

Adult Sabbath School Lessons

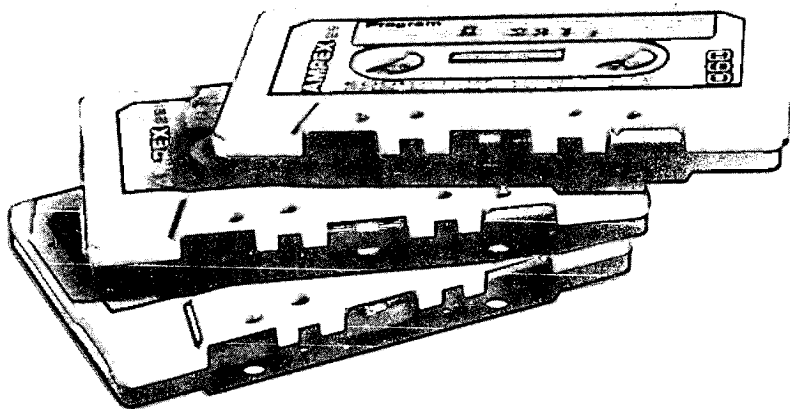
SEEKING THE GLORY OF GOD

APRIL-JUNE 1982



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Dear Members and Friends:

This quarter the Euro-Africa Division has the privilege of benefiting from the Thirteenth Sabbath Special Projects offering. In advance, we wish to thank you and the Lord for your generous help, which will contribute toward two projects in Spain and Belgium.

1. Evangelistic Center in Brussels, Belgium

This interesting city with its international atmosphere has over a million inhabitants. The Belgian metropolis presents a real challenge to the proclamation of the three angels' messages. Our two churches in Brussels, the one French and the other Flemish-speaking, urgently need suitable meeting halls. This need must be met now, for wonderful opportunities have opened up for evangelistic work.

2. Girls' Dormitory at Sagunto College, Spain

This school was founded in 1965 and since then it has grown rapidly. The theological department, which has 35 students enrolled at the present time, offers Spanish and Portuguese young people the first two years of ministerial training. The total student body numbers well over 200. The college's greatest need is for a girls' dormitory. At the moment the girls are living in the school classrooms. The shortage of space has become so acute that something must happen soon.

We look forward to being able to carry out these two projects in the very near future. Once again, may we extend to you our heartfelt thanks for your support. When God's children determine to further God's cause, great things are achieved.

Your brother in Christ,

E. Ludescher,
President

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The Adult Sabbath School Lessons are prepared by the Sabbath School Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the lessons is under the general direction of a worldwide Sabbath School Lesson Committee, the members of which serve as consulting editors.

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Adult Sabbath School Lessons (standard edition). Published quarterly by Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042, U.S.A. One year subscription in U.S.A., \$2.40; single copy 60 cents. One year subscription to countries outside U.S.A., \$3.40; single copy, 85 cents. All prices at U.S.A. exchange. Second-class postage paid at Mountain View, California 94042, U.S.A. When a change of address is desired, please send both old and new addresses.

Editions in Braille and for the deaf available. See page 97.

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Introduction

SEEKING THE GLORY OF GOD

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” (Matt. 6:13). Thus have many of us prayed from our earliest years, learning to say the words before we could understand them. And still we fail to sense their full meaning for us, without a doubt.

Behind the familiar words of the Lord’s Prayer lie the age-long conflict between Christ and Satan. All the relationships of the inhabitants of the universe are involved. And on our small planet the way has been provided for those who will to return to seeking the glory of God.

Satan’s rebellion in heaven was the first challenge to the heart of God’s glory—to His character which reveals His perfect selfless love. During this quarter we will seek to define God’s glory, see it in the person of God, see it in the face of Jesus. We will see how man lost his reflection of God’s glory in Eden.

We will see the cross providing the way back to God, the way to seek His glory rather than our own. Restoration full and complete is contemplated. We will consider the means and agencies that God has provided for this purpose. We will hear our Lord in intercessory prayer for His glory to be restored in us.

In the struggle and sometimes heartache of daily living, we too easily forget our high calling. The home is one of the places where we too often forget. God wants those homes restored to seeking His glory.

From the Scriptures, we will note that God’s people through the ages have been seeking His glory, some more earnestly than others. But only He knows the many who were faithful though unrecorded in the Word. He is looking for the final triumph of the remnant people as the controversy between good and evil sweeps to its climax. The cross provides for victory all the way. And soon the glory—in the sense of awe, majesty, and power—of the advent will signal the close of the conflict. The redeemed of all ages will join the living saints in the final triumph, not only of glory, but in the place and home of glory. Then a unified universe will resume in unbroken measure the unending seeking of the glory of God. That restoration will signal the end of sin and Satan. Unceasing righteousness and eternal love will pervade the universe.

“Thy kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10).

Challenge to God's Glory

“Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee” (Eze. 28:15).

These words are found in the dirge addressed to the king of Tyrus. In them, and in attendant verses, there seems to be an undoubted portrayal of the source of the first challenge to God's government. And that involved a challenge to God's glory.

There came a day when Moses asked God for a personal revelation of His glory. And in His response God touched upon the two major aspects of His glory: His goodness (Ex. 33:19) and the overwhelming majesty of His Person (verses 20-23).

God's goodness, His character, His selfless love are the foundation of His government. The law of His kingdom expresses, in principles that meet our condition, the nature of God's character.

From the few explicit scriptures that speak of Satan's rebellion and from the other few that may make indirect references, we have a picture.

Satan introduced the spirit of self-exaltation into the universe, and through it he has worked constantly to draw to himself glory and honor. He wants especially the power and praise side of glory. The spirit of Jesus, by contrast, is the spirit of self-sacrifice. It will be His Spirit, “the glory shining in the face of Jesus,” that will finally prevail.

When the great rebellion in heaven was first transferred to this earth, Satan used methods that Christ could not use—lying, deception, immorality, false slogans, and exciting suggestions. Many good people are entrapped, often tragically and permanently, by such lures.

The object of this lesson is to note the method of approach in some of Satan's snares. To show that though worldly honor be lost, all the glory that endures results from following the Christ road.

Those who, like the prodigal son, have lost both wealth and the father's home may find themselves feeding on husks. Fortunately, some people do learn from life's experiences and decide to redeem the time by making good use of the remaining opportunities. Such are likened to brands, plucked from the fire. (Compare Joshua, the high priest—Zech. 3:2.)

Sin has given Satan access to humanity. He claims all, even God's people, as his own. Because of this fact we are warned that temptations will come to each one of us but that there will be limits to them. With Christ as our Helper, they will not be greater than we can bear. (See 1 Cor. 10:13.)

The admonition of Jesus is that we “watch and pray” (Matt. 26:41).

**Part 1
INVOLVES
CREATION**

What event brought Lucifer to this earth to foster his rebellion?

“The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Rev. 12:9). (See verses 7, 8.)

The exact timing of the events seen by John is not revealed to us. Christ connects Satan with “the beginning” (John 8:44). We find the tempter in Eden. Other glimpses of his work are given, and together they give us the picture of his character and purpose.

One great issue in Satan's rebellion was an emphasis on worship of “the creature more than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25). Thus the challenge to God's principles of love touched this earth.

How did sin originate? 1 John 3:8. (Compare Eze. 28:13-15.)

“Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven. . . . He stood in the presence of the great Creator, and the ceaseless beams of glory enshrouding the eternal God rested upon him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

Repeatedly in history, earthly warfare has ranged back and forth over key territories on earth such as Palestine or has involved key routes like the Khyber Pass. The battle of the ages is not over territory but over less tangible issues such as power and position. Character is the focal point of it all, the character of love.

Leaders of world empires anciently banished their defeated foes to penal colonies to get rid of them. But it was not God's purpose to make this world a penal colony for Satan and his followers. Rather, it has become an arena in which opposing forces would work out their policies of government as “a lesson to the universe.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 42.

We might assume from the Genesis account that the first rebellion took place about the time of this earth's creation. (See *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 13, 14.) In such a relationship, it would be understandable that this world would become the battlefield between God and Satan and the allegiance of man would be rebellion's focal point.

How are Satan's claims on this world suggested in our Lord's third temptation? (See Matt. 4:8, 9.)

Further Study: Isa. 14:12-15; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 33-43

**Part 2
TOUCHES
ADAM AND EVE**

With what characters and for what purpose did God create our first parents?

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. 1:27, 28).

It is quickly evident in the Genesis account that Satan was seeking to thwart God's plans in the creation of man. He suggested that God was protective of His own glory, in terms of power and knowledge. His rule should be challenged. (See Gen. 3:1-6.) The image of God must be destroyed.

In the spread of rebellion from heaven to earth, how could mere eating have such dire results? Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:1-24. (Compare 1 Tim. 2:13, 14.)

“The sin was not merely in yielding to appetite. It was distrust of God's goodness, disbelief of His word, and rejection of His authority, that made our first parents transgressors, and that brought into the world a knowledge of evil.”—*Education*, p. 25.

God could at any point have given man up. But He did not. Instead, He gave a greater revelation of His love in providing the remedy for sin.

It is said that the bird with the broken pinion never soared so high again, but Paul tells that “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20). Then he anticipates our unspoken question, “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” The answer is, “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. 6:1, 2).

Christ characterized Satan as a liar and a murderer “from the beginning” (John 8:44). It is clear, then, that Lucifer was not interested in the continuance of the glory of God's character (image) in man. He had not been interested for himself. He brought death to man.

What feelings did Adam and Eve experience when they forfeited God's presence? (See Gen. 3:7, 10, 15.)

“Man was not abandoned to the results of the evil he had chosen. . . . Before they heard of the thorn and the thistle, of the toil and sorrow that must be their portion, or of the dust to which they must return, they listened to words that could not fail of giving them hope. All that had been lost by yielding to Satan could be regained through Christ.”—*Education*, p. 27.

Further Study: Rom. 5:12-21; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 591-593

Part 3 REFLECTED IN ISRAEL

“The Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye” (Deut. 32:9, 10).

“It was a high honor to which Abraham was called—that of being the father of the people who for centuries were to be the guardians and preservers of the truth of God to the world, the people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 15.

The highest calling to which any human being can aspire is that of interpreting the glory of God to mankind through the acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice and the consequent living of a Christlike life.

When, after long and patient nurturing, the people of Israel failed to respond to the love of God, who was responsible? Isa. 5:4; Jer. 2:21.

When we look back at the history of Israel, we are inclined to follow the pattern of children in a family who each wonder how the other can be so foolish as to displease Mother or Dad. When Israel had such awesome revelations of God, and we seemingly have nothing comparable in our time, we sometimes marvel at ancient Israel for her disobedience to God.

“Satan was determined to keep his hold on the land of Canaan, . . . and when the law of God was made the law of the land, he hated Israel with a cruel and malignant hatred and plotted their destruction.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 688.

Did God’s rejection of Israel mean an abandonment of His plan to save man? Isa. 55:6-9; Rom. 11:25, 26, 32.

We wonder at the repeated cycles of waywardness and repentance that marked the history of Israel. Could we possibly be repeating those same cycles despite the full blazing sunlight of the gospel?

“No earthly parent ever pleaded so earnestly with an erring child as He who made us pleads with the transgressor. No human, loving interest ever followed the impenitent with invitations so tender.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 275.

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee” (Isa. 60:1).

Further Study: Psalm 78; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 720, 721

**Part 4
REACHES THE
INCARNATE
LORD**

In the remarkable prophecy made by the father of John the Baptist, what purpose made the Christ the target of Satan's attacks?

"The dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace"(Luke 1:78, 79). (Read verses 67-79.)

"Satan had been working to make the gulf deep and impassable between earth and heaven. By his falsehoods he had emboldened men in sin. It was his purpose to wear out the forbearance of God, and to extinguish His love for man, so that He would abandon the world to satanic jurisdiction."—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 34, 35. But the Seed of the woman was about to come.

How did Herod attempt to destroy the baby Jesus? Matt. 2:16.

When Jesus later entered upon His ministry, He visited the synagogue in Nazareth and announced the charter of His life of service. (See Luke 4:16-20.) Satan prompted the religious leaders to oust Jesus from the synagogue and from the city, and they prepared to throw Him over a cliff. Thus the enemy demonstrated his fury.

In the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness, Satan sought to accomplish spiritually what he had failed to do physically. He tried to make Jesus serve him, the deceiver. All through His earthly life Jesus endured every possible abuse and accusation.

How did Peter try to prevent the Lord from going to His impending death? Matt. 16:21, 22.

Jesus spoke to Peter's protest and to the tempter who lay behind the suggestion: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (verse 23).

Here is one example of what was true at every step of Christ's stay in this world. Christ constantly revealed the "image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan and his supporters contested every gesture of Christ's unflinching love for all mankind. Sometimes the attack came through open enemies, sometimes through sincere but unthinking friends. We may think of the repeated open conflicts between Christ and the religious authorities of His day. Behind these authorities were the continuous efforts of Satan to cause Christ to fail, to lower His defenses for a moment, to be caught off-guard, to fail to give glory to the Father.

Through what kind of human agents might Satan now be working to destroy souls, especially those of the youth?

Further Study: Luke 4:1-15; *The Great Controversy*, p. 501

Part 5 UCHES THE Y CHURCH

What is Christ's goal in regard to His church?

“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:26, 27).

Christ has returned to His Father in triumph. The bright glory of heaven is His again. The glory of the divine character had never dimmed. Now only His followers are left as Satan's targets. But the Comforter is with them and in them. Christ will not fail in His goal for His church.

How was the glory of Christ's character reflected in the early church's use of material wealth? Acts 2:44-46; 4:32, 36, 37; 5:1-4.

“Of the apostolic church, in those bright days when the glory of the risen Christ shone upon them, it is written that no man said ‘that aught of the things which he possessed was his own.’”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 137.

“The first Christian church had not the privileges and opportunities we have. They were a poor people, but they felt the power of the truth. . . . They felt that the salvation or the loss of a world depended upon their instrumentality. They cast in their all and held themselves in readiness to go or come at the Lord's bidding.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 156, 157.

To what persecution was the early church membership subjected, and how did this affect its character? Acts 7:59, 60; 9:1; 12:1, 2, 5, 12.

Having killed James, the brother of John, Agrippa wanted to continue to curry favor with the Jews, who prevailed upon him to undertake the further persecution of the Christians. He imprisoned Peter and took great precaution to see that he should not escape. The story of Peter's deliverance is found in Acts 12.

“Through trial and persecution *the glory—the character—of God* is revealed in His chosen ones. . . . They are purified in the furnace of affliction. . . . Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they can look beyond the gloom to the glory, saying, ‘I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.’”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 576, 577. (Emphasis supplied.)

Will “Christians” accustomed to “the good life” be willing to seek an uncomfortable refuge in the time of trouble ahead?

Further Study: *Early Writings*, pp. 192-209

**Part 6
AS HE
PROTECTS
HIS OWN**

What assurance does the Christian have that others cannot enjoy?

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” (Ps. 34:7). ..

Notice that though the “camp” of the angel is nearby, it is not always in prominence. Neither does the angel always deliver from suffering or cruel death. Not even those serving in other lands than their own. Not here shall we see the glory of the divine purpose in every experience. In this sometimes strange, sad world that is our Father’s school, Paul linked his sufferings to the glory of God. (See 2 Cor. 4:5-11.)

Since God “maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45), what is the benefit a Christian may anticipate? (See Ps. 37:23-28; 73:2, 3, 12, 17; John 14:27; 16:33; Rom. 8:1.

The uncertainty of life for so many makes envy of the rich a strong temptation. But one great search in the world today is for secure places in which to protect wealth. David was tempted to envy the wicked for their prosperity. But he found an answer to his question when he looked at eternal values.

Compared with the experience of His ancient people, what can God’s people do today to prepare for the trials ahead? Zeph. 1:14, 15; 2:1-3.

“It is because they [the people of God] are drawing nearer to Christ, and their eyes are fixed upon His perfect purity, that they so clearly discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Their contrition and self-abasement are infinitely more acceptable in the sight of God than is the self-sufficient, haughty spirit of those who see no cause to lament, who scorn the humility of Christ, and who claim perfection while transgressing God’s holy law. . . . The crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the cross.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 474, 475.

What prevents God from always sending immediate relief to His dear people in need?

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 206; *Early Writings*, pp. 56-58

What Is Glory?

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him” (Eph. 1:17).

Putting our text aside for a moment, what does the word “glory” itself bring to mind? A sunset, a cathedral, a coronation, a stallion, or untold wealth? Perhaps something like honor or character. Perhaps something that calls for praise, worship, or adoration. Its meaning could include any or all of these.

The range of words translated as *glory* in the English Bible includes “adornment,” “honor,” “brightness,” “beauty,” “majesty,” “purity,” “preciousness,” “weight,” “heaviness,” “desire.” The most frequently used Hebrew word for *glory* means (in verb form) “to be heavy.” Ancient people who traveled abroad often returned “heavy” with gifts. These suggested honor, approval, or praise on the part of their hosts. Perhaps also on the part of the people who became aware of the gifts.

These brief observations about biblical usages of the words for *glory* should alert us to one thing. We should not expect that wherever the word appears it carries the same meaning. Sometimes the setting or context in which the word appears will guide us to the meaning. The use of a concordance can be helpful also. But our limited consideration of the general term *glory* is only to shed light on the glory of God—our overall study for the quarter.

