proportionate to the energy he has expended.

So it is in spiritual things. We are to be laborers together with God. Man is to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in him, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. There is to be co-partnership, a divine relation, between the Son of God and the repentant sinner. We are made sons and daughters of God. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Christ provides the mercy and grace so abundantly given to all who believe in him. He fulfills the terms upon which salvation rests. But we must act our part by accepting the blessing in faith. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. Thus he becomes a co-partner with Christ.

The infinitely wise and all-powerful God proposes co-operation with his frail, erring creatures, whom he has placed on vantage-ground. On the one side there are infinite wisdom, good-

ness, compassion, power; on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness, poverty, dependence. We are dependent upon God, not only for life and all its blessings, but for our entrusted talents, and for all the resources required in the work we must do if we accept the invitation to work with God. Man's intellect, his understanding, his every valuable thought, the opportunities and privileges that are placed within his reach, all come from him who is the way, the truth, and the life. We have nothing of ourselves. Our success in the Christian life depends upon our co-operation with Christ, and our submission to his will. It is not a sign of pure, consecrated service for a worker to follow his own way. Every worker is to willingly obey his Leader, to receive and practice every word of God.

We are to be individual toilers. Character can not be bought or sold. It is formed by patient, continuous effort. Much patience is required in the striving for that life which is to come. We may all strive for perfection of character, but all who come into possession of it will earn it step by step, by the cultivation of the virtues which God commends. The Holy Spirit presents before man the agencies provided for his transformation. If he heeds the words, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," he will receive help from a power that is infinite.

Man is given the privilege of working with God in the saving of his own soul. He is to receive Christ as his personal Saviour and believe in him. Receiving and believing is his part of the contract. This means abiding in Christ, showing in him at all times and under all circumstances a faith that works by love and purifies the soul from all defilement. Christ is the author of this faith, and he demands that it be constantly exercised.

The apostle Paul declares, "Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building." The material for the building is plainly specified in the words: "Giving

all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here we are shown how we may co-operate with God. Man is to work constantly upon the plan of addition, while God works on the plan of multiplication. Thus man grows in spirituality, until he presents to the world, to angels, and to men, such perfection of character that in the heavenly courts the words are spoken, "Ye are complete in him."

The plan of redemption was arranged in the councils between the Father and the Son. Then Christ pledged himself to render an account for man if he proved disloyal. He pledged himself to make an atonement which would unite

every believing soul to God. He who lays his sins upon the substitute and surety, thus becoming a partaker of the divine nature, can unite with the apostle in saying: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places." "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." In his infinite love Christ devised the plan of salvation. This plan he stands ready to fulfill in behalf of all who will co-operate with him. In their behalf he says to the Father, Do not impute their sins to them, but lay them on me. Be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities remember no more. They have accepted my merits, and made peace with me; My righteousness is theirs, and for my sake bless them with all spiritual blessings.—*Review and Herald*, May 28, 1908.

FAITH AND SALVATION

LESSON 9

February 24 to March 2



"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John 5:4, 5.

The righteousness of Christ becomes our righteousness by faith. Since faith is the medium by which a person is righteous in God's sight, it becomes imperative to know what faith is, how it is

developed, and what the evidence is that one has it.

As with many other features of truth there is a false or counterfeit faith as well as a true and genuine faith. This false faith is taught by some Christian communions, but it is also possible to have a deficient view of faith, not because one has been taught it, but simply out of spiritual immaturity.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **What Is Faith?**
2. **Distinctiveness of Faith**
Heb. 11:1
3. **The Importance of Faith**
Heb. 11:6
4. **Proof of Faith**
James 2:17, 26
5. **Source and Development of Faith**
Rom. 12:3
6. **Faith and Christ's Righteousness**
Eph. 2:8

"Saving Faith," an article written by Ellen G. White, is printed at the end of this lesson for supplementary reading. It was originally printed in the *Review and Herald*.

Part 1
WHAT IS FAITH?

In the King James Version the word "faith" is a translation of the Greek word "*pistis*." "There is a basic similarity between the Greek words usually translated 'believe,' 'belief,' and 'faith' in the King James Version. 'Believe' is *pisteuo*. 'Belief' is *pistis*. 'Faith' is also from *pistis*. 'Not believe' is *apisteo*. 'Unbelief' is *apistia*."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 496. The dictionary meaning of the English word faith when it refers to the attitude of man toward God is "belief and trust in and loyalty to God."

But faith is not a strictly religious term, and its use in religion is not limited to Christianity. Ellen G. White notes that "faith is the medium through which truth or error finds a lodging place in the mind. It is by the same act of mind that truth or error is received."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 346. Many financial transactions are carried out by faith. The use of credit cards is an example of faith exercised by both the user and issuer of the card. There is confidence on the part of the card user that the company which issued it will supply goods or services on credit as it has promised to do. The company exercises faith in the card user. The credit card indicates that the issuing company has confidence that the user has the capacity and intention of fulfilling his obligations. Other examples of faith in ordinary life are check cashing, delivery service, surgical operations, and marriage. In each instance there is confidence on the part of one person that the other person is able and willing to make good on his promise.

What evidence is recorded in Heb. 10:19-22, of God's willingness to accept man and thus give man a basis for faith in Him?

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the evidences on which my faith in God is based? What assures me that He is able and willing to fulfill my needs?

"Look up, you that are doubting and trembling; for Jesus lives to make intercession for us. Thank God for the gift of His dear Son and pray that He may not have died for you in vain. The Spirit invites you today. Come with your whole heart to Jesus, and you may claim His blessing."—*Steps to Christ*, pages 54, 55.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 381, 382.

Part 2
DISTINCTIVENESS
OF FAITH
Heb. 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The word "substance" is translated from a Greek legal term used for a document that proved ownership of property, which we today call a title or a deed. If we follow the lead of this illustration, we may note that possession of a deed is proof of ownership only where the property really exists. There can be false documents that raise false hopes in those who made a bad investment. The statement is made in the context of faith in God. Faith is the title because God is the one who made the promise on which the hope is based; faith is the evidence because the faith is in God who has revealed the unseen; and, since God knows the unseen and He does not lie, then man can accept the unseen as realities.

What makes faith in God appear so drastically different from faith toward other persons is the scope covered (1) by what God promises, (2) by what He is able to do, and (3) by the degree of loyalty He requires. Christian faith is man's response to God's revelations which have come to him in Jesus, the Scriptures, nature, and God's providences. This faith must be all-absorbing for the one who holds it, because the information, commands, and promises contained in God's revelations relate to every sphere of man's life, the whole span of his existence, and require of him full allegiance and loyalty to God. Faith in God is confidence in what He says. His information is correct. He is able to keep His promises, and He intends to keep them. Because His commands are the best way for man to live they should be obeyed.

"Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life's success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles."—*Education*, page 253.

"Said the angel: 'Feeling is not faith. Faith is simply to take God at His word.'"—*Testimonies*, Vol. 1, p. 620.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I develop greater faith in God?

"God will do marvelous things for those who trust in Him . . . He will help His believing children in every emergency, if they will place their entire confidence in Him and implicitly obey Him."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 163.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 342-348.

Part 3
THE IMPORTANCE
OF FAITH
Heb. 11:6

What two facts about God are part of the content of faith in God?

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

To have faith in a person, the person must exist and have communicated something about himself to the other, usually by words. If one has faith in the person, he believes that the communication is a true reflection of reality. If he doubts the word he hears, then there is no basis for faith in that person. That is what happened when Adam and Eve sinned. They doubted God's statement that they would die if they ate of the forbidden tree. As sin entered the world by lack of faith, righteousness comes to the believer by exercise of faith. God does not ask us first of all to be good, but to believe God, and thus become good.

"If we commit the keeping of our souls to God in the exercise of living faith, His promises will not fail us; for they have no limit but our faith."—*My Life Today*, page 14.

But while faith is so important to the Christian life, there is no virtue in faith itself to save the believer.

"Through faith we receive the grace of God; but faith is not our Saviour. It earns nothing. It is the hand by which we lay hold upon Christ, and appropriate His merits, the remedy for sin."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 175.

"Faith is not the ground of our salvation, but it is the great blessing—the eye that sees, the ear that hears, the feet that run, the hand that grasps. It is the means, not the end."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1073.

The benefits of faith come because the faith is in God, and not merely because one has faith. Faith in and of itself can do nothing.

Faith must be backed up by promise or it is presumptuous.

We have faith in the surgeon for surgery and faith in the banker for banking because these are the promises inherent in their professions. In the same way our faith must correspond to what God has communicated to us.

THINK IT THROUGH

"Faith familiarizes the soul with the existence and presence of God, and, living with an eye single to the glory of God, more and more we discern the beauty of His character, the excellence of His grace. Our souls become strong in spiritual power; for we are breathing the atmosphere of heaven, and realizing that God is at our right hand, that we shall not be moved."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 335.

FURTHER STUDY

Messages to Young People, pages 109, 110.

Part 4
PROOF OF FAITH
James 2:17, 26**What is the evidence of a living faith?**

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”
“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

Faith is an attitude hidden within the person's mind that is inconsequential unless it breaks out in action. The faith that believes a doctrine, James argues, is held by the devils, but they do nothing about it and remain devils. A faith held in the mind of devils or of people is a dead faith.

To separate faith from works is the same as to separate the gospel from the law, or faith from love, or doctrine from experience.

The object of faith is to make a person loving in the way that God is loving. And so when a person has true faith in God the acts he does are acts of love. Paul described it as “faith working through love.” Gal. 5:6, RSV.

“While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. And the apostle John declares, ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar.’”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1073.

“How different is the faith that is presented to the world to-day as essential to salvation. It has no vitality, no reality. It does not unite the believers as branches to the living Vine. It is not the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. It is a formal, nominal acceptance of a popular story, and has about as much efficacy as the faith that accepted Abraham Lincoln as a good administrator of governmental affairs. Genuine faith will show definite results in the character, and will exert a controlling influence over the thoughts of the heart, and the affairs of the life. It will lead its possessor to practice the principles of his belief. . . .

“It is the doing of the words and works of Christ that testifies to the saving qualities of your faith.”—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, March 30, 1888.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways do I hold a correct belief which I do not practice?

“The apostle James saw that dangers would arise in presenting the subject of justification by faith, and he labored to show that genuine faith cannot exist without corresponding works. . . . Thus genuine faith does a genuine work in the believer. Faith and obedience bring a solid, valuable experience.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 936.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 472, 473.

Part 5
SOURCE AND
DEVELOPMENT
OF FAITH
Rom. 12:3

What is the source of man's faith?

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Man's faith in God is not a capacity that belongs to human nature, but it is a gift from God.

"The Spirit operating upon and enlightening the human mind, creates faith in God. In the Scriptures faith is stated to be the gift of God, powerful unto salvation, enlightening the hearts of those who search for truth as for hidden treasure. The Spirit of God impresses the truth on the heart."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 940.

On what is faith based? Rom 10:17.

"Faith that enables us to receive God's gifts is itself a gift, of which some measure is imparted to every human being. It grows as exercised in appropriating the word of God. In order to strengthen faith, we must often bring it in contact with the word."—*Education*, pages 253, 254.

"Faith is the gift of God, but the power to exercise it is ours."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 431.

Faith grows by exercise. In Romans 1:17 Paul wrote, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

"From faith to faith. Compare 'from glory to glory' (2 Cor. 3:18) and 'from strength to strength' (Ps. 84:7). The righteousness of God is received by faith, and when received, results in ever-increasing faith."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, pp. 476, 477.

THINK IT THROUGH

What am I doing that my faith may grow stronger from day to day? What effect can my trust in God and His promises today have upon my confidence in Him tomorrow?

"Faith is needed in the smaller no less than in the greater affairs of life. In all our daily interests and occupations the sustaining strength of God becomes real to us through an abiding trust."—*Education*, page 255.

"Let us not talk doubt, but faith; for faith brings infinite power. If we lay hold upon this power, and do not trust in our own human strength, we shall see the salvation of God."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 85.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 428-431.

Part 6
FAITH AND CHRIST'S
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Eph. 2:8

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

The righteousness of Christ is God's character perfectly expressed in Christ's human life. To have faith in Christ is to consent to the character of God which Christ lived out on earth, and to desire that character.

"In order for man to be justified by faith, faith must reach a point where it will control the affections and impulses of the heart; and it is by obedience that faith itself is made perfect."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 366.

Note that the faith is incomplete until there is obedience. Sanctification is obedience by faith. Justification makes this obedience by faith possible, and sanctification causes justification to be retained. See *Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 366.

"When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire. Let none look to self, as though they had power to save themselves. Jesus died for us because we were helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. When we see our sinfulness, we should not despond and fear that we have no Saviour, or that He has no thoughts of mercy toward us. At this very time He is inviting us to come to Him in our helplessness and be saved."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 431.

What was God's purpose in placing "exceeding great and precious promises" in His Word? 2 Peter 1:4.

"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. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 123.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is there some weakness or habit in my life that I have not been able to overcome? By faith I can "lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ" at this very moment. With Him on my side I can overcome.

"It is faith that connects us with heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. In Christ, God has provided means for subduing every evil trait and resisting temptation, however strong."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pages 65, 66.

FURTHER STUDY

The Acts of the Apostles, pages 529-532.

SAVING FAITH

Ellen G. White

The faith essential for salvation is not mere nominal faith, but an abiding principle, deriving vital power from Christ. It will lead the soul to feel the love of Christ to such a degree that the character will be refined, purified, ennobled. This faith in Christ is not merely an impulse, but a power that works by love and purifies the soul. It accomplishes something, bringing the soul under discipline, elevating it from defilement, and bringing it into connection with Christ, till it appropriates his virtue to the soul's need. This is saving faith.

There are many who claim to have faith, but how shall we know that it is genuine? The Lord has given us a test by which we may prove our profession and the profession of others. The prophet says, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." John declares, "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." This test applies to those who have been enlightened in regard to the claims of God's law. The principles of the Bible must be brought into every-day life, to enlighten conscience, and regulate the conduct.

If heavenly light is welcomed by the soul, grace will be given to adorn the character, to dignify the nature, and to fit man for the society of the angels of heaven. Every temptation may be conquered through the strength of Christ. God desires us to have pure characters; purity is power, but sin is weakness and ruin.

Christ has said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's

commandments, and abide in his love." Christ came to our world, and for our sake he became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He suffered reproach, he was despised and rejected of men. He died a shameful death upon the cross, that we might have eternal life; and shall we dare to flatter ourselves that we may follow a course of sin, choosing our own way, shunning the cross, avoiding reproach and self-denial, and yet have a home in the kingdom of heaven?—No; through faith in Christ we must render obedience to all the requirements of God; through his merits we may be elevated to keep God's commandments.

Exceeding great and precious promises have been given unto us, whereby we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. We must appropriate these promises to ourselves, that we may overcome unbelief, and get the victory over every besetment, perfecting a character that will meet the approval of Heaven. We are very anxious to appear well in the sight of men, but of how much greater importance is it that we stand approved in the presence of God.

Day by day we are to fight the good fight of faith. Day by day God will give us our work; and though we cannot see the end from the beginning, we are to examine ourselves daily to see if we are in the path of righteousness. We must strive to overcome, looking unto Jesus; for in every temptation he will be at our side to give us the victory. Every day should come to us as the last day in which we may be privileged to work for God, and much of it must be given to

prayer that we may work in the strength of Christ. This is the way in which Enoch walked with God, warning and condemning the world by manifesting before them a righteous character.

We profess to believe that Christ is soon coming to the earth, and a solemn responsibility rests upon us; for a lost world is to be warned of the hastening judgment. We must not lay off our responsibility; we must carry the burden of the work. Self must be out of sight, and Christ must appear; as faithful, obedient children, we must follow the light, and reflect its precious rays to others. We must be living epistles, known and read of all men. If we are to be cleansed, both soul and body, we cannot afford to be slothful and negligent. Christ is coming, the third angel's message must be proclaimed to the world; for it brings light upon the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. O, could we realize how all heaven is interested in the salvation of the world, we should rouse up with holy zeal to be followers of Jesus.

When Christ left the world, he gave to his disciples the work of carrying the gospel. The professed followers of Christ are held responsible for the warning of the world. How are we doing this solemn work committed to us? We must humble ourselves before God, and not follow the ideas of men. We must come before the world, speaking the words of God, that the world may know that God has sent us, and that Heaven's mold is upon the work. O, we must grow up into a glorious temple in the Lord. The enemy will come in, and try to draw our minds away from the important work to be done for this time. He will seek to keep us engaged on trivial matters, make us think that it is our province to criticize and condemn others; but our work is to deal faithfully with our own souls. We must search our hearts and see if we are right in the sight of God. Peter said to Christ in regard to John, "Lord, what shall this man do?" But the Lord answered him, "What is that to thee? follow thou me." We each have

a work to do for ourselves, and while we are criticizing others, we are neglecting the most important work of all.