Throughout the Bible “glory” deals with wealth, gifts, attributes, and objective reality on the one hand, and the aura of honor and praise that the objects call forth on the other. Let us keep these thoughts in mind in our study. By doing so we can gain important insights into God’s purposes for us and can better know our role in the realization of these purposes.

Referring back to the first lesson, not one among us wants to “come short of the glory [praise and approval] of God” (Rom. 3:23). And not one of us would choose to be absent when God’s glory (His character and its worthiness) is displayed to the universe, with praise ascending from people of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

“Through trials and persecution, the glory—character—of God is revealed in His chosen ones.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 31.

Throughout our study this quarter we will discover that God’s glory is a present reality for us as well as a strong hope for the future. In fact, God’s glory involves every moment of our lives.

**Part 1
“GLORY” IN
THE OLD
TESTAMENT**

According to the psalmist, with what attitude were the “great” people of earth to relate to God?

“Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength” (Ps. 29:1).

As already noted, the root meaning of the word *glory* in the Old Testament is “to be heavy,” or “to be laden down.” One might wonder how our present concept of glory emerged from that. Language, as you may well understand, is never static, but some degree of meaning is generally passed along. We sometimes remark concerning a rich man that he is “loaded with wealth.” If this phrase conveys meaning in an age of paper money and computers, think how much more it would have done so in a time when wealth was carried in saddlebags or even worn as anklets or as bracelets.

Where did some patriarchs stand in terms of glory as wealth?

“Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold” (Gen. 13:2). When he sought a wife for Isaac, he sent his servant with ten camels laden with wealth as a bridal present. (See Gen. 24:10, 53.)

Jacob also was very rich. After he had worked for Laban many years, he departed from him laden down with wealth. Now note the lament of Laban’s sons: “Jacob hath taken away all that was our father’s; and of that which was our father’s hath he gotten all this glory [from *kabod*, “weight,” “heaviness,” “honor”]” (Gen. 31:1). Jacob had not only taken the wealth of his father-in-law, but he had taken also the feeling that went with it.

Job, according to the Scriptures, was regarded as “the greatest of all the men of the east” (Job 1:3). Then one day he was deprived not only of all his physical possessions, but he was also regarded as a great sinner. One kind of glory Job retained—his character. He could say, “When he [God] hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). This glory counts for eternity.

While *kabod* is translated as “glory” 155 times (in the KJV), it is also translated as “honour” 29 times. Not all rich men were worthy of the honor given to the patriarchs, but they often gave the onlooker a feeling of awe, if not of respect.

Glory in the Old Testament often touches upon the earthly sanctuary. There the visible glory above the mercy seat made known the presence of God. He was with His people, Israel. (See Ex. 40:34, 35 for example.)

In what ways is it possible for a person today to achieve true beauty of character—true glory?

Further Study: This week, look in a Bible concordance for the word *glory* and note its wide and varied uses.

Part 2
GLORY THAT
PASSES

“Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him” (Ps. 49:16, 17).

In our text for today the psalmist speaks of people who “trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches” (verse 6). But their wealth cannot bring them glory forever. “Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names” (verse 11). Those who make earthly glory their goal “are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; . . . and their beauty shall consume in the grave” (verse 14).

Nebuchadnezzar was one who boasted, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” (Dan. 4:30). God’s answer was swift—the king would be humiliated until he should learn “that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” (verse 32).

When Nebuchadnezzar had learned who it is that overrules the affairs of men, what new attitude toward the glory of God was he able to reveal? Dan. 4:37.

To what does Isaiah liken earthly glory as seen in the goodness of the flesh? Isa. 40:6-8.

Members studying this lesson in lands where grasses and leaves are the only available fuel will have a vivid understanding of Isaiah’s words. Not so those who have heating, cooling, and cooking at the turn of a knob. Everyone can understand how quickly and intensively grass can grow and how soon it can fade and burn. So swiftly will human glory disappear. So quickly passing is the goodness of man. Yet so many still make selfish and visible glory their prime goal in life.

By contrast, what glory, offered to Jerusalem by Isaiah, remained to be revealed at Christ’s two advents? (Compare Isa. 40:1-5 with John 1:14; 2:11; 2 Peter 1:16, and Rev. 1:7; 21:23, 24, 26.)

“About His [Jesus’] coming cluster the glories of that ‘restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.’ Acts 3:21. Then the long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; ‘the kingdoms of this world’ will become ‘the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.’ Revelation 11:15.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 301.

Further Study: Rom. 5:1, 2; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 514-521

Part 3
"GLORY" IN
THE NEW
TESTAMENT

What example do we have in which our Lord carried an Old Testament illustration of glory over to the New?

"Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28, 29).

Solomon's glory was, in part, his gold, his garments, his horses and chariots, his extensive household. And along with these possessions went the atmosphere that surrounded them. The visible glory of Solomon was well acknowledged. But in sharp contrast to this glory was that of the lilies of the field. At first he had been modest and unassuming in the exercise of his governing power. But soon pride marred the true glory of his character.

We may want to analyze how Solomon got his wealth after he lost his true glory. Perhaps through taxation, perhaps by forced labor, subjugation, hoarding, and intrigue. But who can dissect the glory of a dew-drenched lily, open to the morning sun, so as to find the exact origin of its marvelous tints and designs?

What lesson in spiritual priorities can the Christian gain from the temporary glory of the lilies of the field? Matt. 6:30, 33.

That the beautiful righteousness of Christ is bestowed on us and is not achieved by our own works, is quite evident from Jesus' words. This blessed assurance of justifying righteousness we must ever retain by faith which has its fruit in obedience. Christian growth is also a gift of God, one that calls for our cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

How does growth relate to life—both in nature and in the true glory of Christian character?

"As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God's purpose for us is to be fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase. We shall become strong to bear responsibility, and our maturity will be in proportion to our privileges."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 65, 66.

Further Study: John 15:1-8; *Christ's Object Lessons*, "First the Blade, Then the Ear," pp. 62-69

Part 4 GOD'S APPROVAL

In terms of our need of God's approval, in what desperate state do we humans all find ourselves?

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

When Adam and Eve chose Satan as their adviser and ruler, they brought the whole human race into slavery. As Paul says, "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey" (Rom. 6:16).

We have fallen short of meeting God's mind, His expectation of us, His approval. We are therefore unable to attain it. There is only one Saviour (Isa. 43:11; Acts 4:12), and that Saviour is not myself or yourself. Only God, through Jesus Christ, can make us beautiful and restore the lost glory.

In His work of restoration, how did Jesus relate the restoration of health to the forgiveness of sin? John 5:14. (See also verses 1-16.)

Jesus never left a job half done. When He healed people, He set them on the road to the kingdom. When He healed bodies, He sought to heal minds also. To those who found fault with Him for healing on the Sabbath, He said, "If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?" (John 7:23).

We need a healing that will cure the ills of the entire person. When Christ forgave past sins, He also urged toward the cessation of sin—"Go, and sin no more." And yet He patiently cast an evil spirit out of Mary seven times. The words of Paul express God's ideal for us: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23).

To what extent can a person be regarded as whole who is not experiencing the continuing work of sanctification?

A plant is regarded as whole even when it is a healthy shoot; blossoms and fruit are yet to come. At every stage of our lives we can be perfect but still progressing to a new perfection. Each day should find us ready to receive more grace.

"You are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. . . . You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 51.

Part 5 "GLORY" AS PRAISE

In what ways can we glorify (bring praise to) God in our daily living?

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God" (Ps. 50:23).

Hebrew parallelism indicates that in our text the offering of praise calls for ordering one's "conversation aright." "Conversation" is an old word for "way," "journey," "manner." Modern versions tend to reflect this more accurate meaning: "to him who orders his way aright" (RSV).

So ideally, our way of life is a constant source of praise to God. The angels are examples to us of bringing glory to God in their praise. They likewise praise Him by their tireless errands of love. (See Ps. 148:2; Isa. 6:2, 3.) The psalmist spoke joyously of the heavenly hosts in their praise to God (Psalm 148). Praise is also said to be "comely" (Ps. 33:1). And we are to "give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (Ps. 29:2).

Relate our way of living to the glory of God. (Compare Rom. 4:1, 2 with verse 20.)

What did "way" mean to the early Christians? (See Acts 19:23; 22:4.)

Notice that to the first-century Christians their religion was not merely a creed to be repeated. It was not a song of praise to be sung once or twice a week. Their whole life, their whole "way," set them apart and was a song of praise to the glory of God.

"The greatest praise that men can bring to God is to become consecrated channels through whom He can work."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 566.

What effect will trial have upon the praise offered to Jesus by a believer?

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7).

Further Study: Rev. 5:12, 13; *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 100; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 63, 64

Part 6 MOSES AND ELIJAH IN GLORY

“Behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure” (Luke 9:30, 31, RSV).

We note that it was as men that Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount in glory—not as sinful men, however, but as forgiven, saved, transfigured, and transformed men.

Were Moses and Elijah somehow of a holier kind than we? We remember that it was Moses himself who received this word from God: “Get thee up into this mountain . . . and die in the mount . . . because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh” (Deut. 32:49-51). And James said of Elijah that he was “a man subject to like passions as we are” (James 5:17). So we have no reason to think that these men were of a different nature from us. Neither did they find a way of salvation that is closed to us.

In the Bible account of these great leaders of the past we have assurance that all of God’s earthly children who choose to surrender to Him will reflect Christ’s character. In meeting with God’s approval, through the grace of Jesus, they do and will share in His glory.

Why were Moses and Elijah so highly honored?

No direct answer to this question is to be found in the Bible. The Gospels are more accounts of actions than explanatory writings, except where they record the teachings of Jesus. Yet we know enough about the life experiences of Moses and Elijah to understand, in part, why they, of all the hosts surrounding the throne of God should be sent on this particular mission to the Son of God. Both men in their earthly experiences had been called to stand alone under most discouraging and almost overwhelming odds. Through the loving care of God in the ministry of angels, they had emerged from those experiences triumphant. As human beings they could *feel* with Christ in His coming agonies. This He needed.

How would you compare human beings and angels in their ability to bring glory to God by their faithfulness?

“God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin. . . . And in all their work they are to ascribe glory, honor, and praise to Him who is above all and over all.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 330.

Further Study: Matt. 17:1-8; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 419-425

The Glory of God

“The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. . . . O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Ps. 95:3-6).

Any consideration of glory must begin with God. He is the source of glory. Only God can cause glory to endure forever. The visible glory of man passes, like that of the grass and the flowers of the field. Once we have confessed to the greatness of God in character and in power, we have only begun the first sentence of a paragraph that leaves us voiceless in wonder and worship. We search for likenesses to God, but we find none. As Isaiah asked of those turning to heathen worship, “To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?” (Isa. 40:18).

Is it possible for a human being fully to know God? Jesus Himself said, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Jesus had manifested His Father to the world (see John 14:7, 9), and now He wanted His people to continue to know God in His saving power as seen in Jesus Himself.

We can experience God’s kingship, His worship, and His love, but we can never *fully* know Him. Through our study of Scripture and by our own experience we can catch glimpses of all aspects of His glory. Best of all, we can know that God is love and that He loves us. That is the heart of His glory. We shall try to explore that love—a patiently pursuing force that refuses to surrender us to the enemy and to perdition even when we have, by our folly, denied Him.

This love beyond measure or explanation was shown to Israel of old. They witnessed overwhelming displays of God’s power. They were given a school in which to learn His character. But they often chose earthly above heavenly glory. They were not content with a Ruler who could not be seen. They sought a visible king so as to be like the surrounding nations. God bowed to their request. As long as these kings recognized their need for dependence upon God, they even prospered. But the rejection of people and kings seemed inevitable. Only by a grasp of the Unseen can true prosperity thrive.

Of all lessons that God would teach His people today, complete and childlike faith in the unseen God is the most essential. By it we will see God’s glory, and that will give Him glory.

Part 1 GOD THE KING

**“I am the Lord your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King”
(Isa. 43:15).**

God’s rulership is properly thought of in connection with His creatorship and His holiness. (See also Ps. 95:3-5; Col. 1:16.) He sends out the gifts of His love. Where accepted unselfishly, they flow back to Him as a tide of glory. Kingship calls for a kingdom, and at its best a kingdom calls for citizens who are intelligent, free beings. God can rule par excellence; for, as Creator, He knows what is for the best good of all His creation.

The Bible often refers to “the glory of the Lord.” It will be our privilege to study those aspects of God’s glory as revealed in God’s rulership over His people.

Israel, for example, had no human king at first. God ruled His people, revealing His will through His chosen agents. His people were to be different from the surrounding nations. Moses was indeed a great leader, but he was neither lord nor king. While he was in company with royalty in Egypt, he learned how to rule and how to make war, and when called to lead Israel, he even tried the use of force.

Forty years in the wilderness school taught Moses that, though earthly kings may come and go, the great I AM rules forever. Moses chose to cast in his lot with the eternal kingdom.

Israel, however, was not content with a glory that seemed far away. They wanted power, worldly power. After the days of Moses and Joshua, they chose the first judges as leaders. In doing so, they reduced the priestly office. But a judge is not a king, and soon the people became laws to themselves—“every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 6:17). When Eli’s sons were priests, the glory of Israel, linked to the ark of God, departed. (See 1 Sam. 4:6-11, 21.) The people demanded a king, and God gave them Saul. With him came further rejection of Jehovah. After the strong rule of David and Solomon, there came another long period of fading glory. Satan, it seemed, had succeeded in bringing God’s chosen people into conformity to the world. Satan claimed the world as his kingdom.

Since God is the great King above all, what should be the response of His subjects? Ps. 145:5.

God will yet have a people among all nations who will not make the error that Israel made. They will enthrone Jesus, God’s Son, as King of their lives by submitting every act and every motive to the approval of their King.

Further Study: Selections from Psalms 96 through 100

Part 2 THE ONLY SAVIOUR

Having saved Israel from Egypt and Assyria, what further assurance did God give to Israel of His plan to save them?

“I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour” (Isa. 43:11).

To be truly King over His people, ancient or modern, God must provide the best of all possible governments. At the heart of His plan for a chosen people to reflect the glory of His character is a “Saviour.” All this was awaiting the outcome of the fateful Friday afternoon when Jesus hung on the cross, bearing in His own body the sins of the world. But when Jesus arose from the tomb, God’s government of this world was made sure. (See John 20:11-17; 1 Cor. 15:20-24.)

What startling disclosure was made to Isaiah regarding the restoration of Zion? What broader promise is included? Isa. 52:10.

At the beginning of Isaiah’s ministry he received one of the most glorious visions in the entire Bible account. He saw the great majesty of God and heard the words, “The whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa. 6:3). He did not join the seraphim in chanting “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” Isaiah, a sinful man, shrank from the great gap that lay between a righteous God and sinners. To Isaiah this seemed to forecast an eternal rift between God and man.

Nothing is too hard for the Lord. (See Gen. 18:14; Jer. 32:17.) Even before a problem arises, God has provided the best possible answer. Isaiah was cleansed. God had made a way to bridge the awful gap of sin. As God “made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations” in Israel’s day, so He has in Christ. And “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God” (Isa. 52:10).

The universe has before it the revelation of the measure of the greatness of God’s character. The glory of His character of love, His holy rule, are upheld. In Jesus, kingship stoops to the place of service. Visible glory is hidden. But the glory of God’s character is seen in His taking upon Himself the world’s sin, making Himself the only Sin Bearer. (See *The Desire of Ages*, p. 758.)

“Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.

Further Study: Psalm 106, especially verse 21; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 66-70

Part 3
THE ETERNAL
GOD

What attribute of God's glory commands the worship of His creatures everywhere?

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Tim. 1:17).

Glory or praise cannot properly be ascribed to any human being, except for the glory that God bestows upon him; for when glory becomes dust, it ceases to be. Yet God, in whom dwells immortality, will be praised long after "the tumult and the shouting dies, the captains and the kings depart."—Rudyard Kipling, "Recessional."

When God wanted to tell Moses about Himself, He appeared in a burning bush—burning, but never consumed. It was then that God revealed Himself as the great I AM, the eternal, self-sustaining God. God's glory is within Himself. (See Ex. 3:14.)

In 40 years of wilderness dwelling, Moses doubtless had plenty of time to learn lessons from many things, including the courageous yet struggling desert flowers. He began to understand better the purpose of his own life. He entered therefore into a relationship with God that assured him of a secure destiny. Nevertheless, Moses did die and was buried. (See Deut. 34:5, 6.) No tomb of Moses exists as a shrine. But Moses was seen in glory as a man (see Luke 9:30, 32) on the mount of Christ's transfiguration, in company with the great I AM.

As they lost sight of the glory of the Eternal God, to what object, worshiped by the heathen, did ancient Israel sometimes ascribe praise? Eze. 8:16.

Even a winter's sun, reaching plants not in continual shadow, can stimulate added growth under most forbidding conditions. No wonder the sun has so long held the devotion of all mankind, including apostate Israelites. Because the sun, a remarkable burning ball, and seemingly the source of all life, was always there, its worship often came to compete with the worship of God.