The great crisis is before us, and every one is to act as though his own soul was at stake. The most important question of all is, How shall I save my soul, for which Christ died? How shall I be holy, as he is holy? It is time to be seeking for the forgiveness of your sins, for the assurance that your names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Let every one realize that he is not his own, but has been bought with a price, even with the blood of the Son of God.

Live by the day for Christ. Seek to be a victor just for this one day; for you do not know that you have another day to live. Confess your sins to-day. You have the promises of pardon.

The Lord says, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." God is in earnest with us. He has borne long and patiently with us, and the light that has shone upon us from the throne of his glory will not lessen our responsibility, but, if we fail to improve it, will leave us without excuse. God will not be trifled with. You may ask, What shall I do to advance the light of truth? I answer, Work humbly for God; do not exalt yourself, but remember that you are standing upon holy ground. We are living in the last days, and the great question is, How shall I stand before God? Every one is responsible for the light he has received. What have you done with the light of heaven? Have you put it under a bushel?

There is a great work to be done; for we are to reach the people with the divine light of truth, not in our own way, but through the power and Spirit of God. God will use us as instruments in his hand, if we will yield ourselves to him. O that all may make the effort essential to win eternal life! Every soul is precious in the sight of God. He declares by the prophet, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." This preciousness will be wrought in the soul

that is connected with Christ; but our own ways must be abandoned, our own thoughts must be put away.

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." O, shall Jesus plead in vain for an entrance into your heart? Clear away the rubbish from the door, and let him in, and you will know what is the comfort and peace of his blessing. I present before you the Man of Calvary. He can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. The more you have of Jesus, the more you will desire a closer connection with him, and your soul will be hid with Christ in God, and thus be prepared when he shall come with power and great glory.

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Not in self-confidence, not in self-exaltation, are we to pass the time of our sojourning, but in fear working with Christ for the salvation of others. We are to live as on holy ground, and when the Master shall appear in glory, we can say, "This is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us."—*Review and Herald*, August 18, 1891.

Christ's Righteousness in Symbols

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matt. 13:45, 46.

In the Scriptures great truths have often been presented in simple ways. The Bible abounds in experiences and illustrations to bring its message home to the soul.

The important theme of "Christ our Righteousness" has been illustrated by figures and symbols so that the truths it contains may be more readily understood—so that those who understand may reach out and receive Christ into their lives. Such common things as salt and yeast have been used to teach the way of life. And yet, while the truths taught by such illustrations may appear simple, they also have a depth of meaning that is profound. So let us beware that when we grasp the simple, evident truths in each instance we do not dismiss them as unworthy of further study.



H. LARKIN

LESSON OUTLINE

1. Salt
Lev. 2:13
2. Leaven
Matt. 13:33
3. Incense
Exodus 30:1, 7, 8
4. The Sun of Righteousness
Mal. 4:2; John 8:12
5. The Pearl of Great Price
Matt. 13:45, 46
6. The Armor of God
Eph. 6:13, 14

Part 1
SALT
Lev. 2:13 **"And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt."**

A child, when asked what salt is, answered: "that which, if left out, makes the food taste bad."

So with the Christian life. If the salt is lacking, all else that man can do will still make his life incomplete. What is this salt?

"In the ritual service, salt was added to every sacrifice. This . . . signified that only the righteousness of Christ could make the service acceptable to God. Referring to this practice, Jesus said, 'Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.' 'Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.' All who would present themselves 'a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God' (Rom. 12:1), must receive the saving salt, the righteousness of our Saviour."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 439.

Can you harmonize this thought, that salt represents the righteousness of Christ, with what Jesus says about salt in Matthew 5:13?

"Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel. They are not saved in masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power. We must come close to those whom we desire to benefit."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 36.

"'Ye are the salt of the earth,' Jesus said. Do not withdraw yourselves from the world in order to escape persecution. You are to abide among men, that the savor of the divine love may be as salt to preserve the world from corruption."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 306.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is represented by flavorless salt?

"The savor of the salt represents the vital power of the Christian—the love of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ pervading the life. . . . The sincere believers diffuse vital energy, which is penetrating and imparts new moral power to the souls for whom they labor. It is not the power of the man himself, but the power of the Holy Spirit that does the transforming work."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, page 36.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Matthew 5:13, pages 35-38.

Part 2
LEAVEN
Matt. 13: 33, NEB

"He told them also this parable: 'The kingdom of Heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and mixed with half a hundredweight of flour till it was all leavened.'"

Like salt, yeast is an element that comes from the outside, and must be added to the food being prepared. But once added it works within the dough.

"But man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven—something wholly from without—must be put into the meal before the desired change can be wrought in it. So the grace of God must be received by the sinner before he can be fitted for the kingdom of glory. . . . The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power.

"As the leaven, when mingled with the meal, works from within outward, so it is by the renewing of the heart that the grace of God works to transform the life."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 96, 97.

"The leaven hidden in the flour works invisibly to bring the whole mass under its leavening process; so the leaven of truth works secretly, silently, steadily, to transform the soul. The natural inclinations are softened and subdued. New thoughts, new feelings, new motives, are implanted. A new standard of character is set up—the life of Christ."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 98, 99.

"The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely—because he is required to do so—will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. . . . True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 97.

THINK IT THROUGH

In this lesson leaven is said to represent the Spirit and also truth. Can you harmonize this dual meaning?

"The leaven of truth works a change in the whole man, making the coarse refined, the rough gentle, the selfish generous. By it the impure are cleansed, washed in the blood of the Lamb. Through its life-giving power it brings all there is of mind and soul and strength into harmony with the divine life. Man with his human nature becomes a partaker of divinity. Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break forth in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 102.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Like Unto Leaven," pages 95-102.

Part 3
INCENSE
Ex. 30:1, 7, 8

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon."

"And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations."

Incense has been used to provide a pleasant fragrance in a situation that had a bad odor. The bad odor represents sin, which God abhors. The symbolic use of incense in the sanctuary teaches that the sinner, to whom the "odor" of sin clings, can be acceptable to God only by His coming to God through the "sweet smelling" righteousness of Christ.

In John's description of opening the seventh seal, with what was incense mingled? Rev. 8:3, 4.

"The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary, but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. They ascend not in spotless purity, and unless the Intercessor, who is at God's right hand, presents and purifies all by His righteousness, it is not acceptable to God. . . . He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. . . .

"Oh, that all may see that everything, in obedience, in penitence, in praise and thanksgiving, must be placed upon the glowing fire of the righteousness of Christ. The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat."—*Selected Messages*, Bk. 1, p. 344.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what way is the intercession of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary indispensable to me?

"The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 353.

"Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. . . . Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 532.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 252, 256.

Part 4
**THE SUN OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS**
Mal. 4:2; John 8:12

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

"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."

"As the sunbeams penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, so does the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon every soul."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 464.

"Let the windows of the soul be closed against the poisonous malaria of earth, and let them be opened heavenward to receive the healing rays of the sunshine of Christ's righteousness."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 202.

What did the aged Simeon say of Christ? Luke 2:28-32.

What did Peter declare to be the purpose of prophecy? 2 Peter 1:19.

Peter declared that the prophetic word is like "a light that shineth in a dark place." And that prophetic light also has its source in Him who is the Sun of Righteousness. The whole prophetic Word is "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1) just as is the book of Revelation to which these words primarily referred.

At a time when men were being called to obedience to all the commandments of God (Rev. 12:17; Rev. 14:12), God sent a special message to his people that was given emphasis at the Minneapolis General Conference in 1888. The following is a comment on the blessings that came through that message:

"Those who received the message were greatly blessed, for they saw the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and life and hope sprang up in their hearts. . . . The Sun of Righteousness shines into our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of Jesus Christ."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 95.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways do you see the name "the Sun of Righteousness" as an appropriate name for Jesus?

"We should bring the attractiveness of Christ into our Christian service. The soft beams of the Sun of Righteousness should shine into our hearts, that we may be pleasant and cheerful and have a strong and blessed influence on all around us."—*That I May Know Him*, page 136.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 463-465.

Part 5
THE PEARL OF
GREAT PRICE
Matt. 13:45, 46

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

In this brief parable a man is presented performing four actions—seeking, finding, selling, and buying. The essential feature in the parable is the man's recognition of the value of the pearl he found. Without this recognition there would have been no purchase, and he would presumably have kept on seeking.

"It is the Holy Spirit that reveals to men the preciousness of the goodly pearl."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 118.

Without the Holy Spirit man would not seek Jesus nor would he recognize His value if he found Him.

"Christ Himself is the pearl of great price. In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fulness of the Godhead. . . . Every page of the Holy Scriptures shines with His light. The righteousness of Christ, as a pure, white pearl, has no defect, no stain. No work of man can improve the great and precious gift of God."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 115.

What truth did Jesus teach in the parable of the hidden treasure? Matt. 13:44.

"Christ is the truth. His words are truth, and they have a deeper significance than appears on the surface. All the sayings of Christ have a value beyond their unpretending appearance. Minds that are quickened by the Holy Spirit will discern the value of these sayings. They will discern the precious gems of truth, though these may be buried treasures."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 110.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the difference between the parable of the pearl and the parable of the treasure? What is the meaning of this difference in human experience?

"In the parable the pearl is not represented as a gift. The merchantman bought it at the price of all that he had. Many question the meaning of this, since Christ is represented in the Scriptures as a gift. He is a gift, but only to those who give themselves, soul, body, and spirit, to Him without reserve. We are to give ourselves to Christ, to live a life of willing obedience to all His requirements. All that we are, all the talents and capabilities we possess, are the Lord's, to be consecrated to His service. When we thus give ourselves wholly to Him, Christ, with all the treasures of heaven, gives Himself to us. We obtain the pearl of great price."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 116.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "The Pearl," pages 115-121.

Part 6
THE ARMOR OF GOD
Eph. 6:13, 14

What is the purpose of wearing the armor of God?

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, . . . having on the breastplate of righteousness."

**What is the spiritual meaning of each piece of the armor?
Eph. 6:13-17.**

The Christian life is a constant warfare. When man fights alone, defeat is inevitable. But he need not face the enemy alone; all the powers of heaven will come to his aid so that he may have complete victory.

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

"If you pray in sincerity, surrendering yourself, soul, body, and spirit, unto God, you put on the whole armor of God, and open the soul to the righteousness of Christ; and this alone,—Christ's imputed righteousness,—makes you able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The work of every soul is to resist the enemy in the power and might of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the promise is that the devil shall flee from us."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, page 346.

THINK IT THROUGH

As armor is the name of the total equipment of the first-century soldier, what is the name of the total of the spiritual counterparts?

"Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners' (Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer.

"The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; . . . God will be to His church 'a refuge from the storm.' Isa. 25:4."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 725.

FURTHER STUDY

Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, on Luke 13:24, pages 141-144.

Christ's Righteousness in Parables

"In all His teaching, Christ brought the mind of man in contact with the Infinite Mind. He did not direct the people to study men's theories about God, His word, or His works. He taught them to behold Him as manifested in His works, in His word, and by His providences.

"Christ did not deal in abstract theories, but in that which is essential to the development of character, that which will enlarge man's capacity for knowing God, and increase his efficiency to do good. He spoke to men of those truths that relate to the conduct of life, and that take hold upon eternity."—"Christ's Object Lessons," page 23.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3:18.

In the parable of the ten virgins, when the cry went forth at midnight that the bridegroom was coming, five virgins discovered that they had no oil.

In the parable of the wedding feast, when the king came in to see the guests, it was found that a man had come to the feast without a wedding garment.

In the vision of Joshua and the Angel, the high priest was clothed in filthy garments.

In the message to Laodicea, that church was counseled to buy of the heavenly Merchantman gold, white raiment, and eyesalve.

It is the purpose of this lesson to discover what these parables represent and how we can apply to our daily lives the truths they teach.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Ten Virgins I**
Matt. 25:1-5
2. **The Ten Virgins II**
Matt. 25:6-12
3. **And They Would Not Come**
Matt. 22:2, 3, 8-10
4. **The Wedding Garment**
Matt. 22:11-13
5. **Joshua and the Angel**
Zech. 3:1-5
6. **Counsel to Laodicea**
Rev. 3:18

Part 1
THE TEN VIRGINS I
Matt. 25:1-5

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

One of the lessons Christ sought to teach by the parable of the ten virgins was that the individual who is waiting for Christ's return must allow the Holy Spirit, represented by the oil, to do His work in the life. The result of this work is represented by the lighted lamp. Without this work, man will not be able to take part in Christ's wedding feast.

"The two classes of watchers represent the two classes who profess to be waiting for their Lord. They are called virgins because they profess a pure faith. By the lamps is represented the word of God. The psalmist says, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.' Ps. 119:105. The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 406, 407.

"All had lamps and vessels for oil. . . . All have heard the message of Christ's near approach, and confidently expect His appearing. But as in the parable, so it is now. A time of waiting intervenes, faith is tried; and when the cry is heard, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him,' many are unready. They have no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They are destitute of the Holy Spirit."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 408.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I be certain that the Holy Spirit is accomplishing in my life the work that is needed to prepare me to meet Jesus when He comes?

"Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fulness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 671.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "To Meet the Bridegroom," pages 405-411.

Part 2
THE TEN VIRGINS II
Matt. 25:6-12

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart is crucial to the preparation to meet Jesus, just as the oil in the lamp was crucial to being prepared to meet the bridegroom. That oil of the Spirit must be obtained now. When the Bridegroom comes, it will be too late.

"Now is the time to entreat that souls shall not only hear the word of God, but without delay secure oil in their vessels with their lamps. That oil is the righteousness of Christ. It represents character, and character is not transferable. No man can secure it for another. Each must obtain for himself a character purified from every stain of sin."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 233, 234.

Note that the oil is both the Holy Spirit and the righteousness of Christ. The Holy Spirit is the instrument to produce righteousness, and the righteousness of Christ in the life is the result of the Spirit's work.

"No man can impart to another the character *which is the fruit of the Spirit's working*. 'Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it [the land], as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.'"—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 412. (Emphasis supplied.)

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the relationship between faith in Jesus and reception of the Spirit?

"All the ten virgins appeared to be ready for the coming of the bridegroom, and yet the test brought out the fact that five were unready. Those who have true piety esteem and revere the law of God. Through the grace of Christ they exemplify the principles of the law in their lives, and will not wilfully break any of the commandments of God. . . . They yield to Christ, who leads men to repentance of sin, who pardons the penitent soul, and clothes him with his own righteousness."—*Review and Herald*, Sept. 17, 1895.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "To Meet the Bridegroom," pages 411-415.

Part 3
AND THEY WOULD
NOT COME
Matt. 22:2, 3, 8-10

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come."

"Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests."

This parable teaches that many refuse to accept the Lord's invitation and that both "bad and good" are invited to be present at the marriage.

Three invitations were sent out to call the guests to the feast. See Matt. 22:3-9. The first was extended by the Twelve and the Seventy to the Jewish people during the time of Christ's ministry. The second was given by the disciples after the crucifixion of Christ, making a further call to God's chosen people. The third represents the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. See *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 308, 309.

"The nation that claimed to be God's peculiar people rejected the gospel brought to them in the power of the Holy Spirit. Many did this in the most scornful manner. Others were so exasperated by the offer of salvation, the offer of pardon for rejecting the Lord of glory, that they turned upon the bearers of the message. There was 'a great persecution.' Acts 8:1. Many both of men and women were thrust into prison, and some of the Lord's messengers, as Stephen and James, were put to death."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 308.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is my responsibility when I have accepted the invitation to the gospel feast? (See Rev. 22:17.)

"The king's servants who went out into the highways 'gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good.' It was a mixed company. Some of them had no more real regard for the giver of the feast than had the ones who rejected the call. The class first bidden could not afford, they thought, to sacrifice any worldly advantage for the sake of attending the king's banquet. And of those who accepted the invitation, there were some who thought only of benefiting themselves. They came to share the provisions of the feast, but had no desire to honor the king."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 309.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Without a Wedding Garment," pages 307-309.

Part 4
THE WEDDING
GARMENT
Matt. 22:11-13

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"For every guest at the feast there had been provided a wedding garment. This garment was a gift from the king. By wearing it the guests showed their respect for the giver of the feast."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 309.

"By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ's true followers will possess. To the church it is given 'that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,' 'not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' . . . It is the righteousness of Christ, His own unblemished character, that through faith is imparted to all who receive Him as their personal Saviour."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 310.

"The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unforsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 555, 556.

THINK IT THROUGH

In personal experience, what is the significance of the speechlessness of the man without a wedding garment?

"This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character he offers to impart to us. . . . By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness. Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 311, 312.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Without a Wedding Garment," pages 309-319.