One is unwise to be satisfied with a brief, fading glory when "the gift of God is eternal life" (Rom. 6:23).

Further Study: Dan. 7:13, 14; *Education*, p. 172

Part 4
GOD'S
WORTHINESS

On what other basis may glory properly be ascribed to God?

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11).

The word *worship* could well be thought of as “worthship” or “worthiness.” Only those who submit to God and who find something of the depth of His benevolence can know of His worthiness. It is proclaimed here on the basis of His creative power. Those who believe this, like the four and twenty elders of Revelation 4:10, will one day “cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord.” (See verse 11.)

Today worldwide communication brings every man’s suffering to our doors. People want to know whether God is lacking in power, in wisdom, in love, or in all three. Is God really worthy?

In answer, we should be asking ourselves, What is the root of all suffering? We should decide what we shall do with God’s provision for eradicating that root.

“He [God] has always chosen extremities, when there seemed no possible chance for deliverance from Satan’s workings, for the manifestation of His power. Man’s necessity is God’s opportunity.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 714.

Should faith in God’s worthiness stem from the assurance of personal experience with God or from a sense of having no other place to go? (See Job 13:15.)

When Job was in his greatest distress, personal contact with God seemed to have failed. Yet Job in his extremity could cling to his God by faith.

In connection with the question, “Lord, to whom shall we go?” Peter made one of his greatest affirmations of faith. “Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:68, 69).

“Through good and bad report, through darkness, through all the antagonism of the agencies of Satan, the Sun of Righteousness calmly shines on, searching out evil, repressing sin, and reviving the spirit of the humble and contrite ones.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 285.

Our minds are not able to assess the immanent (indwelling) attributes of God, but we can glory in His great salvation. From His Word and our personal experience, we can pronounce Him worthy “to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

Further Study: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 475, 476

Part 5
BENEVOLENT
GOD

What great revelation of His glory did God give to His servant, Moses?

“The Lord passed by before him [Moses], and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex. 34:6).

Moses had prayed, “I beseech thee, shew me thy glory” (Ex. 33:18). What did Moses expect to see? gold and precious stones? an overpowering light or array? the spectrum of the rainbow? Moses had already beheld the smoke, lightning, and an earthquake. One can hardly blame him for wanting to know just what God’s glory was. He may have been surprised to know that God’s character (glory) is first of all goodness—love and mercy.

The why of God’s love will never be fully known. But we can know that God loved His people so much that He sent His Son to redeem them to Himself. And “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. 5:19).

What is the leading thought in that best-loved text, John 3:16?

John 3:16 has as its very first word, in the original language, that very meaningful “so.” It is a small but mighty word. So much, so fervently, so dearly—to such a great extent did God love the world that He gave us Jesus, to be one with us, not for a day or for a year, but eternally, that we might be saved from sin and death.

Sometimes when a government investigates a person, agents are sent to shadow the suspect, wiretap his phone, or place microphones in his apartment. God, however, sent His Son into the world, not to trap or condemn it, but to save it while its people were still His enemies.

When residents of a certain Samaritan village failed to receive Jesus as a guest, He rebuked James and John for wanting to “command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them” (Luke 9:54). He said, “The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” (verse 56). Jesus then went on to another village.

How can I best convey to others the fact that God is good and that it pays to serve Him? 1 Cor. 10:31 to 11:1.

“The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

In view of God’s great Gift to us, how do we treat God’s children who need what we can well afford to supply?

Further Study: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 19-22

Part 6 ULTIMATE IN WISDOM

What is one measurable evidence that God has given us of His wisdom?

“He hath made the earth by his power, and he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding” (Jer. 51:15).

Nature’s evidence for God’s glory is not always clear. Because of the cloud of sin over this world, the wisdom of God, even as it is displayed in nature, must be perceived by the eye of faith. Yet nature contains marvelous tokens of the infinite wisdom of the Creator—mysteries beyond the hand of chance and time.

Whether looking at nature or other evidence of God’s wisdom, we are unable to sit in judgment upon God’s wisdom. To do so would be to elevate our own borrowed ability above that of our Maker. Yet we can, in company with God, explore His house, entering daily, as it were, a new room in His palace. Every pushing back of the boundaries of science—whether through the exploration of the vast edges of space or the probing of the minutest details of the microcosm—is a further revelation of the wisdom of God.

Isaiah advised Hezekiah, “Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times” (Isa. 33:6). How stability is needed today! It has often been remarked that the lack of great human leadership is the outstanding phenomenon of our day.

What gracious invitation does God extend to those who feel the need of guidance? James 1:5, 6.

All the wisdom of heaven could have been shared with Adam and Eve. Sabbath by Sabbath, God would tell them of His wonders. But Satan could not abide such intimacy between God and man. He suggested to Eve that another great field of knowledge was out there waiting to be explored. Our first parents took the bait, and they brought death upon themselves and upon their children. The world is now being asked to explore a “new morality.” Satan’s old trick is being tried out on us again.

In terms of wisdom, by what means can the glory of God be restored to fallen man?

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). “Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth” (Jer. 9:24).

Further Study: *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 432; *Education*, pp. 15-30

Glory in the Face of Jesus

“It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. 2:10, 11).

Among the most baffling opposites in human thought are these: that the divine has been best seen in the human; that strength can be best manifested in weakness; that victory is best achieved through the tender graces of faith and love; and that sinful human beings can be accounted pure.

In this lesson we shall briefly explore the blessings of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ—a doctrine that poses the greatest stumbling block to many Jews and Muslims as well as to many so-called Christians.

Why should it be thought strange that the great God who is “dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Tim. 6:16) should somehow want to encamp near (see John 1:14) the objects of His love? Would He not want to do this, particularly in view of an opposing, contesting power that seizes tyrannical control over those loved ones and challenges the very purpose for which they were created? Would not God have the most effective, the most surprising way to bring His plans to fruition and to exhibit His treasures of grace and love, thus proving the enemy false?

No parallel has been found in human experience that can explain the incarnation, although many Christians must be given some credit for having tried to find one. By its very nature, the life and death of Jesus must be a one-time-only demonstration. Indeed, no other will ever be needed.

God has chosen to be our Father. Jesus has chosen to be our Elder Brother, who is “not ashamed to call [us] brethren” (Heb. 2:11). If Scripture had not recorded it, no person could ever believe it. Yet there it stands for all to see.

What is our response? Complete acceptance, complete enthronement of Jesus in our lives, complete submission to His will, voluntary cooperation in the writing of the final chapters in the great war between good and evil?

May we in this week gain a clearer understanding of “the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”—the glory of self-sacrificing love—as we consider aspects of the incarnation. (See 2 Cor. 4:6.)

Part 1
THE
INCARNATE
LORD

What is at the heart of God's plan to save man in Christ Jesus?

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

Only God could originate such a plan, the stated purpose of which is to destroy the devil and to put an end to the great controversy between good and evil.

God wanted to have His children of earth and heaven a united family (see Eph. 3:15), yielding praise to Him. Christ, as the God-man, provides the link. The salvation of man, though central to the final goal, is not the final chapter. Sin and sinners, along with Satan, must be banished so that Eden can be restored. Then the universe will resound again with the praise and the obedience of those who will seek only the glory of God.

What kind of "flesh and blood" did Jesus assume? Heb. 2:16, 17.

Though our Brother in the flesh, Christ gave no place to sin during His life on earth. He met all the guilt and power of human sin. The adversary is thus completely defeated by the sacrifice that has been made.

"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. . . . What an assurance to the witnessing universe, that Christ will be 'a merciful and faithful high priest'!"—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 926.

Although Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26), He endured real suffering under temptation such as we will never have to experience. And He gained the victory as one of us. (See Heb. 5:7.)

Although Jesus knew strong feelings and emotions, these were always subjected to the Father's will. Never once did He nurse the urge to sin, though such urges must have strongly pressed upon His consciousness. "Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 8, 1887.

Compare the temptations of Jesus with your own. (See Heb. 4:15.)

Further Study: Matt. 1:18-23; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 23-26

**Part 2
OUR ELDER
BROTHER**

What is the meaning to us of the name by which we are instructed to address God?

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name” (Matt. 6:9).

“Such a conception of God [as Father] was never given to the world by any religion but that of the Bible. Heathenism teaches men to look upon the Supreme Being as an object of fear rather than of love—a malign deity to be appeased by sacrifices, rather than a Father pouring upon His children the gift of His love.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 74.

It is by virtue of His incarnation that Christ can declare Himself our Elder Brother. By divine adoption we join the family of heaven. (See Eph. 1:3-7.)

Christ knows by experience the problems and tests that we face every day. He is our Brother, but He also understands and loves better than any earthly father can. (See Ps. 103:13.)

**What is there about God that draws us most powerfully to Him?
1 John 4:16.**

That which drew even little children to Jesus when He walked this earth is the same power that draws all human hearts to God today—especially the lonely, the discouraged, the sick, the poor, the widows and orphans.

What would be Jesus’ feeling toward those who are related to Him in name and those who are related in deed? Matt. 12:47-50.

“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” (Matt. 7:21).

We need constantly to remind ourselves that our acceptance with God is not based on our obedience to His will. When Jesus became our Elder Brother, He brought the weight of His creative power to bear on our sin problem. He laid aside His divine powers in His contest with evil. But it was because He was our Creator that His death and life are effectual to the redeeming of all who will believe. (See Rom. 5:2, 6-8, 12, 18.)

The outshining of God’s glory in the face of Jesus was the glory of God’s character of love. When by faith we join His family, we, by His Spirit, begin to reflect His image more and more completely.

“Adam . . . was the son of God” (Luke 3:38), but some children of Adam, by their choice, have made Satan their father. (See John 8:44.)

Part 3
JESUS,
THE LIFE

In revealing God to man, what astounding claim did Jesus express to Martha?

“Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:24, 25).

In our text is one of Jesus’ most notable uses of the words I AM. “I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1099.

Jesus answered Martha’s question by both word and deed, assuring her and us that He is Master of the most feared reality of humanity—death.

Perhaps the miracle that Satan most feared was the resurrection of the dead. Jude 9 tells us about the dispute between Michael and Satan over the body of Moses, a dispute in which Satan had to retreat in defeat. And now, at the tomb from which Jesus has released Lazarus, Satan, infuriated, takes up the battle anew. He is now more than ever determined that Christ shall die. “Then from that day forth they [the chief priests and the Pharisees] took counsel together for to put him to death” (John 11:53).

How did Christ’s own people interpret His I AM declarations? (See John 8:51-59 compared with 10:33.)

If Jesus had said “I was” or “I used to be,” His hearers would have felt insulted enough, for Abraham was to them so high that they “almost . . . honored him above God.”—*S.D.A. Bible Dictionary*, p. 11. But for Jesus to apply to Himself the words I AM was to make Himself equal to Jehovah—a name they considered too exalted to pronounce. Such an act was considered worthy of death.

What do we understand by the “conflict” stated in the latter part of Hebrews 2:14: “That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”?

“When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible. . . .

“This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then all the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

Further Study: Rom. 1:4; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 530-536

Part 4
IN COMMON
PATHS

What is the meaning to us and the whole world of a particular event in which Christ literally took the place of a servant?

“He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded” (John 13:4, 5).

In the culture in which Jesus lived, anyone who would wash feet was on the lowest rung of the social ladder. This task was devoid of glory, but Jesus glorified the common duties, attaching to the everyday chores of life an aura that only eternity can explain. “Judas was now offended at Christ’s act in washing the feet of His disciples. If Jesus could so humble Himself, he thought, He could not be Israel’s king. All hope of worldly honor in a temporal kingdom was destroyed. Judas was satisfied that there was nothing to be gained by following Christ. After seeing Him degrade Himself, as he thought, he was confirmed in his purpose to disown Him, and confess himself deceived.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 645.

What is the call then of Christ to His followers? John 13:13-17.

“All are called to do service for Him, and for the manner in which they have met this claim, all will be required to render an account at the great judgment day. . . .”

“. . . By living to minister to others, man is brought into connection with Christ. The law of service becomes the connecting link which binds us to God and to our fellow men.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 326.

When the great and the learned were offended by Christ’s conduct, how did the majority react? Mark 12:37, last part.

As with the people in Christ’s day, the majority of early Adventists were comparatively poor people. But it has been observed that Christianity makes people good stewards, good stewardship produces efficient management, efficient management produces wealth, and wealth leads to a lack of emphasis on spiritual matters, or even to apostasy. Thus is created a vicious chain. A grave danger therefore faces Adventist membership in the industrialized world from the level of prosperity many enjoy.

“Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: . . . that no flesh should glory in his presence. . . . He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (1 Cor. 1:26-31).

Further Study: Luke 22:25-30 (note especially verse 27); *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 615, 616

Part 5 HE BORE OUR SINS

What is the most profound aspect of Jesus' mission to earth?

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed” (1 Peter 2:24).

He was called Jesus, “for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). It was “for sin,” or concerning sin, that God sent Jesus “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. 8:3).

In the Jewish services the priest took upon himself, in the symbols of the service, the sins of the people. But because he himself was a sinner, he could not give his life for the people. Therefore, the sins of the people having been transferred to it, a lamb “without blemish” was offered. This lamb pointed forward to Jesus, who shared our humanity and yet, because of His perfection, could be God’s Lamb. “John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Did Christ suffer only for the sins of the elect or also of the unrepentant? John 3:16-19; 4:42; Rom. 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:19, 20.

“The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His [Christ’s] heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 753.

What hope cheered Christ on in the midst of His sufferings? John 17:5-8.

“It was the joy of Christ in His humiliation and pain that His disciples should be glorified with Him. They are the fruit of His self-sacrifice. The outworking in them of His own character and spirit is His reward, and will be His joy throughout eternity. This joy they share with Him as the fruit of their labor and sacrifice is seen in other hearts and lives. They are workers together with Christ, and the Father will honor them as He honors His Son.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 624.

When Jesus said, “Learn of me” (Matt. 11:29), He referred to more than the study of the Bible. We are to learn from Christ’s life of service and, by bearing one another’s burdens, “fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). Thus we will find joy in service.

“The glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 20.

Further Study: Heb. 9:24-28; *Steps to Christ*, “The Sinner’s Need of Christ,” p. 19; “The Work and the Life,” p. 79

**Part 6
E ASCENDED****What message did Jesus bid Mary tell?**

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17).

Why, in a lesson on the incarnation, should we include the thought of Christ’s ascension? How could Christ be “with us” and yet go away?

The ascension of Jesus brought the testimony of Heaven that His sacrifice for sin was both completed and accepted. For the disciples, it climaxed the growing assurance as to who Jesus really was and what He had accomplished on earth. Now He was to be “with them” more intimately and constantly than ever, by the indwelling, promised Holy Spirit. Pentecost served as a signal to the band of believers on earth that their Lord was not at the Father’s right hand. As Peter told the great crowds at Pentecost, “This Jesus hath God raised up; . . . and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:32, 33).

When Jesus ascended, He did not cease to be our Brother. In the text for today, notice the emphasis that Jesus placed upon God as our common Father. Neither did Jesus surrender His humanity when He ascended. Rather, He glorified humanity and made it possible for His presence to be felt by Christians at all times and in all parts of the world. “Christ in you” is still “the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

What phase of Jesus’ ministry opened after His ascension? (See Rom. 8:34.)

When Stephen, about to die, looked up at the opening heavens “and saw the glory of God” (Acts 7:55), he also saw “the Son of man standing on the right hand of God” (verse 56).

Since His ascension, our Lord has been seated (in the sense of enthroned) and standing at God’s right hand (in the sense of position or authority) in His ministry as Intercessor. As the great High Priest of the more perfect tabernacle, He has been carrying out His roles represented by the daily and yearly ministries of the earthly tabernacle. He has been applying the benefits of His once-for-all sacrifice to penitent sinners.

Further Study: Eph. 4:8-12; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 829-835

The Glory of Man

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Isa. 43:7).

In Isaiah’s words to Israel is a truth for all mankind. It matters greatly what we believe about God’s purpose in creating us. In fact, this belief is closely wrapped up with its companion thought—what we believe about God.

Those who view God as a super magician might emphasize the creative act itself—like pulling a rabbit out of a hat. Or some scientists might see man’s development as a laboratory experiment. In some minds God might have wound up the human machine and then left it to run down.

Did God create me in order to save me, or did He have an even wider purpose? It is doubtful we can understand the whole truth on this, but we can discover some ideas in regard to our role in God’s great plan. Seven short words tell us much: “I have created him for my glory.” This simple yet profound statement comprehends power, purpose, love, promise, the dignity of man, and ultimate success.

Stirring political speeches sound out in one country and then another. The big question is, Can words of promise become fulfillment? The Hebrew language uses one word, *dabar*, to denote “word” and the “act” that fulfills that word. In much of our experience words die as words. Not so with God, who “spake, and it was done”; who “commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:9).

God will also accomplish His word in our lives. His promises are sure. True to His unchangeableness, God is steadfast in purpose; He creates and He upholds. God chooses to work out His salvation plan through human beings, although He could have chosen angels to preach the gospel.

Indeed the enemy must be baffled to discover that strength can come out of seeming weakness. A defeat does not necessarily deny final victory. Jesus set the example of self-sacrificing love when He chose to pitch His tent beside the poor and the outcast. His followers too will catch the spirit of ministry, showing to the inhabitants of the unseen worlds the glory of God—the abiding principles of God’s nature and kingdom.