Part 5
JOSHUA AND
THE ANGEL
Zech. 3:1-5 RSV

From the information contained in the record of the vision of Zechariah, what is the meaning of the change of raiment?

"Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, 'The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?' Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. And the angel said to those who were standing before him, 'Remove the filthy garments from him.' And to him he said, 'Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with rich apparel.' And I said, 'Let them put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments; and the angel of the Lord was standing by."

Read also verses 6-10.

This message from the prophet Zechariah presents a symbol of Judah. Judah had sinned, had been led away into captivity, and now, under the favor of God, had returned to Palestine.

"And now that this work of restoration had begun, and a remnant of Israel had already returned to Judea, Satan was determined to frustrate the carrying out of the divine purpose, and to this end he was seeking to move upon the heathen nations to destroy them utterly."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 583.

"It was by faith in the coming Saviour that Joshua and his people had received pardon. Through faith in Christ they had been restored to God's favor. By virtue of His merits, if they walked in his ways and kept His statutes, they would be 'men wondered at,' honored as the chosen of Heaven among the nations of the earth."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 585.

THINK IT THROUGH

"Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing scenes of the great day of atonement."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 587.

"Christ is our High Priest. Satan stands before Him night and day as an accuser of the brethren. . . . But Christ has made atonement for every sinner. Can we by faith hear our Advocate saying, 'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; . . . is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? . . .

"The filthy garments are removed; . . . and man, all undeserving, stands before the Lord cleansed from all unrighteousness, and clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ. Oh, what a change of raiment is this."—*That I May Know Him*, page 108.

FURTHER STUDY

Prophets and Kings, pages 586-592.

Part 6
COUNSEL TO
LAODICEA
Rev. 3:18

In what sense must the spiritual qualities symbolized in Rev. 3:18 be bought?

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Those who are invited to open the door of their hearts to Jesus (Rev. 3:21), have also been invited to buy "gold," "white raiment" and "eyesalve." What is the meaning of each of these symbols?

"Let them humble their souls before God, let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will realize their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer; and eyesalve, which is the grace of God and which will give clear discernment of spiritual things and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 254.

"Oh, what can I say to open blind eyes, to enlighten the spiritual understanding! Sin must be crucified. A complete moral renovation must be wrought by the Holy Spirit. We must have the love of God, with living, abiding faith. This is the gold tried in the fire. We can obtain it only of Christ. Every sincere and earnest seeker will become a partaker of the divine nature."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 105.

What cause for Judah's rejoicing did the prophet record? Isa. 61:10.

THINK IT THROUGH

What are the differences between Laodiceanism and righteousness by faith?

"The great Redeemer represents Himself as a heavenly merchantman, laden with riches, calling from house to house, presenting His priceless goods. . . .

"Now He stands at the door of the heart as a heavenly merchantman; He says, . . . 'Open unto me; buy of me the heavenly wares; buy of me the gold tried in the fire.' Buy faith and love, the precious, beautiful attributes of our Redeemer. . . . He invites us to buy the white raiment, which is His glorious righteousness; and the eyesalve, that we may discern spiritual things. Oh, shall we not open the heart's door to this heavenly visitor?"—*Our High Calling*, page 350.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Two Worshipers," pages 156-159.

The Third Angel's Message



"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

While a renewed emphasis was being given to teaching the righteousness of Christ, beginning with the General Conference session of 1888, held at Minneapolis, Mrs. White tells of some correspondence she had received.

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.'"—*Evangelism*, page 190.

It is the purpose of this lesson to investigate this relation of the message of justification by faith to the three angels' messages.

The expression "third angel's message" can be used in the following two

ways: (1) the third angel's message, recorded in Rev. 14:9-11, as distinguished from the first and second angel's messages; and (2) the message preached by Seventh-day Adventists that has developed out of the content of the three messages of the angels of Revelation 14, the third thus climaxing and including the first and second messages.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Gospel Into All the World**
Matt. 24:14
2. **The Hour of Judgment**
Rev. 14:6, 7
3. **Come Out of Babylon**
Rev. 14:8; Rev. 18:1-4
4. **Receive Not His Mark**
Rev. 14:9, 10, 12
5. **Unity of Thought in Three Messages**
6. **The Obedience of Faith**
Rev. 14:12

Part 1
THE GOSPEL INTO
ALL THE WORLD
Matt. 24:14

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Before Christ ascended into heaven He gave to His disciples the great commission to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

That little band of disciples, in the name of Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, in season and out of season, under favorable and unfavorable conditions, preached the message of a crucified and risen Saviour. See *Desire of Ages*, page 827.

Our text calls attention to God's plan that before the Saviour's return, the gospel is to be preached to all the world. Conditions in the world will provide a backdrop which will give significance and relevance to the final preaching of the gospel.

"The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 537.

"Christ came to this world for no other purpose than to manifest the glory of God, that man might be uplifted by its restoring power. . . . He knew that the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in all the world; that truth, armed with the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, would conquer in the contest with evil; and that the blood-stained banner would one day wave triumphantly over His followers."—*That I May Know Him*, page 37.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is "this gospel of the kingdom"? What am I doing to proclaim it?

"The message of Christ's soon coming is designed to arouse men from their absorption in worldly things. It is intended to awaken them to a sense of eternal realities, that they may give heed to the invitation to the Lord's table. . . .

"The world is perishing for want of the gospel. There is a famine for the word of God. There are few who preach the word unmixed with human tradition. Though men have the Bible in their hands, they do not receive the blessing that God has placed in it for them. The Lord calls upon His servants to carry His message to the people. The word of everlasting life must be given to those who are perishing in their sins."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 228, 229.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 826-828.

Part 2
THE HOUR OF
JUDGMENT
Rev. 14:6, 7

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

"The messages of this chapter [Rev. 14] constitute a threefold warning . . . which is to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord's second coming. The announcement, 'The hour of His judgment is come,' points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. . . . That men may be prepared to stand in the judgment, the message commands them to 'fear God, and give glory to Him,' 'and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' The result of an acceptance of these messages is given in the word: 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment. . . .

"The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power." (Then follow Ps. 96:5; Isa. 40:25, 26; 45:18; Ps. 100:3; 95:6; Rev. 4:11.)—*The Great Controversy*, pages 435-437.

THINK IT THROUGH

Which of the Ten Commandments calls attention to the Creator? Would the keeping of this commandment have anything to do with true worship of the Creator?

"In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. . . . The fourth precept declares: "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.' Ex. 20:11. . . .

"So long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 437, 438.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 326-329, 352-354.

Part 3
COME OUT OF
BABYLON
Rev. 14:8
Rev. 18:1-4

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils. . . . For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

"Babylon is fallen, 'because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' What is that wine?—her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told to Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul. Many kindred errors she has spread far and wide, 'teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' . . .

"And in the loud cry of the third angel's message a voice is heard from heaven saying, 'come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.'"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 985.

What call did the apostle Paul give to the Corinthian believers? 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

THINK IT THROUGH

On what condition can I be a "son" or "daughter" of the Lord Almighty? 2 Cor. 6:17, 18.

"Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: 'Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.' Rev. 18:5. . . . But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and 'receive not of her plagues.' Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth."—*The Great Controversy*, page 604.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 382-390.

Part 4
RECEIVE NOT
HIS MARK
Rev. 14:9, 10, 12

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

"This message embraces the two preceding messages. It is represented as being given with a loud voice; that is, with the power of the Holy Spirit. Everything is now at stake. The third angel's message is to be regarded as of the highest importance. It is a life and death question."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 980.

"The third angel of Revelation fourteen is represented as flying swiftly through the midst of heaven crying: 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Here is shown the nature of the work of the people of God."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 206.

What are the three distinguishing marks of the saints?
Rev. 14:12.

"**Faith of Jesus.** Or, 'faith in Jesus.' The Greek may be understood either way, though the latter meaning is generally preferred. For the difference in meaning between the two expressions and for the importance of faith to Christian experience see on Rom. 3:22."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 833.

THINK IT THROUGH

"But Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him. But when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshiping the beast and his image."—*The Great Controversy*, page 449.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 446-450.

Part 5
UNITY OF THOUGHT
IN THREE MESSAGES

The announcement of judgment led to the call to fear and glorify God. A correct relation with God, fearing and glorifying Him, results in readiness for the judgment. A close relation exists between judgment and justification. Without a judgment justification is unnecessary because justification accomplishes removal of the sin that the judgment would condemn. But God announced judgment, and if fear of God leads one to confess his sins and accept Christ's righteousness, he will receive acquittal in the judgment.

The angel calls also for man to glorify God. Man glorifies God by living the character of God before his fellowmen, a process also known as sanctification. This may also be viewed as man doing what he can by God's help to develop a fitness for heaven. God decides in the judgment on entrance of people to heaven.

After the announcement of judgment the angel calls men to worship God as Creator. Observance of the seventh-day Sabbath corresponds to this call.

Of what is Sabbath observance a sign? Ex 31:13.

What sign indicates the fear of God? The commands to fear and glorify God link together as a unit in verse 7. This harmonizes with the inseparability of justification and sanctification. The believer is justified so that he can be sanctified. If he is being sanctified, then he must have been justified. Thus true Sabbath keeping is a sign that the righteousness of Christ is accomplishing its goal in the life of the believer.

Those who do not accept Christ's righteousness constitute Babylon and are followers of the beast and his image. In the second and third messages this group is shown to be under the judgment of God because they have believed another message than God's message and have worshipped another power than God. The righteousness of Christ is the theme of the three messages in the context of the judgment.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why does a formal keeping of the Sabbath, just laying aside our regular work and resting for 24 hours, fall short of God's purpose in giving us the Sabbath?

"All power is given into His [Christ's] hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 92.

FURTHER STUDY

The Desire of Ages, pages 281-289.

Part 6
THE OBEDIENCE
OF FAITH
Rev. 14:12

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

The saints are acquitted in the judgment. They will have chosen the faith of Jesus in preference to the wine of Babylon, and obeyed God's commandments in preference to obeying the beast and his image. The saints will have combined faith and obedience, or Jesus and the law.

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen." Rom. 16:25-27.

"Now, it has been Satan's determined purpose to eclipse the view of Jesus and lead men to look to man, and trust to man, and be educated to expect help from man. For years the church has been looking to man, and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. Therefore God gave to His servants a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel's message, in clear, distinct lines."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 93.

"The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 92.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what way has Abraham set an example for me in the matter of obedience? See Heb. 11:8.

"The Lord God of heaven will not send upon the world His judgments for disobedience and transgression until He has sent His watchmen to give the warning. He will not close up the period of probation until the message shall be more distinctly proclaimed. The law of God is to be magnified; its claims must be presented in their true, sacred character, that the people may be brought to decide for or against the truth. Yet the work will be cut short in righteousness. The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 19.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 451-460.

the FINAL CONFLICT

"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Matt. 10:24, 25.

The character of God is the norm for righteousness.

This character has been revealed to man in the law and in the life of Jesus. "From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God."—*The Great Controversy*, page 582. During the earthly life of Jesus, Satan sought His downfall and eventually did all that it was possible to do to destroy Him.

The wrath that Satan once aimed at the righteous life of Jesus has since been directed toward the men and women who are seeking to develop a righteous character like His.

The great controversy from one viewpoint is over the question of what is the norm for righteousness in human life?

In this final encounter God is counting on His people to vindicate His character as the norm. God will give this

character to all who will relate to Him in faith and obedience.

No one will take credit to himself, for the victorious host will sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

"Character of the Last Conflict," an article written by Ellen G. White, is printed at the end of this lesson for supplementary reading. It was originally printed in the *Review and Herald*.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **Lucifer Advocates Government Without Law**
Ezek. 28:12-15, 18
2. **God's Law Is Immutable**
Ps. 111:7-9
3. **The Issue of the Final Conflict**
Rev. 13:16, 17
4. **The Time of Trouble**
Daniel 12:1
5. **Seek Righteousness**
Zeph. 2:1-3
6. **The Final Triumph of Christ's Righteousness**
Rev. 22:11, 12; Rev. 15:2, 3

Part 1
LUCIFER ADVOCATES
GOVERNMENT
WITHOUT LAW

Read Ezekiel 28:12-15, 18.

What was the ambition of Lucifer presented under the symbols of the prince of Tyre and the king of Babylon? Ezek. 28:2, 6; Isa. 14:12-14.

What spirit inspired by Satan will manifest itself in the great apostasy? 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

Note the following expressions from 2 Thess. 2:3-9, as they appear in the RSV.

"The man of lawlessness." Verse 3.

"The mystery of lawlessness." Verse 7.

"The lawless one." Verse 8.

"The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan." Verse 9.

"When it was announced that with all his sympathizers he must be expelled from the abodes of bliss, then the rebel leader boldly avowed his contempt for the Creator's law. He reiterated his claim that angels needed no control, but should be left to follow their own will, which would ever guide them right. He denounced the divine statutes as a restriction of their liberty and declared that it was his purpose to secure the abolition of law."—*The Great Controversy*, page 499.

"From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. . . .

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition."—*The Great Controversy*, page 582.

THINK IT THROUGH

In my attitudes toward God's law, on whose side am I casting my influence?

"The warfare against God's law, which was begun in heaven, will be continued until the end of time. Every man will be tested. Obedience or disobedience is the question to be decided by the whole world. All will be called to choose between the law of God and the laws of men. Here the dividing line will be drawn. There will be but two classes. Every character will be fully developed; and all will show whether they have chosen the side of loyalty or that of rebellion.

"Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 763.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 498-504.

Part 2
GOD'S LAW IS
IMMUTABLE
Ps. 111:7-9

"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever and are done in truth and uprightness. He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name."

"The law of God, being a revelation of His will, a transcript of His charatcer, must forever endure, 'as a faithful witness in heaven.' Not one command has been annulled; not a jot or tittle has been changed. Says the psalmist: 'Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.' 'All His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever.' Ps. 119:89; 111:7, 8."
—*The Great Controversy*, page 434.

What was one of Christ's purposes in coming to this world?
Matt. 5:17, 18.

How did Christ demonstrate His attitude toward the Law of God? **John 15:10 (last part), John 8:46 (first part).**

How is faith in Christ related to the law of God? **Rom. 3:31.**

"He [Jesus] gave his life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God's law, not to create a lower standard, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be immutable, that it might stand fast forever."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 314.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I show by my daily living that the law of God is valid?

"Had it been possible for the law to be changed or abrogated, then Christ need not have died. But to abrogate the law would be to immortalize transgression, and place the world under Satan's control. It was because the law was changeless, because man could be saved only through obedience to its precepts, that Jesus was lifted up on the cross. Yet the very means by which Christ established the law Satan represented as destroying it. Here will come the last conflict of the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

"That the law which was spoken by God's own voice is faulty, that some specification has been set aside, is the claim which Satan now puts forward. It is the last great deception that he will bring upon the world."—*The Desire of Ages*, pages 762, 763.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 465-468.

Part 3
THE ISSUE OF THE
FINAL CONFLICT
Rev. 13:16, 17

“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

To what extreme will Satan go to bring all under his form of government? Rev. 13:15.

The power depicted in Revelation 13 will do its utmost to bring about conformity to the mark of its authority. First boycott and then a death decree will be leveled against those who seek to uphold the sanctity of the Ten Commandments.

“As the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and as the only way to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, many popular teachers declare that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus they cast away the law and the Sabbath together. . . .

“Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called ‘Christian Sabbath,’ and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 587.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is my greatest need so that Jesus may carry me safely through the final crisis?

“He [Satan] will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. . . .

“And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God’s commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced.”—*The Great Controversy*, pages 589, 590.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 585-592.

Part 4
THE TIME OF
TROUBLE
Dan. 12:1

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

Study the promises of God in Psalm 91:1, 2, 7, 8, 14, 15.

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. . . . The final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' Then Jesus ceases his intercession in the sanctuary above. . . .

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 613, 614.

"As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. . . .

"Their confidence in God, their faith and firmness, will be severely tested."—*The Great Controversy*, page 618.

THINK IT THROUGH

"It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God."—"The Great Controversy," page 622.

"They [God's people] afflict their souls before God, pointing to their past repentance of their many sins. . . . They lay hold of the strength of God as Jacob laid hold of the Angel; and the language of their souls is: 'I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.'

"Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed. . . . But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 619, 620.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 613-620.

Part 5
SEEK
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Zeph. 2:1-3

In view of the "day of the Lord" what four commands were given to Judah in the following passage?

"Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

"During the reign of Josiah the word of the Lord came to Zephaniah, specifying plainly the results of continued apostasy, and calling the attention of the true church to the glorious prospect beyond. His prophecies of impending judgment upon Judah apply with equal force to the judgments that are to fall upon an impenitent world at the time of the second advent of Christ."—*Prophets and Kings*, page 389.

"Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. . . .

"It is in this life that we are to separate sin from us, through faith in the atoning blood of Christ."—*The Great Controversy*, page 623.