**Part 1
MARKED
FOR GLORY**

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:5, 6).

Several important facts emerge from an analysis of our text for today: (1) God is sovereign; He works according to the good pleasure of His will. (2) God wants to adopt His children into full sonship, through the merits of Jesus' full sonship. (3) His merciful provision is “to the praise of the glory of his grace” (verse 6). (4) God is able, by His grace, to justify (count and treat as righteous) His erring children.

In this brief lesson we will be able only to touch on the showing forth of God's glory before the inhabitants of the universe.

What larger plan than the salvation of men does God have in redemption? 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 12:22, 23; Col. 1:20.

“The plan of redemption had a yet broader and deeper scope than the salvation of man. It was not for this alone that Christ came to earth; it was not merely that the inhabitants of this little world might regard the law of God as it should be regarded; but it was to vindicate the character of God before the universe. To this result of His great sacrifice—its influence upon the intelligences of other worlds, as well as upon man—the Saviour looked forward when just before His crucifixion He said: ‘Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.’ John 12:31, 32.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 68, 69.

Although God's ultimate purpose does not end with the salvation of man, what is its central focus?

Those who see themselves as the nucleus of the prophesied “remnant” people of God will be foremost in exalting the cross. At that cross the means was provided for restoring sinners to joyful harmony with God's law of love—the Ten Commandments.

“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. Those who in the strength of Christ overcome the great enemy of God and man, will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above the angels who have never fallen.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 242.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 34-36

Part 2
A LIGHT TO
THE NATIONS

What bearing did the call of Israel have on the glory of God?

“Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee” (Isa. 55:5).

The universal acknowledgment of the justice of God’s dealings begins when a human being glorifies God in his or her own daily living. God had in mind that Israel should do this for the Gentiles. “So far as it was of divine institution, the entire system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 211. Likewise, if God is ever to be glorified in the remnant church of the last days, it will be because the persons in that church reflect the love of God and the power of the cross in every aspect of their lives.

Christ is the promised Seed of David, and “if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29). If we are ever tempted to long for the great privileges that were Israel’s, we should pause to think of the greater privileges that are ours.

The promises too are ours. Read the following passage, substituting for the word “glory” the words “character” and “approval”: “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the glory of the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee” (Isa. 60:1, 2).

Do my motives, my decisions, my way of life, my allocation of time, and my use of resources reflect the image of Christ? Do they reveal that, through Christ’s merits, I am a child of God? Only when, by the grace of Christ and the power of His blood, such evidences of the Spirit’s indwelling are seen can it be said that “the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

What does the restoration of the Sabbath to its rightful place have to do with God’s glory?

Read Isaiah 56:1-8 and discover what goals God had for Sabbath keeping. Some apply the word “Jewish” to the Sabbath, but never once is it so described in Scripture. “Jewish” is once applied to “fables” but never to the Sabbath or to God’s law. (See Titus 1:14.) The Sabbath, which God calls “my holy day” (Isa. 58:13), is for all men of all races and nationalities.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 729

Part 3

THE PURPOSE ESTABLISHED

What was the purpose of God's creation of this earth?

“This is what the Lord says—
he who created the heavens,
he is God;
he who fashioned and made the earth,
he founded it;
he did not create it to be empty,
but formed it to be inhabited—
he says:
‘I am the Lord,
and there is no other’ ” (Isa. 45:18, NIV).

God did not create the earth only to forsake it to its own ways. His will concerning it is now being established. God's purpose has to do with His people (see Isa. 43:7). The earth, and all it contains, is a vehicle as it were—a means to an end or goal.

God might have stopped with the creation of a lovely world, as seen in Eden. Animals, not people, might have wandered about in a harmless and safe atmosphere. Sin could never have entered then, for animals can neither sin, nor can they be sorry (in a moral sense) for any misdeed. That mysterious and convenient word “instinct” could have ruled every action, and there could never have been a fall.

What ingredient would have been lacking in Eden had not human beings been created? Gen. 1:26-28.

Eden could still have been admired. “The hills, mountains, and very beautiful plains were adorned with plants and flowers and tall, majestic trees of every description, which were many times larger and much more beautiful than trees now are. The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God.”—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 20.

Without the human family, however, this world would have been incomplete. No one reflecting the noble character of God would have been there.

“While everything in nature is governed by natural laws, man alone, of all that inhabits the earth, is amenable to moral law. To man, the crowning work of creation, God has given power to understand His requirements, to comprehend the justice and beneficence of His law, and its sacred claims upon him; and of man unswerving obedience is required.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

Further Study: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 674, 675

Part 4
SHOW FORTH
GOD'S PRAISE

What words spoken of Israel indicate God's purpose for all His children?

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise" (Isa. 43:21).

Throughout the Bible, God's purpose for His people is not only stated—it is explained, and then cooperation is solicited. We are "called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). That purpose is that in our brief walk upon earth we may, by the grace of Christ, live in joyous obedience to God's will and show forth His praise.

Paul goes on to show that God's calling is based upon His foreknowledge. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).

To some minds, God's foreknowledge means the end of human freedom; it means that a person's actions are all fixed, perhaps in the genes, and that life unfolds independently of one's free will. Such a belief completely denies God's purpose as stated in our text for today. We can show forth no praise if we are "programmed." Some people would be God's elect, while others, by making contrary "choices" or by neglect of the right choice, would find themselves in another camp. A belief in predestination would make God responsible for the choices that would decide individual human destinies.

What is the level of our dependence upon Christ if our lives are to bring glory to God? Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:17.

In the church of the Middle Ages it was noticed that some people seemed unable to "bring forth . . . fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8). To overcome this, a system called supererogation was invented whereby the excess of good works on someone's part could be credited to someone else to shore up his bad record.

Can a just God rightfully transfer from one human life (that of Christ) to another (that of man) the good record needed for salvation?

God forgives the sins that Jesus bore for us and for which He pleads His blood. He beholds the victory wrought by Jesus which we have claimed. This victory does not stand merely as a ledger entry or a judicial verdict. After Christ's victory on Calvary came the glorious resurrection. And "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

Further Study: Psalm 113; *Steps to Christ*, "The Test of Discipleship," p. 57; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 382

Part 5
AN HONOR-
ABLE PEOPLE

According to His gracious word to Israel, on what basis are God's people honored?

“Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life” (Isa. 43:4).

It was God's purpose that Israel, as a nation, should bring honor to His name (Isa. 43:7, 21). The same is true with His people today. The human search for honor is ceaseless and often concerns wealth and position. These factors can be used to honorable ends, but elevation for any other cause than worthiness is a sham and a fraud. In our times masks of prominent leaders in many nations are being snatched away, revealing, in some cases, a condition of misplaced trust.

Unless the love of God can be detected in a Christian's daily dealings, there is really no basis for honor. Even if they can neither define nor explain it, the people of the world should sense that something is special about those who bear Christ's name.

Does God arbitrarily honor some and degrade others? Acts 10:34, 35.

Very few people in this world know what it is to get a fair deal. Many children are spurned by their “busy” parents. And parents often get little honor from their ambitious children. Employees are often unappreciated, and many executives who look forward to success are struck down while on the verge of honor. We are assured that in God's plan honor will not be misplaced or be lacking.

How do motives weigh with God? (See 1 Sam. 16:7.)

“The approval of the Master is not given because of the greatness of the work performed, because many things have been gained, but because of the fidelity in even a few things. It is not the great results we attain, but the motives from which we act, that weigh with God. He prizes goodness and faithfulness more than the greatness of the work accomplished.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 510, 511.

God does not give us His grace on the basis of our merit. Our obedience is also by His grace: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

What effect can good works have on non-Christians? 1 Peter 2:12.

Further Study: *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 481

Part 6
"WALK
IN NEWNESS
OF LIFE"

What place does resurrection power have in enabling man to seek the glory of God?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). (Read also verses 1-11 for the setting.)

Right in the heart of our lessons for this quarter lies one of the great "glory of God" passages of Scripture. The apostle Paul has contributed scores of references to the glory of God. So we are not dealing with a minor biblical idea in our present studies. The glory of God was supreme in all of Paul's thinking and living.

If we read the surrounding texts—the context—and note other key passages from Paul, "the glory of God" refers to His excellence, His power, the perfection of His character. It is God's power as shown in the resurrection of Christ that is brought forward. (See Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 13:4; Eph. 1:19, 20.)

What other resurrection event was a revelation of the "glory of God"? John 11:40.

The power by which Jesus rose from the dead was the power by which He raised others and will finally raise the righteous dead. (See 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.) In the meantime, there is a life to be lived now—the "walk in newness of life."

What is the relationship of "the walk in newness of life" to a baptized believer's daily living?

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1, 2). Following this advice, we will be fulfilling Jesus' prayer for us, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 98, 99.

Further Study: 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 2:14; *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 133

Restoring Lost Glory

**“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”
(1 Peter 2:5).**

Before the enlightened minds and eyes of earth, God’s plan for the world and for His people is daily unfolding. To create a world, God used His word: “He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:9). But Creation was only the beginning of the project. The special people to inhabit the world made new are also established by God. Like a building, the Bible says they are being erected, stone by stone, upon Christ, the Chief Cornerstone. Every stone is precious and will shine forth as can no other in that day when the completed structure will be on display.

Not because of the great things God’s people have done are they valuable to Him. It is rather because of the great work Christ has done for them. Believers, in turn, permit God to work in them. Nothing has been left unprovided for. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19).

In drawing them to Himself, God now points to them as His friends. He wants them to show themselves the friends of others as part of the “spiritual sacrifices” he calls them to offer. Small and insignificant though they may feel themselves to be in the world, they are very much a part of God’s plan. Each Christian is a “chosen vessel” to carry the truth to others and to bring the light of life to its full and final display.

Gentleness and tenderness, far from being negative attributes, are the very spirit of God’s kingdom. To “rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep” (Rom. 12:15) is not a sign of weakness.

The worldling may judge that the world owes him something, but the one who has tasted of the Spirit of Christ will, like Paul, consider himself a debtor to all men.

Part 1
GLORY ABOVE
THE HEAVENS

“O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens” (Ps. 8:1).

These opening lines of the first of the group of nature psalms are repeated at its close. (See Psalms 19, 29, 104, etc.) This envelope device suggests the literary beauty of this gem.

God’s glory—whether as power, character, or majesty—is presented as “above the heavens.” The amazing thing, therefore, is that God has drawn man into sovereignty with Himself over the rest of creation (see verses 6-8). Although God’s created works are so vast and intricate that a man may feel small, he is crowned with glory and honor (see verse 5). God’s glory has never been tarnished or diminished, but redeemed man can have a part in demonstrating that fact to the universe.

If God possesses so much glory (above the heavens), why introduce the passages about “babes and sucklings” (verse 2)?

God’s “strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9), and He “hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Cor. 1:27).

Man, when he was created, was pronounced “good,” but man sold out his dominion to the enemy. To all appearances the war is lost—except for a Babe in Bethlehem, eleven vacillating disciples, and a host of weak people who through the ages have used their free will to invite Jesus into their hearts and lives. The glory that is “above the heavens” will be augmented by honor and praise from the lips of “babes.”

Regard Psalm 8 as a promise. In both the first and the last verses is an assurance that we are valuable to God in hastening that day when “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14).

“I see nothing wherein man should be praised or glorified. I see no reason why the opinions of worldly-wise men and so-called great men should be trusted in and exalted.

“. . . Let us choose to be taught by Him who created the heavens and the earth.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 449.

Further Study: Psalms 19 and 29; *Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 376, 377

Part 2
THE GENTLE
PEOPLE

What kind of people will inhabit God's glorious kingdom?

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

“The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Ps. 37:11).

People are often heard to remark that the meek are not in charge of the world today. It might also be true that not all meek people are found in churches and that not all who go to church are meek. Yet the meek, the gentle, the humble, the courteous, and the considerate are the kind of people who are needed today.

“The value of our work does not consist in making a loud noise in the world, in being zealous, eager, and active in our own strength. . . . We should continually pray to God to increase our strength to make us strong in His strength, to kindle in our hearts the flame of divine love. The cause of God is best advanced by those who are meek and lowly in heart.”—*Evangelism*, p. 631.

Can meekness characterize a person in all aspects of life, even when being mistreated? Rom. 12:17-19.

“A meek and quiet spirit must be cherished. Carry Christ's meekness with you in all your labors. . . . If we have the truth, we can afford to be calm and unexcited. Our language should be modest and elevated. . . . As the cloud of witnesses look upon a man reflecting the image of Christ, they will realize that he is surrounded by a pleasant atmosphere. The world will see that amid the storms of abuse he stands unmoved, like the lofty cedar. That man is one of God's heroes. He has overcome himself.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 348.

In the witness of Daniel in the Babylonian capital, how did meekness combine with wisdom? (See Dan. 5:13-17.)

“Daniel possessed the grace of genuine meekness. He was true, firm, and noble. He sought to live at peace with all, while he was unbending as the lofty cedar wherever principle was involved. In everything that did not come in collision with his allegiance to God, he was respectful and obedient to those who had authority over him; but he had so high a sense of the claims of God that the requirements of earthly rulers were held subordinate. He would not be induced by any selfish consideration to swerve from his duty.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 78, 79.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 218, 219

Part 3
WHITE
GARMENTS

As represented in the experience of Joshua, the high priest, how did Satan try to defeat God's restoration plan?

“He shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire: Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by” (Zech. 3:1-5).

Joshua the high priest stands as the representative of God's faithful people. The angel represents Christ, whom Satan opposes. As prince of this world (see John 14:30), Satan claims every inhabitant as his own subject. He points to the filthy garments of the high priest as proof that God's commandments cannot be obeyed. But Jesus, in His humanity, did obey them. He can rightfully impute that character to those whom He chooses and who choose Him as Lord. As for the works of Joshua himself, they proved to be nonmeritorious—what mattered was the righteousness of Christ. And Christ is waiting to bestow on His submissive children that which they seek but can never possibly earn.

How do I see myself in the experience of Joshua?

“A Change of Raiment.— . . . ‘And he answered [the accusing charge of Satan] and spake unto those [angels] that stood before him [to do His bidding], saying, Take away the filthy garments from him.’ I will blot out his transgressions. I will cover his sins. I will impute to him My righteousness. . . .

“The filthy garments are removed; for Christ says, ‘I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.’ The iniquity is transferred to the innocent, the pure, the holy Son of God; and man, all undeserving, stands before the Lord cleansed from all unrighteousness, and clothed with the imputed righteousness of Christ. . . .”

“And Christ does more than this for them: [Zech. 3:5 quoted].

“This is the honor that God will bestow on those who are clothed with the garments of Christ's righteousness. With such encouragement as this, how can men continue in sin? How can they grieve the heart of Christ?”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1178.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 471-476

Part 4 How can we all be used in God's plan of reconciling alienated people?
MAKING FRIENDS FOR GOD

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt. 5:9).

Reconcilers are God's most effective agents. People will take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. As children of God, they will represent the principles of the heavenly household.

To what lengths did Paul go in order to spread the gospel? 1 Cor. 9:19-22.

Did Paul have to deny Christ in order to establish rapport with his own people? No, he tactfully introduced Christ, also a Jew, as the expected Messiah. He showed that the ancient prophets spoke of the Seed of David yet to come. He sought a bridge to friendship.

“You should get rid of your cold, frozen formality as soon as possible. You need to cultivate feelings of tenderness and friendliness in your everyday life. You should exhibit true courtesy and Christian politeness. The heart that really loves Jesus loves those for whom He died.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 466.

How can the theme of friendship harmonize with James 4:4: “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?”

James is here speaking of a yearning for worldly pleasures that are not in harmony with the spirit of Christ's kingdom. He echoes the words of Jesus, “No man can serve two masters” (Matt. 6:24). One can be friendly with non-Christians without espousing their worldly principles.

Jesus said, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you” (John 13:34). In what respect was this commandment new?

“To love as Christ loved means to manifest unselfishness at all times and in all places. . . .

“Christ's love is deep and earnest, flowing like an irrepressible stream to all who will accept it. There is no selfishness in His love. If this heaven-born love is an abiding principle in the heart, it will make itself known . . . to all with whom we come in contact.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 101.

Further Study: John 15:15-17; *Gospel Workers*, pp. 117-119

**Part 5
THE ROLE OF
GOD'S WORD**

“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. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

The Bible is the only book in the world that really faces up to man's true condition and directs us to the remedy for sin. Restoring the glory (character) of God in sinful man is the burden of the Written Word of God.

Many passages of the Bible may well be memorized and repeated, but knowledge in words can never approximate knowledge of the Word made flesh. Here is essential knowledge. The forgiveness of sin is a personal meeting with Christ our Substitute and Surety. By a faith stronger than sight we follow our High Priest into the heavenly sanctuary. “It is those who by faith follow Jesus in the great work of atonement who receive the benefits of His mediation in their behalf, while those who reject the light which brings to view this ministration are not benefited thereby.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 430.

To what degree is a book as ancient as the Bible relevant to modern life? (Compare Dan. 12:4, 8, 13 with Rev. 22:10, 18, 19.)