What is Christ waiting to accomplish in His church before receiving it unto Himself? Eph. 5:26, 27.

"The church, endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the riches of His mercy, His grace, and His love, are to appear in full and final display. Christ looks upon His people in their purity and perfection, as the reward of His humiliation, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ, the great Center, from whom radiates all glory."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 680.

"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I "seek righteousness"?

"Now is the time to lay up treasure in heaven and to set our hearts in order, ready for the time of trouble. Those only who have clean hands and pure hearts will stand in that trying time. Now is the time for the law of God to be in our minds, foreheads, and written in our hearts."—*Early Writings*, page 58.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 599-602.

Part 6
THE FINAL TRIUMPH
OF CHRIST'S
RIGHTEOUSNESS
Rev. 22:11, 12

What evidence is there in the following texts that they refer to the close of probation?

"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Read Revelation 15:2, 3.

As probation closes and the final decree goes forth, a seal is placed on the righteous. But their righteousness is not their own. It is the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed and imparted to them. They have made it their own. Through faith in Him they have been able to stand firm unto the end. They will not take any credit to themselves, but they will say, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. 5:13.

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil."
—*The Great Controversy*, page 425.

"Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth—these are receiving the heavenly mold and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. . . .

"All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 216.

THINK IT THROUGH

What lesson can I learn from Enoch in preparation for translation? See Gen. 5:24.

"The hour has come when Christ occupies His rightful position and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named. . . . He looks upon the redeemed, renewed in His own image, every heart bearing the perfect impress of the divine, every face reflecting the likeness of their King. . . . And the song of praise ascends from the white-robed ones about the throne: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' Rev. 5:12."—*The Great Controversy*, page 671.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 620-627.

CHARACTER OF THE LAST CONFLICT

Ellen G. White

The great controversy between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness has not abated one jot or tittle of its influence as time has gone on. The stern conflict between light and darkness, between truth and error, is deepening in its intensity. The synagogue of Satan is intensely active, and in this age the deceiving power of the enemy is working in the most subtle way. Every human mind that is not surrendered to God and is not under the control of the Spirit of God, will be perverted through satanic agencies. The enemy is working constantly to supplant Jesus Christ in the human heart, and to place his attributes in the human character, in the place of the attributes of God. He brings his strong delusions to bear upon the human mind, that he may have a controlling power. He seeks to obliterate the truth and abolish the true pattern of goodness and righteousness, in order that the professed Christian world may be swept to perdition through separation from God. He is working in order that selfishness may become world-wide, and thus make of no effect the mission and work of Christ.

Christ came to the world to bring back the character of God to man, and to retrace on the human soul the divine image. Through his entire life, Christ sought by continuous, laborious efforts to call the world's attention to God and to his holy requirements, so that men might be imbued with the Spirit of God, might be actuated by love, and might reveal in life and character the divine attributes. Christ came to be the light and life of the world, and his life was one of continual self-denial and self-sacrifice. The Lord Jesus valued every human being, and could not endure the

thought that one soul should perish. His great heart of love embraced the whole world, and led him to provide complete salvation for all who would believe in him. In the character of Christ, majesty and humility were blended. Temperance and self-denial were seen in every act of his life, but there was no taint of bigotry, no cold austerity, manifested in his manner to lessen his influence over those with whom he came in contact. The world's Redeemer had a greater than angelic nature; yet united with his divine majesty were meekness and humility that attracted all to himself. He speaks to all, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor 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."

Christ is man's example. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. . . . And 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." Christ, our Redeemer, comprehended all the necessities of man. He formulated the mighty plans by which fallen man is to be uplifted from the degradation of sin. In every circumstance, however trivial, he represented the Father. Though upholding the world by the word of his power, he would stoop to relieve a wounded bird. O that we all had an intelligent knowledge of Jesus Christ! Weary and worn as he often was, he pleased not himself. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "See that ye

refuse not him that speaketh." Who are those that refuse to hear the voice of Christ!—They are those who do not hear and practise his word. They are those whose hearts are crowded and overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life; who are eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage. They are those who will not receive the message of warning for these last days.

The agencies of Satan are at work to keep the minds of men engrossed with the things of this life, in order that he may work counter to the mission and work of Christ. Of Satan, Christ declares he "abode not in the truth." Once Satan was in co-partnership with God, Jesus Christ, and the holy angels. He was highly exalted in heaven, and was radiant in light and glory that came to him from the Father and the Son; but he became disloyal, and lost his high and holy position as covering cherub. He became the antagonist of God, an apostate, and was excluded from heaven. He established his empire, and planted the standard of rebellion against the law of Jehovah. He invited all the powers of evil to rally about his standard, in order to form a desperate companionship of evil to league against the God of heaven. He worked perseveringly and determinedly to perpetuate his rebellion, and to cause men to turn from Bible truth, and to stand under his banner. As soon as the Lord through Jesus Christ created our world, and placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, Satan announced his purpose to conform to his own nature the father and mother of all humanity, and to unite them with his own ranks of rebellion. He was determined to efface the image of God from the human posterity, and to trace his own upon the soul in place of the divine image. He adopted methods of deception by which to accomplish his purpose. He is called the father of lies, an accuser of God and of those who maintain their allegiance to God, a murderer from the beginning. He put forth every power at his command to win man

to co-operate with him in apostasy, and succeeded in bringing rebellion into our world.

All the vast, complicated machinery of evil agencies is put into action in these last days. Through generation after generation, from age to age, Satan has gathered human agencies through whom to work out his diabolical purposes, and to bring about the enforcement of his plans and devices in the earth. The great putrid fountain of evil has been continually flowing through human society. Though unable to expel God from his throne, Satan has charged God with satanic attributes, and has claimed the attributes of God as his own. He is a deceiver, and through his serpentine sharpness, through his crooked practises, he has drawn to himself the homage which man should have given to God, and has planted his satanic throne between the human worshiper and the divine Father.

But in man's behalf, Christ met the specious temptations of Satan, and left to man an example as to how to overcome Satan in the conflict. He exhorts his followers, saying, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Satan has made masterly efforts to perpetuate sin. He arrayed all his evil agencies to war against Jesus Christ in an active, desperate conflict, in order that he might bruise the heart of infinite Love. He seduced the people to bow to idols, and thus gain supremacy over earthly kingdoms. He considered that to be the god of this world was the next best thing to gaining possession of the throne of God in heaven. In a large measure he has been successful in his plans. When Jesus was on earth, Satan led the people to reject the Son of God, and to choose Barabbas, who in character represented Satan, the god of this world. The Lord Jesus Christ came to dispute the usurpation of Satan in the kingdoms of the world. The conflict is not yet ended; and as we draw near the close of time, the battle waxes more intense. As the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ draws near, satanic agen-

cies are moved from beneath. Satan will not only appear as a human being, but he will personate Jesus Christ; and the world who has rejected the truth will receive him as the Lord of lords and King of kings. He will exercise his power, and work upon the human imagination. He will corrupt both the minds and the bodies of men, and will work through the children of disobedience, fascinating and charming, as does a serpent. What a spectacle will the world be for heavenly intelligences! What a spectacle for God, the Creator of the world, to behold! The form Satan assumed in Eden when leading our first parents to transgress, was of a character to bewilder and confuse the mind. He will work in as subtle a manner as we near the end of earth's history. All his deceiving power will be brought to bear upon human subjects, to complete the work of deluding the human family. So deceptive will be his working, that men will do as they did in the days of Christ; and when asked, Whom shall I release unto you, Christ or Barabbas? the almost universal cry will be, Barabbas, Barabbas! And when the question is asked, "What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" the cry again will be, "Crucify him!" Christ will be represented in the person of those who accept the truth, and who identify their interest with that of their Lord. The world will be enraged at them in the same way that they were enraged at Christ, and the disciples of Christ will know that they are to be treated no better than was their Lord. But Christ will surely identify his interest with that of those who accept him as their personal Saviour. Every insult, every reproach, every false accusation made against them by those who have turned their ears away from the truth and are turned unto fables, will be charged upon the guilty ones as done to Christ in the person of his saints.

Those who love and keep the commandments of God are most obnoxious to the synagogue of Satan, and the powers of evil will manifest their hatred

toward them to the fullest extent possible. John foresaw the conflict between the remnant church and the power of evil, and said, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." The forces of darkness will unite with human agents who have given themselves into the control of Satan, and the same scenes that were exhibited at the trial, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ will be revived. Through yielding to satanic influences, men will be transformed into fiends; and those who were created in the image of God, who were formed to honor and glorify their Creator, will become the habitation of dragons, and Satan will see in an apostate race his masterpiece of evil,—men who reflect his own image.