“The truths thus revealed [through the various writers of Scripture] unite to form a perfect whole, adapted to meet the wants of men in all circumstances and experiences of life.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 26.

Have all the truths of the Bible been discovered? (Compare 1 Peter 1:10-13 with 2 Peter 1:19.)

Those who seek to discover truths for themselves, rather than to receive them packaged on Sabbath, will find in the Bible an inexhaustible mine.

“There are veins of truth yet to be discovered, but spiritual things are spiritually discerned.”—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 437.

The supreme goal of Bible study is to have the mind and heart open to God. It is His Word. It is as truly His personal message to each of us as though we could hear His voice.

“It is Satan's studied plan so to absorb and engage the mind that God's great Guidebook shall not be regarded as the Book of books and that the sinner shall not be led from the path of transgression into the path of obedience.”—*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 442.

Further Study: *Counsels to Teachers*, pp. 421-430

**Part 6
MANKIND
RECLAIMED**

What words concerning ancient Babylon give promise of the final restoration of God's rule over the earth?

"The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

We have long used these words (and parallel phrases in Isaiah 11:9 and Numbers 14:20, 21) to paint a picture. (We have even made them a declaration of faith in some traditional hymns about the future.) We see in them the final triumph of righteousness in the whole earth. Actually the words dealt with ancient Babylon, but could have a broader fulfillment at the end of time.

When we speak of the reclaiming of mankind, we are talking about the ultimate result of the plan of redemption. Sin and sinners will have brought destruction on themselves, and only the redeemed remain. (See Rev. 20:7-9.)

What effect will the bowing of every knee have upon the glory of God? Phil. 2:9-11. (Read also verses 5-8.)

There is a sense in which God's glory is fixed and absolute. God differs from man because He does not change. But such is the love of God that the destiny of every soul will be to God's ultimate glory (in terms of vindication of His character and government).

What value does God place upon a human soul? Eze. 18:4; Isa. 53:11.

"The Saviour longs to manifest His grace and stamp His character on the whole world. It is His purchased possession, and He desires to make men free, and pure, and holy. Though Satan worked to hinder this purpose, yet through the blood shed for the world there are triumphs to be achieved that will bring glory to God and the Lamb. . . . All the nations of the earth shall hear the gospel of His grace. Not all will receive His grace; but 'a seed shall serve Him; and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.'"—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 827, 828.

"Our little world . . . will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

Further Study: John 7:16-18

The Race to Glory

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

In Paul’s day athletic contests had a regular place in Corinthian life, and Paul used them for effective illustration. He knew that the impeding garments permitted in training must be laid aside for the race itself and that the body, through control of appetite and careful training, must be built up to peak condition. Just as a runner might set his sights on a distant goal or city, the candidate for the New Jerusalem will make that goal real.

Paul goes so far as to say, “Our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20)—our manner of running, our whole way of life, is pointed toward heaven. Never for an instant will the dedicated runner forget it.

All about us are strivers—some even fall into the category known as “workaholics”—addicts of work. But to what end? To achieve great fame in the world of sports, for instance, young men and young women risk bodily injury and possibly even death itself. And should they ever reach the top, their career might last a few years. Is it really worth it all? There is some satisfaction, no doubt, in hearing the cheers of the crowds and seeing one’s name in the headlines, but this is poor comfort in comparison with the glory that endures.

Even the strivers after otherwise worthy goals will meet great disappointments unless they also achieve a strong grasp on eternal matters.

In the Christian race all can win if they will, by the grace of Christ persisting to the end. As for the rewards, the real treasure is measured in the gold of character.

Part 1 “Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God,
JUST MEN . . . to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are
MADE PERFECT written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of
just men made perfect”(Heb. 12:22, 23).

The first 11 chapters of Hebrews take us on a tour, as it were, beginning with the role of Jesus Christ in the creation of the worlds. As the tour moves along, the great scenes concerning redemption are introduced. Jesus is always the supreme figure because of His great sacrifice and His mediation. These scenes are to be held as a part of our experience, and we are not to let them slip. In chapter 11 attention is turned to people who lived lives of faith, lives of faithful deeds. And with chapter 12 we as Christians are introduced into the race toward the New Jerusalem. The heroes of old are pictured as sitting in an arena, urging us on and encouraging us to finish well. (See Heb. 12:1, 2.)

(The “spirits” in today’s text are not some conscious part of man that can exist apart from the body. The language is figurative of the saints who *will* assemble before God’s throne.) Whether we like it or not, we must live our lives in the light of those who have lived before us. We may also contemplate those who are yet to come on the scene.

In the text for today, what is meant by “just”?

The words *just* and *righteous* are really the same word in the Bible, whether in the Hebrew or the Greek language. “Paths of righteousness” (Ps. 23:3) are right paths, paths that are good for one’s feet, paths that exemplify what paths ought to be.

When a person accepts the righteousness of Christ, he accepts the merits of Christ’s life of complete obedience to the Father’s will. This act places him where God sees him and counts him righteous. He treats him as righteous, just. By contrast, “all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags” (Isa. 64:6).

Yet the story does not stop here. As God counts the believers righteous, He also implants within them a new spirit. (See Eze. 36:25-27.) Others looking on take “knowledge of them” (Acts 4:13), recognizing a quality of life that people cannot achieve by themselves.

Not only is the righteousness counted to us a necessary part of God’s plan, but also the continued fostering and receiving of this righteousness. Both will be seen in the final demonstration of God’s glory.

To whom does the fruit belong that is borne by the branches of the “true vine”? (See John 15.)

Further Study: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 532, 533

Part 2
EXAMPLE

“What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:20-22).

“Imitation” can be a negative word, smacking of the fake and the false. But it is also a very good word when it is used of following Jesus, for anyone who imitates Jesus can never be led astray. (See 1 Cor. 4:16; 1 Thess. 1:6 where the word *imitator* is used in the original language.) Much of the New Testament is an enlargement of Jesus’ words, “Follow Me.”

“He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Ps. 23:3). God’s name, His character, is being challenged. We are delegated to declare to the world what God is like. Many non-Christians operate from humanitarian or religious motives which resemble Christian motivations. They do this under cruel trial and with a view to the future. But the true follower of Christ will react from love when under cruel trial and will forego present advantages for an unfading crown of glory.

In every aspect of life our example becomes a witness for or against Christ. In some parts of the world where Christianity is a minority faith, the Adventist recognition of biblical health principles and practices often opens doors of goodwill to us.

What should we do if we are engaged in a business in which it is impossible to follow the Christian way? (Consider Matt. 9:9; Acts 19:18, 19.)

“If any are engaged in business where they cannot advance in the divine life and perfect holiness in the fear of God, they should change to a business in which they can have Jesus with them every hour.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 234.

Why is example better than good advice?

“When a crisis comes in the life of any soul, and you attempt to give counsel or admonition, your words will have only the weight of influence for good that your own example and spirit have gained for you. You must *be* good before you can *do* good.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 127, 128. (Original emphasis.)

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 274-287

**Part 3
SINGleness
OF PURPOSE**

“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” (Phil. 3:13, 14).

“He who would build up a strong, symmetrical character, he who would be a well-balanced Christian, must give all and do all for Christ; for the Redeemer will not accept divided service. . . .

“Paul did many things. From the time that he gave his allegiance to Christ, his life was filled with untiring service. . . . But in all the busy activities of his life, Paul never lost sight of one great purpose—to press toward the prize of his high calling.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 483, 484.

What was the theme of Paul’s one great purpose? Phil. 1:21.

“To exalt the cross of Calvary—this was the all-absorbing motive that inspired his words and acts.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 484.

“What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ” (Phil. 3:7).

In the battle with sin, by what means is victory assured? 1 John 5:4.

“God will do great things for His people when they put their entire trust in Him.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 140.

How important it is in the race for eternal life that we look “unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2)! Satan’s big deception may simply be to divert our attention from essential prayer and Bible study, thus preoccupying our interests and thoughts to the exclusion of that which would advance God’s kingdom. Today, in many parts of the world, time-consuming entertainment devices are invading our homes in increasing numbers. The challenge to our best use of time is great.

How might the length of human probation be related to singleness of purpose?

“God has most graciously granted us a probation in which to prepare for the test which will be brought upon us. Every advantage is given us through the mediation of Christ. If the human agent will study the word, he will see that every facility has been freely provided for those who are seeking to be overcomers.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 452.

Further Study: *Messages to Young People*, pp. 105, 369

**Part 4
RENEWING
THE MIND**

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil. 4:8).

“Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:2).

Ask almost any Olympic athlete how he or she won distinction and you get one answer: the mind was set to achieve.

The kind of food we eat daily affects in some way every tissue of our body. The same rule applies to the mind: we are what we think. Must we then go into a cloister in solitude and perform penance in order to stifle our fleshly urges? Those who have done so may tell you that solitude and idleness can be the devil’s tools.

What is recommended for mind renewal? 1 Peter 1:13-15.

“As God is pure in His sphere, so man is to be pure in his. And he will be pure if Christ is formed within, the hope of glory; for he will imitate Christ’s life and reflect His character.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 366.

“Christ came to change the current of his [man’s] thoughts and affections.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 196.

What did Jesus intend when He told us to enter into our closet and shut the door? (See Matt. 6:6.)

A Seventh-day Adventist dentist called to military service was deeply troubled over the impact the perpetual cursing and filthy talk around him made upon his mind and memory. In spite of his wishes this barrage coursed through his mind when he chose to pray or study. What would be your advice to one in such a situation?

Is the Christian who follows Paul’s counsel (in Phil. 4:8) really deprived of anything worthwhile?

“We want the transforming grace of God to take right hold of our thinking powers. We may think evil, we may continue to keep our minds upon objectionable things, but what does this do for us? It conforms our entire experience to that which we are looking upon. But by beholding Jesus we are changed into His likeness.”—Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 670.

Further Study: Eph. 4:17-24; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 434, 435

Part 5
STRENGTH
FOR THE
CONTEST

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you [behave] like men, be strong” (1 Cor. 16:13).

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (Eph. 6:10).

At no point in the race can the Christian pause and say, “I am strong.” Paul went a step farther, with the comment, “When I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor. 12:10). But let us never forget that Paul had the tremendous strength of a tested faith. He could declare, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil 4:13). This strengthening, however, was not for his tomorrows—only for his todays. Moses said, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be” (Deut. 33:25).

“No amount of past experience will suffice for the present nor strengthen us to overcome the difficulties in our path. We must have new grace and fresh strength daily in order to be victorious.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 541.

“By His grace we may bear all the burdens of the present and perform its duties. But many are weighed down by the anticipation of future troubles. They are constantly seeking to bring tomorrow’s burdens into today. Thus a large share of all their trials are imaginary. For these, Jesus has made no provision. He promises grace only for the day.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 200.

What will enable us to withstand the trials which will come upon the remnant church? (See 1 John 5:4.)

Under the trials and difficulties which have already come upon God’s people in many countries, we may wonder what the future holds. The greatest comfort lies in knowing that the future is also in God’s hands. The faith and courage gained in the place of prayer and in the conflicts of the past will help to keep the believer’s lifeline open to Christ in the final days of tribulation.

“Because man fallen could not overcome Satan with his human strength, Christ came from the royal courts of heaven to help him with His human and divine strength combined. . . . He obtains for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them to gain for themselves, that in His name they may overcome the temptations of Satan.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 279.

“Brethren, I intreat you to move with an eye single to the glory of God. Let His power be your dependence, His grace your strength.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 561.

Further Study: Prov. 18:10; *Education*, pp. 295-297

Part 6 COURAGEOUS IN DEATH

“This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God” (John 21:19).

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Ps. 116:15).

Jesus could look into the future and see that after Peter’s effective ministry of the gospel he would have to lay down his life, and that in so doing he would bear an effective witness before the waiting universe, bringing glory to God.

When death comes, what makes the grief of believers different from that of the race in general? 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

Grief is the common lot of mankind in the wake of death. The separation that comes touches all, even when a faithful witness like Peter brings glory to God by the manner of his death. But the hope and assurance of the resurrection to eternal life robs death of its sting.

In what spirit should the Christian meet death? (Consider Acts 7:54-60.)

“The Christian who manifests patience and cheerfulness under bereavement and suffering, who meets even death itself with the peace and calmness of an unwavering faith, may accomplish for the gospel more than he would have effected by a long life of faithful labor. Often when the servant of God is withdrawn from active duty, the mysterious providence which our shortsighted vision would lament is designed by God to accomplish a work that otherwise would never have been done.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 465.

In the Christian’s experience, what would be worse than death?

“To pursue a course of deviation from the purposes of God, in the smallest degree, would be more grievous than hunger or death.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1083.

“The season of distress before God’s people will call for a faith that will not falter. His children must make it manifest that He is the only object of their worship, and that no consideration, not even that of life itself, can induce them to make the least concession to false worship. . . . Truth will be obeyed though the result be imprisonment or exile or death.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 512, 513.

Further Study: 2 Tim. 4:6-8; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 100-102

Prayer for Glory

“It came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1).

“In a life wholly devoted to the good of others, the Saviour found it necessary to turn aside from ceaseless activity and contact with human needs, to seek retirement and unbroken communion with His Father.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 58.

In this lesson we wish to consider the intercessory prayer of Jesus as recorded in John 17. Although Jesus is about to experience crucifixion and death, His greatest burden is for His disciples and for the completion, through them and all later Christians, of the work of revealing God to the world.

The words *glory*, *glorify*, and *glorified* are used by Jesus eight times in His prayer. In this chapter the real meaning of glory becomes apparent. The Father dwells in glory that flows from His perfect character and infinite power. Although fiery brightness surrounds Him and a rainbow encircles His throne, it is the glory of His character of love and goodness that outshines all. In every way He is worthy of our honor, praise, approval, and acclamation. These accompanying elements are never absent. He is the “King of glory,” and we give glory to Him.

What astounds us is that although Jesus shared the Father’s glory, yet He was not content to see one little lamb go astray. His equality with God was not the goal to be grasped and hoarded. The glory of self-sacrificing love could better be displayed to the universe in a darkness more dense than midnight—the heavy gloom of Gethsemane and Calvary.

The character of God is knit with that of the Son. Because Jesus is representative man, our Elder Brother, we have a great share in the Father’s love. God loved us in Christ before the foundation of the world. That same love is to work in and through us for a final demonstration to the universe of the glory of God’s character.

The prayer of Jesus may be divided into the following parts: (1) for Himself, that the Father’s glory might be seen in Him; (2) for His disciples, that they might reflect the gleams of glory from above; (3) for the larger group of followers that should result from the apostles’ witness; (4) for the reunited and harmonious universe.

Part 1
FOR HIMSELF

“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee”(John 17:1).

The danger is that we may define too narrowly the glory which is a recurring subject in this selfless prayer. With what lay just before Him, Jesus would be pleading for the support of His Father's presence and power; He would yearn for the sense of the Father's approval of His work now closing; He would ask for the assurance of restoration to His oneness with the Father in His glory; He would yearn for strength to continue to reveal the Father's character to the final moment of life.

Not all prayers for oneself should be regarded as selfish. A lifeguard who is about to plunge into a raging sea to rescue a disobedient swimmer might pray for wisdom and strength to save the life.

In the case of the world that had gone astray, it was not wind and weather that were the danger, for nature could cooperate with its Creator. But the deliberate and constant plottings of Satan and his agents followed Jesus throughout His earthly life.

“As the world's Redeemer, Christ was constantly confronted with apparent failure. He, the messenger of mercy to the world, seemed to do little of the work He longed to do in uplifting and saving. Satanic influences were constantly working to oppose His way. But He would not be discouraged.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 678.

Was Christ's life-saving project for His enemies, for His friends, or for both? Rom. 5:8.

The tendency of the human heart is to love those who love us. But though the ninety and nine sheep in the flock were indeed precious to Jesus, that rebel who insisted on destroying himself or herself moved the heart of the Rescuer. He came to endure the decree of Herod, the temptation in the wilderness, the constant harassment of the church people of His day, and the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary. Why? For the greater joy in heaven. (See Luke 15:10.)

What effect does our salvation have on the glory of God? (Compare John 17:1, 4, 19, 22, 26.)

We have noted earlier that God's attributes and character are absolute. They cannot be added to, but understanding of His glory can be.

Further Study: *The Desire of Ages*, p. 679

Part 2
FOR THE
DISCIPLES

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them” (John 17:9, 10).

Those for whom Jesus was praying would soon turn their backs upon Him. Yet He said, “I am glorified in them”—in Peter who would soon deny his Lord with an oath, and in those who set their hopes upon an earthly kingdom and positions of prominence in it.

Psychologists tell us that older people and parents should not be surprised at what young people may say or do at a given time. They are in the process of developing, and it is not the occasional statement or side step that determines their destiny, but rather the tendency of the life.

Jesus could see in His little flock the showing forth of glory. He knew that through this nucleus the Holy Spirit would enlighten the world and even change the universe.

What does the picture used by Jesus tell you about the security of the tie that binds you to Him? John 10:27-29.

“By His life and 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. . . .

“ . . . The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 25, 26.

Liberal scholars often remark concerning the name “Immanuel” (see Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23) that Jesus was never really called by that name during His earthly sojourn. This, they say, puts a cloud on the doctrines of the virgin birth and the incarnation. But one does not have to read far in John 17 to detect not only “God with us,” but “God in us.”

“To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with divinity, is the work of redemption.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 251.

Further Study: *The Desire of Ages*, p. 680

Part 3
HE GUARDS
HIS OWN

With what earnest pleading did Jesus express concern for His own? How is His concern reflected in us?

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition” (John 17:11, 12).

Jesus’ relationship to His disciples might well be likened to that of a nurse to a child. Gentleness and carefulness should likewise characterize all our dealings with one another. Only thus can we follow the Christ way.

Paul said of his dealings with the Thessalonians, “We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children” (1 Thess. 2:7). How many times have we permitted our “clumsy hands” to “rend quivering heartstrings”? How often have we perhaps by a cold, legalistic approach to people, driven them over to the charismatics and others, there to feel they have found a warmth and an understanding that we failed to give?

We do have to call sin by its right name, and we all should heed Paul’s counsel to “reprove, rebuke, exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2). However, we are to do this with “all longsuffering.” Only thus can we represent Jesus aright and bring glory to His name—that glory for which He prayed.

In fulfillment of Christ’s mission, where are His followers to find their power? Acts 1:8; John 16:13, 14.

The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus when He dwells in our hearts. He will dwell in our hearts through God’s instruction to us: “He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:14). Then we must become listeners and learners. How can sinners bring glory to God better than to reveal the working of His grace in the heart and the power of His Spirit in the life.

With respect to the text of the day, think of Christ’s grief over Judas’s rejection of Him.

In this part of His prayer (John 17:11, 12) Jesus had special reference to the Twelve, the “little flock” whom He had especially trained. Of these, Judas was lost. But think of the value that Jesus placed upon the eleven who were true. Jesus placed the success of His mission upon eleven men empowered by the Spirit. Today we are called to stand in that same light, reflecting the glory of God to the world.

Further Study: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 646, 647

Part 4
FOR THE
WORLD

What was Jesus' goal for the whole world?

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:20-22).

Those of us who read these lines did not have the privilege of being numbered with the twelve disciples. But we are not left out in the cold; we are among “them also which shall believe.” Moreover, out there—next door, perhaps in the next village, or perhaps half a world away—there are more souls to bring, “other sheep” that are “not of this fold” (John 10:16). Think of the glory (in the sense of praise and honor) that can be added to the One “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

“Christians are set as light bearers on the way to heaven. They are to reflect to the world the light shining upon them from Christ. Their life and character should be such that through them others will get a right conception of Christ and of His service.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 115.

What is the place of joy if the Christian is to be a manifestation of Christ? (See Phil. 4:4.)

At the birth of Jesus the angel said, “I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people” (Luke 2:10). But do Christians really project a joyful image to those about them?

“If we do represent Christ, we shall make His service appear attractive, as it really is. Christians who gather up gloom and sadness to their souls, and murmur and complain, are giving to others a false representation of God and the Christian life. They give the impression that God is not pleased to have His children happy, and in this they bear false witness against our heavenly Father.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 116.

How true of me are the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:14?

“Salvation is like the sunshine. It belongs to the whole world. The religion of the Bible is . . . to sanctify the daily life, to manifest itself in every business transaction and in all our social relations.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 307.

Further Study: All references to the “world” in the Gospel of John

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word” (John 17:6).

So well did Jesus manifest the Father to the world, and especially to the disciples, that He could say, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). So central was the manifestation of God in the plan of salvation that Jesus could say, “I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4).

Some children find it hard to obey the fifth commandment, “Honour thy father and thy mother” (Ex. 20:12). Children cannot always understand the ways their parents deal with them. But God sees a certain honor due to parents because they are the parents. It is also true that we do not understand God’s will always.

Do we want to know what God is like? Then behold Jesus who said, “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30)—not one in person (the word *one* is neuter in the original language), but one in character and purpose.

“Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 419.

Since Christ is not now physically with us, how can we know God’s character and thus glorify Him before the world? John 17:14.

God’s character is outlined for us in His Word, the Bible, which, Paul told Timothy, is “able to make thee wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15). If Paul could say this concerning the Old Testament, how much more can it now be said concerning the New with the Old? The Word is close to us.

What picture of trust is more appealing than that of a tousled two-year-old heavy in sleep on his father’s shoulder during an evening concert of music? So with the children of God. The Lord bids us, “Look unto me, and be ye saved” (Isa. 45:22). “Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

Those who are not naturally warmhearted can become so by a union with Christ.

Further Study: *Steps to Christ*, “A Knowledge of God,” pp. 90, 91

Part 6 What amazing prospect awaits the redeemed in the kingdom of
GOD'S glory soon to come?

CHARACTER—2

“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John 17:24).

This Scripture tells us that God loved Jesus as the Representative of the human race, and loved us in Him. He so loved us before human history began. God set a value on human beings because of what they would become through the divine sacrifice and indwelling.

Because of the great glory of Christ that will be seen and known by the redeemed in eternity, God went ahead with His plan to create our first parents. He did so in foreknowledge of the temptation and of the results of Satan's deceptions. Jesus stepped down from heaven's throne in order to declare unto us the great love of the Father for His children.

“Christ's favorite theme was the paternal character and abundant love of God. This knowledge of God was Christ's own gift to men, and this gift He has committed to His people to be communicated by them to the world.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 55.

What are we to know that is yet too great to know? Eph. 3:19.

“Who can measure the love Christ felt for a lost world as He hung upon the cross, suffering for the sins of guilty men? This love was immeasurable, infinite.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 212.

Although we cannot here fully know God's great love in sending us Jesus, we are to make this knowledge our goal. The four dimensions of Ephesians 3:18—breadth, length, depth, and height—do not describe a boxed-up area, but rather a dynamic, limitless radiating of God's love into our hearts, bringing us to glory and demonstrating God's character to the universe.

“That through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places” (Eph. 3:10, RSV).

“Here is love that no language can express. It passes knowledge. Great is the mystery of godliness. Our souls should be enlivened, elevated, and enraptured with the theme of the love of the Father and the Son to man. The followers of Christ should here learn to reflect in some degree that mysterious love.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 215.

Further Study: 1 John 2:1, 2; 4:9, 10; *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 180

Glory Day by Day

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

Although faith and works are in some ways poles apart, good works do go hand in hand with faith. In fact, the justified person who has no desire to give evidence in the daily life that he or she is a child of God is thus denying the glory that God is waiting to manifest in His people. The prayer of Jesus (John 17) is not effective in that life. The person who thus refuses to show forth God’s character in the life denies many others an opportunity to return glory to God. Thousands have been turned away from the Christian way because they saw in the lives of “Christians” a great gap between principle and practice.

We are not our own, but we are a part of the great web of humanity, and we thus bear a responsibility to all men. We are debtors (see Rom. 1:14). We may think that in the seemingly small matters of daily life no glory may be brought to God, but such is not the case.

Why is Jesus waiting to come back to receive His people? This question is not ours to answer fully. We know that the price of our redemption has been paid, death has been overcome, our Saviour has ascended, and He has definitely not shirked any duty in our behalf. In the gift of Christ to the world there must be an even wider objective than the salvation of man. There is. Man was created for God’s glory. (See Isa. 43:7.) God has not yet received the glory due Him from His professed followers. Some are not ready to recognize God’s glory in the condescension of the cross and in man’s utter dependence on that cross for eternal life. Such cannot therefore learn the secret of daily living that would reflect the image of Jesus and thus reflect glory back to God.

The stalwarts of other ages have done their part. They have passed on to us the torch of truth, and now we have the privilege of meeting history’s climactic challenge by the final revelation of the glory of God.

Part 1
UNITY OF
BELIEVERS

“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God” (Rom. 15:5-7).

When Christ receives sinners, God is glorified. When we accept and honor one another as believers, God is glorified. The key question is this: Does Christ’s perfect life stand for our sinful lives so that we have a welcome reception into God’s presence? If so, then we in turn will receive others who have accepted Christ’s gift of life and demonstrate to the world a unity that is greater than mere tolerance.

In these days great virtue is attached to finding a way to differ from any expressed opinion. One who agrees with another is often thought too simple. It is not always a question of belonging to the Apollos party or the Paul party. We boast of belonging to neither or of starting a new party.

Paul would say to such, “Should we not rather glory that we are all of Christ?” (See 1 Cor. 3:21-23.) If Apollos has something to offer of value, let us receive it with thanks. But let “there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10).

Since no two people are exactly alike and do not think exactly alike, how is it possible for us to be “in the same mind”?

On the great essentials of salvation, we will not agree in theory only but will earnestly seek unity of spirit and action in the church. We need to be mended, tied together, as a torn fishing net is mended loop to loop (Matt. 4:21). (See also Rom. 12:16; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2.)

What kind of spirit seeks to sow dissension? (See 1 Tim. 5:13; 6:4.)

“Floating rumors are frequently the destroyers of unity among brethren. There are some who watch with open mind and ears to catch flying scandal. They gather up little incidents which may be trifling in themselves, but which are repeated and exaggerated until a man is made an offender for a word. . . . These tale-bearers are doing the devil’s work with surprising fidelity, little knowing how offensive their course is to God”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1163.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 7, pp. 156, 157

Part 2
SPEECH THAT
BLESSES

In what two opposite ways can speech be used?

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God” (James 3:9).

A fountain cannot send out bitter and sweet water at the same time and place (see verse 11), but very often those who have espoused Christianity try to mingle sweet and bitter speaking. They may turn off the bitter speech on Sabbath, only to resume it in the week. But religion is not a ritual to be performed on occasion; it is rather like yeast that pervades the entire lump of dough to make an appetizing loaf of bread. True religion is carried into our speech: “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:37).

How important are the words that God speaks? Isa. 55:10, 11.

The Hebrew word *dabar* is translated “word” 770 times in the KJV. But it is also translated “act” 52 times. God does not speak idle words. In a sense His word is an act. It produces.

Jesus spoke words that healed, and by our words we can spread either healing cheer or destructive gloom. Words are one of the chief means by which we show how we feel toward others. They also are an outward sign of what is going on in our minds, what our relationship is with God.

“Let not condemnatory words be spoken. Learn of the great Teacher. Words of kindness and sympathy will do as good as a medicine, and will heal souls that are in despair. The knowledge of the word of God brought into the practical life will have a healing, soothing power.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 163.

“God calls not only for your benevolence, but for your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. As you visit the Lord’s afflicted ones, you will find some from whom hope has departed; bring back the sunshine to them.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 277.

What help can we have in choosing our words? Col. 3:14-17.

“God will surely help those who seek Him for wisdom. . . . If the worker keeps his heart uplifted in prayer, God will help him to speak the right word at the right time.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 120.

“Words are more than an indication of character; they have power to react on the character. Men are influenced by their own words.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 323.

Further Study: 1 Cor. 2:1-7; *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 83, 84

Part 3
FAITH THAT
GLORIFIES

“Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Rom. 4:19, 20).

“Faith” as an Old Testament word usually carries with it the idea of faithfulness. Paul here used the story of Abraham’s faith as his prime exhibit of New Testament faith, the kind of faith a Christian should have.

Christian faith is not divorced from faithfulness. We read of heroes of faith who “endured, as seeing him who is invisible” (Heb. 11:27), linking their daily steadfastness to the reality of an unseen goal. They grasped the promises of the unseen as if they were seen, and the actions of their lives gave a witness to their faith.

The grace of God, manifested in forgiveness of our sins and in fitting us for heaven, is unseen; we grasp it by faith. In doing so, we, like Abraham of old, will be “strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Rom. 4:20). God’s forgiveness of us will be an unseen transaction, but our lives will be a testimony to that transaction as well.

The objective of faith is our ultimate salvation, but it brings to us “the faith of Jesus”—the faithfulness of Jesus demonstrated in Gethsemane, when He could not see through the portals of the tomb. This faithfulness, demonstrated before the waiting universe, was the crowning achievement that will resound endlessly in the ages to come. It will be reflected in the final test of “the remnant.”

What is the relationship between faith and knowledge?

“What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” (Rom. 8:24). “Those who think it impossible for them to yield to the will of God and have faith in His promises until all is made clear and plain before them, will never yield at all.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 28.

Faith seeks an assurance that often probes beyond the known. Will Jesus appear the second time? Is Jesus pleading for our sins in the sanctuary above? Are my sins really forgiven? Does prayer really avail? The true Christian will demonstrate a certainty that outdistances book knowledge on these and many other questions.

“You have to talk faith, you have to live faith, you have to act faith, that you may have an increase of faith; and thus exercising that living faith you will grow to strong men and women in Christ Jesus.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1121, 1122.

Further Study: Rom. 10:13-17; *Sons and Daughters of God*, p.

Part 4
EATING AND
DRINKING

Following a discussion of meats offered to idols, what general principle of Christian life did Paul pronounce?

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

All Christians would agree that “the kingdom of God is not meat and drink” (Rom. 14:17), yet Paul covered in his broad generalization every aspect of life. That certainly would include the universal need for nourishment of the body. Paul’s view of the body-temple supports the general principle. (See 1 Cor. 6:19, 20.)

Nobody on earth has the right to dictate to us how much or of what we should partake. The real question is not what the *other person* says or does—what he or she may eat or imbibe—but am I fulfilling the inspired exhortation of 1 Corinthians 10:31? It is a personal matter.

If healthful living is one means of giving glory to God, how are Seventh-day Adventists doing in this respect at this time?

Let us examine our hearts in regard to our response to God’s call to glorify Him in our personal habits. We have no right to give way to perverted appetite. The result of doing so is often to inflict on others an unhappy disposition.

Healthful living is sensible, balanced, moderate, and slow to condemn those with different ideas. Healthful living deals with every part of our lives and surroundings. It is broader than food choice. It takes appreciative note of the findings of medical science.

What is the place of exercise in a program of health recovery?

“Inactivity is the greatest curse that could come upon most invalids. . . .

“Those whose habits are sedentary should, when the weather will permit, exercise in the open air every day, summer or winter.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 240.

In the area of health consciousness and the conscientious taking of exercise, many who have no religious motivations are setting the pace. What opportunity for effective witness this affords us!

Similarly, there is growing interest in all of the health standards once entrusted to us. How faithfully are we following that light?

Further Study: *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 425-428

**Part 5
PATIENT
MINISTRY**

What fellowship with Christ in ministry is open to all believers?

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38).

To perform some great deed from time to time and thus ease our mind concerning our duty is relatively easy. Our text does not present Christ as an example of casual and occasional service. If we are to meet the requirements of Christ's example, we are to follow in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good continually.

Along with the proclamation of the Sabbath truth, Isaiah 58 made it clear that God's people were “to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free” (verse 6). We likewise are to feed the hungry, bring the poor to our homes, and clothe the naked. If we want to experience a type of prosperity that leaves no bitter memories, we will follow our Lord in helping others.

What ingredient is essential to effective service? 2 Cor. 6:4.

The true spirit of ministering is shown not only in the endurance of persecution; but it is also evidenced in the daily, even hourly, training of children, in constant ministration to others, in silence under rebuke, and in bouncing back from loss and disappointment.

The mother in the home may find the daily chores very tedious, especially in caring for a large family. But by her patient ministry she is worthy of glory and honor, and in the end eternal life. God's remnant people are to be noted for their patience. (See Rev. 14:12.)

What comforting lesson may be learned from Christ, the Master Worker? (See Mark 6:35-44.)

“How often our hearts sink, and faith fails us, as we see how great is the need, and how small the means in our hands. Like Andrew looking upon the five barley loaves and the two little fishes, we exclaim, ‘What are they among so many?’ Often we hesitate, unwilling to give all that we have, fearing to spend and to be spent for others. But Jesus has bidden us, ‘Give ye them to eat.’ His command is a promise; and behind it is the same power that fed the multitude by the sea.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 369.

Jesus mingled easily with the rich and the poor—He refused to conform to society's class distinctions.

Further Study: *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 272

Part 6
USE OF
TALENTS

What evidence does Peter offer to show that God considers the different abilities of His servants?

“If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Peter 4:11).

To every person, even the most uneducated or the most feeble, is given some ability which he can and should use to God’s glory and honor. While others may have greater abilities, such have only their own opportunities and their own areas of operation. We are stationed at certain places at certain times to do a work that no other person can do, no matter how great that person’s ability may be.

Consider the use of talents by the galaxy of Bible heroes.

Noah was the man for his day. Abraham, a native of the prosperous city of Ur, decided to leave it all for God. Moses, called from caring for sheep, provided effective leadership for Israel. Joseph, after a series of dark experiences, rose to prominence in Egypt and proved to be God’s man of the hour. Esther was brought “to the kingdom for such a time” when she was greatly needed. Stephen was ready to die as the first recorded Christian martyr, and he thus influenced Saul to turn to Christ. Paul himself, weak and physically handicapped, was always God’s helper; even as a prisoner on shipboard he was able to save many lives. Are the days of heroism past? No, but we need to awaken to opportunity. Even those who are in prison can respond to God’s call.

“Life is an important thing, a sacred trust; and every moment should be wisely improved, for its results will be seen in eternity. God requires each one to do all the good possible. The talents which He has entrusted to our keeping are to be made the most of. He has placed them in our hands to be used to His name’s honor and glory, and for the good of our fellow men.”—*Counsels to Teachers*, pp. 62, 63.