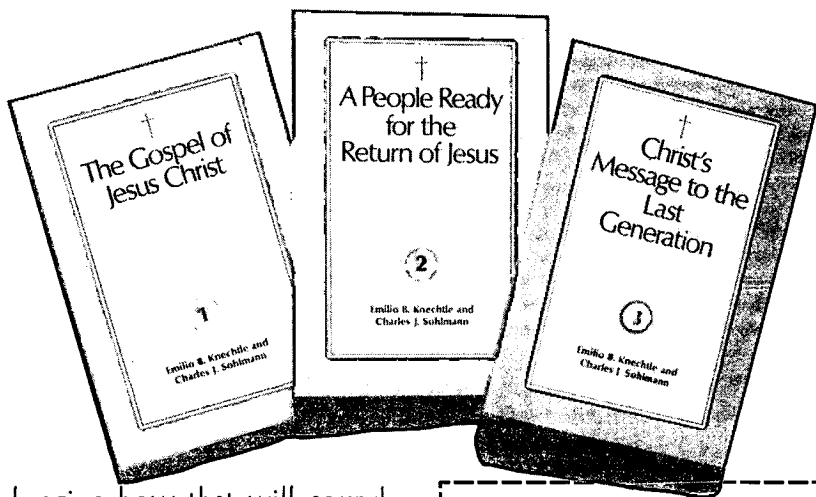
Men were imbued with a satanic spirit at the time when they decided that they would have Barabbas, a thief and murderer, in preference to the Son of God. The demonic power triumphed over humanity; legions of evil angels took entire control of men, and in answer to Pilate's question as to whom he should release unto them, they shrieked out, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." When Pilate spoke again to them concerning Jesus, the hoarse cry was raised, "Crucify him, crucify him." Through yielding to demonic agencies, men were led to take their stand on the side of the great apostate. Unfallen worlds looked upon the scene with amazement, unable to comprehend the degradation that sin had wrought. Legions of evil angels controlled the priests and rulers, and gave voice to the suggestions of Satan in persuading and tempting the people by falsehoods and bribes to reject the Son of God, and to choose a robber and murderer in his stead. They appealed to the very worst passions of the unregenerate heart, and stirred up the worst elements of human nature by the most unjust accusations and representations. What a scene was this for God to look upon, for seraphim

and cherubim to behold! The only begotten Son of God, the Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, was mocked, insulted, taunted, rejected, and crucified by those whom he came to save, who had given themselves to the control of Satan.

Christ said, "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" "They shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. . . . Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the

end come." The agencies of Satan are having their last chance to develop before the world, before angels and men, the true principles of their attributes. The people of God are now to stand as representatives of the attributes of the Father and the Son. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.'"—*Review and Herald*, April 14, 1896.

Welcome Home!



Imagine how that will sound from the lips of Christ. No more hassles. No hangups. No cares. It'll all be over on Planet Earth.

To help you plan for this last great welcome, Emilio Knechtle and Charles Sohlmann have prepared a set of three new paperbacks. In easy-to-study form, they trace God's plan for man from Eden to Eden.

It's a story you'll want to read. And a homecoming you won't want to miss.

Please send _____ sets of Knechtle's new books.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Books are \$4.75 per set. Order from your Adventist Book Center or ABC Mailing Service, 2621 Farnam Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68131. Add 50 cents per set for mailing.

Tax if applicable.

KWH-3

The Commentary Reference Series is one of the most essential helps for YOUR lesson study



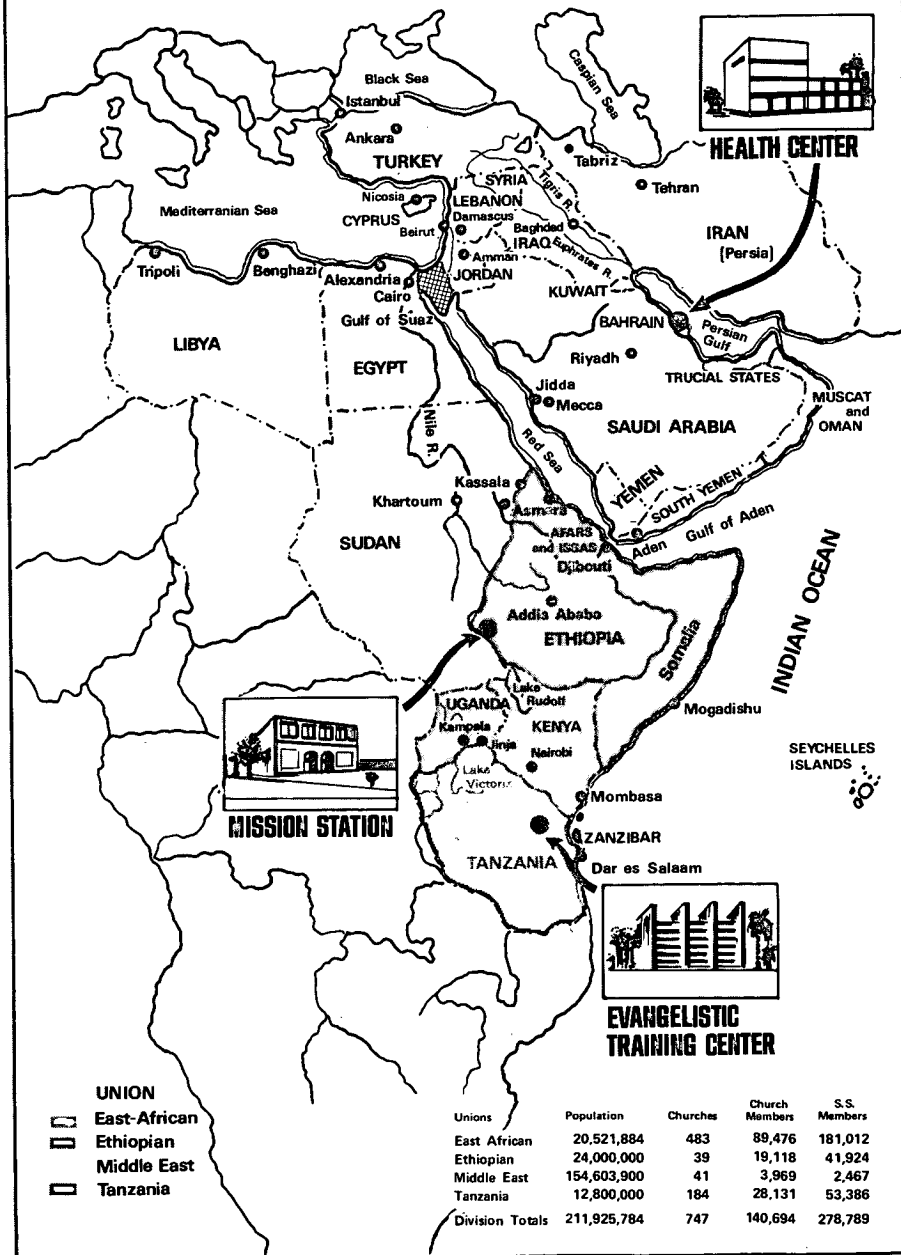
An invaluable self-contained library set for every Sabbath School leader, teacher, and student. *The SDA Bible Commentary* in seven volumes is a verse-by-verse exegesis of the whole Bible, supported by recognized scholarship in ancient languages, chronology, sacred history, and modern archeology. The special articles in these fields are illuminating. The *Bible Dictionary* defines every significant Bible word. The *Source Book* provides reliable historical aid in understanding prophecy. The *Encyclopedia* contains the history of the Advent Church, its organizations, major doctrines, and beliefs. \$14.75 a volume. Complete 10-volume set, \$139.95.


RECENTLY RELEASED—in one volume. *Ellen G. White's Comments* compiled from the 7-volume *Bible Commentary* set. Numbered 7-A, and bound to match the set. \$7.95.

Please add 35c per book for mailing. Include State sales tax where necessary.

AT YOUR BIBLE HOUSE!

AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION



- UNION**
-  East African
 -  Ethiopian
 -  Middle East
 -  Tanzania

Unions	Population	Churches	Church Members	S.S. Members
East African	20,521,884	483	89,476	181,012
Ethiopian	24,000,000	39	19,118	41,924
Middle East	154,603,900	41	3,969	2,467
Tanzania	12,800,000	184	28,131	53,386
Division Totals	211,925,784	747	140,694	278,789