What is the danger to one who has superior talent?

The greater a person’s talent, the greater the danger that he or she will glorify self and forget to glorify God in the common aspects of life. For this reason God sometimes “sets them aside for men of inferior talent who have learned to rely upon Him.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 541.

Further Study: Matthew 25; *Christ’s Object Lessons*, “Talents,” pp. 325-328

Glory in the Home

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

While the foregoing text was written in the context of individuals in the church, it is equally applicable to the home, which is a segment of the church and which in the early days often constituted the meeting place in a given area.

Two reasons have prompted the writing of a lesson on the home: (1) The home constitutes the formative factor in the impartation of God's character to His children. (2) The challenge now evident to the survival of Christian homes is unprecedented in history.

All of us came from some kind of a home or family relationship. Ideally, home is the dearest spot on earth. Home is reminiscent of those beautiful Edenic surroundings within which God placed our first parents and performed the first marriage. It is one of two important institutions that God established and which come to us from sinless surroundings. At the same time God's Word offers particular challenges and blessings for the dedicated single members of the church. The lifelong selfless service of so many of them will be duly rewarded by God, even though it has not always been recognized by the church.

If parents realized what a great opportunity they have to cooperate with God in achieving His goals, they would throw their arms around their children and bind them to their hearts in love and protection. They would seek the most effective ways of counseling their “beautiful flock” that God has given them for a few years to love and cherish.

Since the home was the unquestioned center of society in Bible times and in early advent history, the counsel then given is still vital to us today. The same principles apply to the dwelling places of marrieds or singles.

Although the security of the Christian home is in greater danger in some countries than in others, Adventists should be in the forefront of any save-the-home movement. The home offers the most lasting influences for good or evil. How essential that all who make up the home have the glory of God as the supreme goal of every day.

Part 1 THE GLORY OF EDEN

Who established the home? What was the nature of the first home on earth?

“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed” (Gen. 2:8).

The glory of Eden is beyond our full understanding because it was the work of God’s hands and untouched by sin. Physical, visible glory and brightness it had. “The air was pure and healthful, and the earth seemed like a noble palace. Angels beheld and rejoiced at the wonderful and beautiful works of God.”—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 20.

As the crown of God’s Creation, man was “the image and glory of God” (1 Cor. 11:7), made “in the image of God” (Gen. 1:27).

How was the glory of God reflected in the garments of Adam and Eve? (See Gen. 2:25; 3:7-11, 21.)

The Bible gives us no explicit word on this. By implication, the following can be drawn: “They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. While they lived in obedience to God, this circle of light enshrouded them.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45. The sense of loss of their covering reflected their loss of God’s glory, His image.

What guidance for our families can be drawn from the temptation of Eve? (See Gen. 3:1.)

The brief phrase of Scripture shows us only that Eve was alone with the tempter. Perhaps the one greatest need in today’s homes and families is that of keeping close, keeping in touch, supporting one another, avoiding the coming of coolness and distance. Talk, study, and pray together. Do not lose the sense of oneness that is the essence of marriage and home. “The angels cautioned Eve not to separate from her husband in her employment, for she might be brought in contact with this fallen foe. If separated from each other they might be in greater danger than if both were together.”—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 31.

What could more togetherness in today’s homes do to provide a safeguard against temptation and to prevent, to some degree, the breakup of marriages? (See Prov. 5:18-20.)

In seeking the glory of God in the home in these “last days,” surely there could be no more vital goal than to achieve, by the grace of Christ, the unity and harmony that was in Eden before sin.

Further Study: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 46-51

“Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20).

In faith Adam called his wife Eve (*chavvah*, a primitive root, meaning life-giver). She would be the mother of the race. Also the promise concerning the “seed of the woman” brought to Adam the same kind of hope that Jesus brings to us today—the assurance of the enemy’s total defeat and the hope of Eden restored. In this hope our first parents went from the Garden of Eden to make a home in a territory claimed by Satan.

What was the God-assigned primary role of women in Bible times? (See Gen. 1:28; 3:16; Prov. 31:10-31.)

Although in some countries today, marriage and motherhood are less universal than in Bible times, it still brings glory to God for Christian women to be faithful in such a role. “Mother” is still the sweetest name for many.

“Great is the work and mission of women, especially those who are wives and mothers. They can be a blessing to all around them. They can have a powerful influence for good if they will let their light so shine that others may be led to glorify our heavenly Father. . . . They exert an unconscious influence which seems to work out naturally from a sanctified life, a renewed heart.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 465.

In the early days of the advent movement, the role of women was close to that portrayed in Scripture. “God has assigned woman her mission; and if she, in her humble way, yet to the best of her ability, makes a heaven of her home, faithfully and lovingly performing her duties to her husband and children, continually seeking to let a holy light shine from her useful, pure, and virtuous life to brighten all around her, she is doing the work left her of the Master.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 465, 466.

How much should the wives and mothers of the church confine themselves to the home?

Economic stress and other factors are presenting mothers with cruel choices today. But where old patterns can still be followed, “the Christian mother’s sphere of usefulness should not be narrowed by her domestic life. The salutary influence which she exerts in the home circle she may and will make felt in more widespread usefulness in her neighborhood and in the church of God. Home is not a prison to the devoted wife and mother.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 236.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 565; vol. 4, p. 138

Part 3
FATHERHOOD

What welcome did a wayward son receive upon returning to his father?

“He arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20).

The Bible is not a volume of family counseling. But glimpses here and there present vital principles. Love should mark home relationships at all times. Fathers are to be motivated by love when they discipline their children or feel they must deprive them of something that is not for their good. Requests should be carefully evaluated.

We know not to what extent the prodigal son was deprived of his requests, but we do know that the father embraced his returning boy with a spirit of love. Reluctantly the father had complied with his grown son’s request for his inheritance. And then had come the seemingly endless hours of watching for his son’s return.

On the one hand, fathers may place the kind of unbending, dictatorial restraint on a youth that develops obstinacy and defiance. And, on the other hand, “many prodigal sons become such because of indulgence in the home, because their parents have not been doers of the Word. The mind and purpose are to be sustained by firm, undeviating, sanctified principles. Consistency and affection are to be enforced by a lovely and consistent example.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 271.

“Whatever may be his calling and its perplexities, let the father take into his home the same smiling countenance and pleasant tones with which he has all day greeted visitors and strangers.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 159.

What part can the father have in spiritual training in the home?
Col. 3:21; 1 John 2:13, 14.

Fathers can bind their children’s hearts to themselves and to home by a willingness to confess their own mistakes and failures. Children are forgiving by nature.

“All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker. . . . The father is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice. . . .

“ . . . He is a laborer together with God, carrying out the gracious designs of God and establishing in his children upright principles, enabling them to form pure and virtuous characters.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 212.

Further Study: *The Adventist Home*, pp. 211-219

**Part 4
CHILDREN**

How has God enshrined children in the heart of His holy law of love?

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3).

Happy are the Christian parents who train their children for eternity. Happy also are the children who can bear the polishing that will make them as stones in a beautiful palace. (See Ps. 144:12.) The march toward destiny begins in the home.

If our children can sense from infancy that we love them no matter how trying they may be, obedience will generally come.

What is the primary key to a child’s learning to obey? (Compare 1 Cor. 11:1.)

“It is by beholding love in their parents that children are led to obey the fifth commandment and to heed the injunction, ‘Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.’”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 199.

How does the age level at which children tend to seek independence compare with that at which a Jewish boy became a “son of the law” in Bible times? (Compare Luke 2:41-51.)

“Children often become impatient under restraint and wish to have their own way and to go and come as they please. Especially from the age of ten to eighteen they are inclined to feel that there can be no harm in going to worldly gatherings of young associates. But the experienced Christian parents can see danger.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 529.

The church needs to remember that teenagers are idealists. Bible stories of Joseph, Daniel, Ruth, and Esther can inspire them to press on to victory. Adventist pioneers who devoted their lives to do and dare for God can also become heroes to the youth of today and can inspire them to do exploits for God.

What is youth’s only safety in the face of terrible temptation?

Never was sin so readily available and in more enticing forms than is made possible by the inventions of modern times. Youth must literally “flee . . . youthful lusts” (2 Tim. 2:22). Agents of evil throw themselves and their wares at youth at earlier and earlier stages in life. In answer to the united prayers of parents and children, a wall of holy fire alone can turn aside the thrusting brazenness of temptation!

Part 5
YOUTH

“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also” (2 Tim. 1:5).

Many a youth today is deprived of the Christian example of his father. He may be taught of God only by the women of his family. If so, it is sometimes expected that he will rebel, forsaking God and His Word. It does not have to be that way!

Not only do we have the noble and challenging example of the young man Timothy—to whom Paul became father in the faith—but the same pattern has been often repeated to our amazement over the centuries since.

What a comfort and what a challenge still to the mothers and grandmothers in Israel!

What is the real cause of the alienation of youth? (See 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 12, 13.)

In considering this question, all parties to the family and church are tempted to blame each other for the problem. We may know some factors that contribute to the problem, but many escape us. From Cain to the prodigal son, we know from the Bible that the problem is not new. It challenges the whole church to prayer, study, and the love which is vital to the solution.

Consider how youth have served the Lord despite the poor example of parents. (See 2 Chron. 33:21-25; 34:3.)

What were the factors that counteracted the influence of Amon and that led this young king to turn to God? His mother Jedidah (meaning “beloved of God”) may have taught him carefully, by precept and example. Perhaps his father’s conduct was so unattractive to him that he determined never to follow his ways. Perhaps Jeremiah, a young minister, set him a good example and led Josiah to bring to Judah a much-needed reform. Let it never be said that youth from less than ideal homes cannot fill a noble place in God’s great plan.

Perhaps one of the greatest gifts that parents, teachers, church, and family can offer youth today is a listening ear. It calls for them to withhold counsel until they have really heard where the problem lies. Love listens!

“Let the youth be led to understand the object of their creation, to honor God and bless their fellow men.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 601.

Further Study: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 592, 593

**Part 6
HOME
AT LAST**

No matter what our present situation, to what kind of home can we look forward?

“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14: 2, 3).

The dearest and tenderest earthly thoughts that human beings can bring to mind usually center around the home. Although He suffered at the hands of Joseph’s sons, this must have been true of Jesus also in His early years. Hearing the call of His heavenly Father, He left the home nest and for several years had “not where to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). He did, however, have a home in heaven, and in His earthly walk He was in constant touch with God.

Jesus taught us to address God as “Our Father.” And when He wanted to illustrate the life to come, He chose the metaphor of the home. What a warm and comforting thought to earth’s pilgrims of all time, many of whom “wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; . . . in dens and caves of the earth” (Heb. 11:37, 38)!

Dear young person, do you have a home where neither parent gives God glory? God’s claims upon us supersede those of a father or mother. “Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Heb. 11:24, 25).

By what steps can a foretaste of heaven’s joy and fellowship be ours now? Mal. 3:16; Col. 3:12-17.

“Rest yourself wholly in the hands of Jesus. Contemplate His great love. . . . We may enjoy rich feasts of love, and as we fully believe that we are His by adoption, we may have a foretaste of heaven. . . . We feel indeed an abiding Christ in the soul. We abide in Him, and feel at home with Jesus. The promises flow into the soul. Our peace is like a river, wave after wave of glory rolls into the heart, and indeed we sup with Jesus and He with us. . . . With strong confidence, we can call God our Father.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 1147, 1148.

Why is Satan so anxious to break up homes and to promote unhappy unions, especially among “good” people of God’s remnant church?

Further Study: *The Adventist Home*, pp. 15-17

Glory of the Remnant

“After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory” (Rev. 18:1).

God’s original purpose in creating human beings—for His glory, to reflect His image—will be realized in a whole people before the great drama of sin ends. When once that goal has been achieved and Satan’s charges have again been shown to be false, God will step in to rescue His faithful ones. The sealing work will have been finished, and God’s glory will have been shown in a special setting and worldwide confrontation by His remnant people.

Unnumbered saints and martyrs of old have stood firm, even in the face of death itself. But before the destruction of Satan and the forces of evil, a final display of loyalty will be seen, motivated by the Holy Spirit. This “latter rain” outpouring of the Spirit ripens the harvest for the kingdom.

What does it mean to “fear God”? It means to stand in awe of Him, to adore, to worship, to obey. It does not, however, mean to stand trembling in terror, and especially not if we have accepted the blood of Jesus to cover our sins. It does mean that we live as in God’s sight, carefully and faithfully guarding against any worldly distraction or subtle encroachment that would deceive us and cause us to dishonor God. It does mean looking unto Jesus, who will complete His work of grace in us.

To fear God is to be loyal to Him. This gives God glory but not by adding to His perfect character nor to His almighty power. It adds to God’s acceptance, His praise, and His acclamation by His creatures everywhere.

We cannot afford to postpone our duty to some other time. Today is our day of opportunity. Our Lord wants us to “grow in grace,” progressively advancing in Christian love from day to day. Living constantly in the peace and assurance of the righteousness of Christ that justifies the repentant, trusting child of God, those who thus advance will find at the end of the race a crown of glory “that fadeth not away.”

“To give God glory is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 979.

**Part 1
CALL TO
FEAR GOD**

In the end time of the world, how is God's call of the ages stressed?

"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, . . . saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him" (Rev. 14:6, 7).

We have earlier defined the biblical significance of the expression "fear God." All through the quarter we have attempted to cover the breadth of the expression "give glory to God." Now we are coming face-to-face with a people who are the remnant. They are called to receive messages from God and to give those same messages for God. Under the symbols of angels (messengers) they give the call to fear God. The call is for reverence, awe, submission, and obedience to God. This is associated with giving glory to Him. That includes praise, adoration, worship, reverence, approval, and acceptance. But if God's power and His character are at the heart of His glory, then to give Him glory calls for changed human lives. It calls for lives that give evidence of the working of His power in the heart and that reflect the likeness of His character.

Is there any reason to doubt that God is looking for godly lives in His people in all ages? 2 Peter 1:3; Eccl. 12:13, 14.

As God has had His true witnesses at every stage of human history, so in the climax of the ages, when the whole world is aligned with either Christ or Satan, He has a people on the earth to give the final invitation of mercy to the world and to demonstrate to the world the power of the grace and indwelling of Jesus Christ. The intensity of the final conflict is matched by the completeness of the consecration of the witnesses for Christ.

In the light of 2 Peter 1:3, what knowledge far supersedes that which can be found in books?

Men sometimes think that the salvation of society and of the world lies in the knowledge contained in books from human authors. To the extent that such books reflect the knowledge that comes from God, they can be a blessing. But wickedness does not thrive merely on ignorance. It works with knowledge that has been distorted. The father of lies can use big words or little, fine arts or cave markings. The Word of God is the only fountain of truth and the only channel for knowledge of God's salvation in Christ Jesus.

Further Study: 2 Peter 1:5-7; *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 409, 410, 425, 426

Part 2
WORLDWIDE
CALL

What is to be the outreach of God's final call for men to give Him glory?

"Having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6).

One other message, in earlier ages, was given a similar world-ranging commission. That was the gospel which Jesus gave to His apostles. (See Matt. 24:14.) It is scarcely surprising that the "gospel of the kingdom" and the "everlasting gospel" should have the same extensive commission.

What is our only hope of fulfillment of God's plan that our lives should give glory to Him? Col. 1:27; Phil. 4:13.

Anyone who boasts that he can in his own power live a life acceptable to God is sadly mistaken. Such a struggle is in vain and can be resolved only when in utter helplessness he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). The answer to this most plaintive plea is near and clear—"through Jesus Christ our Lord."

How did the world of His day react to the exact image of God in the life of Jesus? John 7:7; 15:18.

"Thirty years was all that the world could endure of its Redeemer. For thirty years He dwelt in a world all seared and marred with sin, doing the work that no other one ever had done or ever could do."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

How is the outward manner modified by the indwelling power of Christ? John 13:35.

"If the heart is reformed, it will be seen in the outward appearance. If Christ be in us the hope of glory, we shall discover such matchless charms in Him that the soul will be enamored. It will cleave to Him, choose to love Him, and in admiration of Him, self will be forgotten. . . . Every truly converted soul will carry the unmistakable marks that the carnal mind is subdued."—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, pp. 162, 163.

How will we relate to others when Christ is formed within the heart? 1 John 3:14, 15.

Further Study: *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 475-477

**Part 3
JUDGMENT
CALL**

What element in the call of the three angels gives urgency to their messages?

“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come” (Rev. 14:7).

If it is always in order for sinners to fear God and give glory to Him, then it is especially so when the judgment hour is announced. There seems to be some time for spiritual growth under this message of the judgment. Warnings are given. Actions are called for. Changes are made. Those who hear seem to become givers of the message. The result is a people answering to the character of the remnant of the seed of the woman. (See Rev. 14:12; 12:17.)

What is one of the keys to spiritual growth, and how does it relate to the glory of God? 2 Cor. 3:18.

There is a clear connection suggested in this text between the glory of Christ and the reflected glory of Christ in the believer. It is evident also that the Holy Spirit is the divine agent in renewing, making holy, and effecting spiritual growth.

Out of the great reservoir of God's grace He imputes to us righteousness for which we have not labored. Then we are to “grow in grace” (2 Peter 3:18), to enter into a union with God, the channel of which is deepened and widened with use so that we may receive more grace. Thus we may “grow up into him in all things” (Eph. 4:15).

How are growth and life related in the Christian experience? (Consider 1 Peter 2:2.)

“The follower of Jesus should be constantly improving in manners, in habits, in spirit, in labor. This is done by keeping the eye, not on mere outward, superficial attainments, but on Jesus.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 283.

All the Bible writers hold up before the Christian a life of growth. Peter gave us the “addition” formula for spiritual attainment. (See 2 Peter 1:6, 7.) Jude said that our Saviour is “able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24). John said, “Follow . . . that which is good. He that doeth good is of God” (3 John 11). And Jesus said that those who enter heaven will do “the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21).

Further Study: *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 403, 404

Part 4
FRUITAGE
OF SAINTS

In what further way may the Father receive glory from His people, including the remnant?

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples” (John 15:8).

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

“The best evidence that you are in Christ is the fruit you bear.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 348.

What kind of fruit does the Master expect from us? (See Gal. 5:22, 23.)

“The fruit Christ claims, after the patient care bestowed upon His church, is faith, patience, love, forbearance, heavenly-mindedness, meekness. These are clusters of fruit which mature amid storm and cloud and darkness, as well as in the sunshine.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 117.

We often think of fruitage only in terms of numbers of converts. This aspect of fruit-bearing is important, but it is not primary. As at Pentecost, God will add to the church “daily the ones being saved” (literal translation of Acts 2:47) when the rich fruitage of Christ’s love is seen in the daily lives of His people.

Before the “former rain” descended at Pentecost, the disciples made preparation of heart in Jerusalem. They put away differences. They prayed earnestly. They were of one accord. This essential preparation is also needed before this earth shall be lightened with God’s glory at the close of the gospel age.

What kinds of fruitage in the lives of the saints are called for in Deuteronomy 14:29; 15:11; and James 1:27?

“Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on; but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 24.

Before the end of the gospel age, miracles will again be seen and a wide-ranging missionary activity will bring in great numbers of honest souls. The glory of the latter rain will greatly exceed that of the former.

Consider what changes are needed in the church today if full fruitage is to be seen.

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 354, 355

Part 5
LAST CALL

What aid is given the work of the three angels in completing the work of the gospel?

“I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory” (Rev. 18:1).

By the word delivered by this mighty angel messenger, we see his close tie to the work and messages of the three angels. The result of their combined efforts is the enlightening of the world with his glory. Since men are God’s agents in the gospel mission, it can be understood that the remnant is involved both in receiving and in passing on the angel messages. The glory ascribed to the angel may be taken to describe his power and the fruitage of his work in the godly lives of the saints. The chief joy of loyal angels is to reflect the glory of God. This is the joy of the saints.

What work once entrusted to ancient Israel remains to be completed by those responding to God’s last call? Isa. 60:1-3.

Some people will confess God’s goodness when it is too late, when repentance is past and the sun has set on the day of salvation; but many in the day of their stress and affliction will look to those who by their quiet and patient deportment have created a heavenly atmosphere on earth and will find salvation.

What assurance can we find in the message of the other angel of Revelation 18 that God still has many, if not most, of His people in spiritual Babylon? (See Rev. 18:4.)

“Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

“The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 612.

Jesus said, “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God” (Luke 12:8).

Further Study: *The Great Controversy*, pp. 653-656

Part 6 CROWN OF GLORY

What promise made to the early church will undoubtedly be fulfilled to the remnant also?

“When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:4).

In ancient times the victor in a contest was often crowned with a wreath of olive leaves which quickly drooped and faded. (See 2 Tim. 2:5.) Jesus, in His great victory, tasted “death for every man” and is “crowned with glory and honour” (Heb. 2:9). Those who follow in the steps of Jesus will also receive a “crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

Through the grace and power of Christ, Paul waged a successful “fight” and looked forward to receiving from “the Lord, the righteous judge” a crown of righteousness such as will be given not to one winner of the race only but to “all them also that love his appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8).

How did Paul give glory to God rather than himself in the midst of all his trials? (See 2 Corinthians 11:24-28 for a list of the persecutions that Paul endured.)

Yet he could say, “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities” (verse 30).

How is the heavenly crown contrasted with the earthly? (See text of the day.)

“You need not talk . . . of the honors of the world, or the praise of its great ones. They are all vanity. . . . I want the honor that is lasting, honor that is immortal, honor that will never perish; a crown that is richer than any crown that ever decked the brow of a monarch.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 362.

With what words do the recipients of God’s crown of life return to Him the glory of their triumph? Rev. 5:12-14.

The applause that glorifies a great opera performance provides only a weak analogy for the climactic praise to God. A leading performer often beckons to the orchestra conductor, the players, and the composer who might be present to receive respective honors. In fact, as the applause thunders on and on, choir and orchestra may share in it.

In the heavenly scene Jesus Christ is the worthy One. All glory goes to Him, the Victor, for it is by His grace alone that men have been gathered out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

Further Study: *Early Writings*, pp. 288, 289

The Advent Glory

“Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Luke 9:26).

As we near the close of the quarter, we are studying the climax of the ages. We are on the verge of the great proclamation by our Lord for the second time, “It is finished.” The salvation sealed by Christ’s death on the cross will be sealed to the final converts as the Lord completes His work of intercession in the heavenly sanctuary. He will then declare His work finished.

Not one of the redeemed of all ages will be saying, “I will exalt myself!” Each will be ascribing glory as praise to God alone, in tribute casting his own crown—received by God’s grace—at the feet of Jesus. Surely, that day is upon us!

Of all the glorious scenes pictured in the Bible, the second coming of Christ ranks high. It is not just because of the brightness exhibited, the rainbow that encircles the throne, or the fire that issues forth to consume all foreign elements that do not belong to God’s glory. It is a much more personal matter. We shall look on the face of Him who loved us and who died in our behalf. The power and majesty of the Father’s glory, the Son’s glory, and the glory of the holy angels will all be made manifest at once. And then are introduced the saints in whose faces are reflected God’s supreme glory—His character.

In the 150 or so years since William Miller heard the irresistible call of God to preach the message of the second coming of Jesus, the final call of the gospel has been sounding to the world. In every land God has a people who in the last great burst of light will come out to join with those already called.

To many the second coming of Jesus is a myth, a fable. But such have not heeded the words of Jesus. Let us then joyfully explore the glory that is yet to be revealed when Jesus appears the second time as the rightful King of the universe.

Part 1 THRONE OF HIS GLORY

What climactic event will usher in the kingdom of glory?

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Matt. 25:31).

The intercessory prayer of Jesus for His disciples was “that they may behold my glory” (John 17:24). They had seen Jesus in sandals and soiled garb, walking the dusty streets, touching the outcasts, talking to Samaritan “dogs,” and welcoming small children to His embrace. Three of His disciples had received a preview of His kingdom of glory (see Luke 9:28-32). The topic of conversation between Christ and the messengers from heaven at that time was “his decease” (literally, “exodus”)—not a very glorious thought for those who longed for earthly glory. (How much the disciples heard in their drowsiness we may not know. But they “saw his glory.”)

In order to negate the glory seen on the mount, the devil put on his best act, challenging Jesus to a duel. (See Luke 9:37-42.) Satan will also try to stage a challenge to Christ’s second coming. (See Rev. 13:13.) But the devil cannot assume Christ’s glory nor fulfill His promises, and God’s children need not be deceived.

The earthly sanctuary-temple was a miniature representation of heavenly glories. In the time of ancient Israel, where was the glory of God manifested? Ex. 40:34-38; Lev. 16:2.

In the ancient sanctuary, the Shekinah glory of God rested above the ark of the covenant, where justice and mercy met. (See *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 903.)

What will happen to the wicked when Christ returns in great glory? (Compare 2 Thess. 2:8; Deut. 4:24; Rev. 6:12-17.)

“The light of the glory of God, which imparts life to the righteous, will slay the wicked.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 108.

Why should the throne of Christ’s glory be associated with destructive effects upon the world?

On the basis that a prime definition of God’s glory is His character, then Christ’s throne of glory derives its majesty and power from that same pure and holy character. Therefore the presence of our God is a consuming presence to anything that is out of harmony with His character. The consuming power is inevitable rather than arbitrary.

Further Study: *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 48-55

Part 2
RIGHTEOUS
PEOPLE

What indicates that when Christ returns to earth the second time the redemptive activity in regard to sin is completed?

“Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:28). (See also verses 23-27.)

When Jesus died on Calvary, He was laden with the sins of humanity. The cross was for the punishment of the worst of criminals. While Jesus did no sin and bore no sin of His own, He assumed the greatest load of sin ever to be carried. His was a once-only and all-sufficient sacrifice. Now is our day of opportunity for accepting Him and of being accepted by Him.

The sealed people of God are described as clothed in white, and they have palms in their hands, symbolizing victory. The robes are provided to the Laodiceans who open the heart door to the Heavenly Merchantman. He then makes that heart His dwelling place so that His life becomes the life of the believer. His will becomes supreme. (See Rev. 3:14-22 and *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 312.) There is a resulting fellowship with Christ (“I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me”) that can only bring the open-door heart into more and more harmony with Christ. “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 every one engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 332.

In the parable of the king's feast, what place is there for an investigation of the guests? Matt. 22:9-11.

“Ver. 11.—The king came in to see the guests, who by this time had taken their appointed places at table. This second portion of the parable teaches that admission to the visible Church is not all that is required; there is also a scrutiny to be undergone and an award to be made. And that this investigation is keen and searching is denoted by the verb used . . . , which means not merely, to see casually, but to gaze upon with the intent of seeing the real nature and character of an object. The king makes his appearance in the banqueting-hall, not to feast with the guests, but to welcome them, and to examine if they are properly ordered, served, and fitted for the high honour accorded to them.”—*The Pulpit Commentary*, vol. 15, p. 358.

Why is it essential that the sin question shall have been resolved by the time Christ returns? (See Heb. 12:18-29.)

Further Study: *Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 207-216

**Part 3
CHRIST
GLORIFIED**

What evidence did Jesus present to His disciples to show that His resurrected body was real?

“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet” (Luke 24:39, 40).

How would you react if you were approached by one whom you had seen crucified, stabbed with a spear, and laid in the grave?

The body of Jesus was real, not imaginary, yet it was obviously not altogether subject to natural forces. Jesus offered tangible evidence of His personhood and human attributes, albeit glorified.

In view of the impact upon Roman soldiers of one angel from glory, how will it be when Christ returns in the glory of His Father, in His own glory, and the glory of the unnumbered hosts of angels? Matt. 28:2-4.

“When He [Christ] shall come to the earth again, He will shake ‘not the earth only, but also heaven.’ ‘The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage.’ ‘The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll;’ ‘the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.’ But ‘the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.’ Heb. 12:26; Isa. 24:20; 34:4; 2 Peter 3:10; Joel 3:16.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 780.

According to Paul, what is the relationship of the resurrection of the glorified Lord to our hope of eternal life? 1 Cor. 15:12-18.

Our pledge of eternal life is in the resurrection of Jesus. Because of Him we have “a lively hope” (1 Peter 1:3)—a hope not only of standing once again upon the earth but of being honored and glorified. The faithful will be “found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7). The resurrection of all sleeping saints is one of the glories of the second advent.

What factors troubled the early church over promises of the second advent?

Further Study: Acts 3:13-19; *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 250-254

Part 4
THE SAINTS
RESURRECTED

As one of the earliest recorded witnesses, how did Job, in the most adverse circumstances, express his faith in God's power to raise the dead?

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

In spite of the difficulties in the translation of this text (some versions giving "without my flesh" for example), it is still seen that Job expressed a firm trust in the resurrection of the righteous. "In my flesh" stresses the reality of the resurrection. "Without my flesh" may suggest the resurrected body. (Compare 1 Cor. 15:36-50.) Job stated this belief before the time of the Exodus and the giving of the law.

Abraham also showed remarkable faith when, ready to offer Isaac, he said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb" (Gen. 22:8). He then took the knife to slay his son. But God intervened. Isaac became a figure of Christ, a willing sacrifice.

According to the New Testament faith chapter, how could Abraham reconcile the promise of a great nation through Isaac with the divine command to offer his son as a sacrifice? (See Heb. 11:17-19.)

From this evidence of a remarkable Old Testament understanding and expectation of the resurrection, we can move to Paul's classical resurrection chapter in 1 Corinthians 15. Here Paul makes his unique contribution to the message of a risen Saviour, the resurrected Christ, the "first fruits" of all the saints to be resurrected to share in the glory of the second coming of Jesus Christ. (See verses 20-23.)

To what degree will we know each other as resurrected saints?

"The resurrection of Jesus was a type of the final resurrection of all who sleep in Him. The countenance of the risen Saviour, His manner, His speech, were all familiar to His disciples. As Jesus arose from the dead, so those who sleep in Him are to rise again. . . . In the glorified body their identity will be perfectly preserved."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 804.

Further Study: Acts 2:29-32; *The Great Controversy*, pp. 644, 645

Part 5
READY FOR
THE BRIDE-
GROOM

What kind of people are permitted to partake of the divine wedding feast?

“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” (Matt. 25:10).

What a glorious privilege to be admitted by the heavenly Bridegroom to His wedding supper!

In the parable, all who await the bridegroom’s arrival have lamps representing a source of light and a symbol of rejoicing. All the lamps have oil, generally a symbol of the Holy Spirit, by whom the righteousness of Christ’s character is brought into the life. (See Zech. 4:6.) Some of the guests have brought oil in reserve so as to be prepared for any emergency. Others, perhaps carelessly, have forgotten this precaution.

Time passes, and the bridegroom is delayed. Lamps begin to flicker and then go out. In desperation the five neglectful girls try to barter for oil.

“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*, p. 234.

What essential factor did the neglectful ones lack? Matt. 25:8.

The neglectful ones had the same source of light as the others and had doubtless at some time enjoyed communion with the Holy Spirit. But they had never made a complete surrender of their lives to Christ for the indwelling of the Spirit—they lacked a preparation for a time of stress.

“The Spirit works upon man’s heart, according to his desire and consent, implanting in him a new nature; but the class represented by the foolish virgins have been content with a superficial work.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 411.

“Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee” (Isa. 60:2). This glory is what the world needs to see. Christ’s coming exhibits His own glory, the Father’s, and that of the angels. What is missing? The glory of those who should have heeded Jesus’ words, “Ye are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14).

“We as a people profess to have truth in advance of every other people upon the earth. Then our life and character should be in harmony with such a faith.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 100.

Further Study: 2 Peter 1:16-21; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 718, 720

Part 6 HEAVEN AT LAST!

Although we rightly tend to link heaven with the future, where and when does heaven begin?

“Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:13, 14).

We do not negate the existence of a place called heaven when we say that heaven begins on earth, here and now. But the Holy Spirit “is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance” (NIV) until we actually receive it.

“When the Lord’s people are filled with meekness and tenderness, they will realize that His banner over them is love, and His fruit will be sweet to their taste. They will make a heaven below in which to prepare for heaven above. . . .

“If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 112.

“The definition of heaven is the presence of Christ.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 989. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8).

“Now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). It is here that a noble character is to be formed as a result of the work of grace in the heart. Should this not be our primary interest in life?

What part may church attendance have in this preparatory work?
(See Mal. 3:16; Heb. 10:25.)

In our critical, skeptical age, it is harder for us to believe that wholehearted participation in the services of the church is a key agency for the preparation of a people for the glorious worship of the kingdom of heaven. But it is so.

How much can our finite minds understand about the glories of heaven?

“In thinking of heaven, we may put our imagination to the utmost stretch and think the loftiest thoughts that we are capable of thinking, and our minds will grow weary in the effort to comprehend the breadth and depth and height of the subject. It is impossible for our minds to take in the great themes of eternity. It is impossible for us even to make an effort to understand these things without the effort affecting our whole character for good and having an uplifting influence on our minds.”—Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places*, p. 368.

Further Study: Phil. 3:17 to 4:1; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 331

Triumph in Glory

“We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned” (Rev. 11:17).

Not by accident do the three angels' messages include the exhortation, “Give glory to him [God]; for the hour of his judgment is come” (Rev. 14:7).

In the absolute sense, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus provide God all the vindication He could ever need. Yet in a sense, God has put Himself on trial in His people, and our judgment is His judgment. As a part of the final showdown of earth's drama, His people are to be an honor to God and to demonstrate the vindication of His character and government particularly in the creation of earth and man. Like Job of old, they are to show to the world that God's plan really works and that in the midst of the most difficult circumstances of life and in the face of death itself they choose to stand on God's side.

God is honored not only *by* His people, as though a billion voices might shout down the opposition, but He is also honored *in* His people, even in the little things of life. Not that the amassing of good works in themselves is so impressive, nor would it build merit for salvation. But Jesus did say, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35).

Paul makes a strong case for the fact that the promise to Abraham was “not to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ” (Gal. 3:16). When the cross of Christ takes first place in our hearts, this promise becomes meaningful to us. Moreover, He not only gives us life—He is our life. (See Col. 3:4; 1 John 5:11.) We still have our individuality and our will, but the will is merged with Christ's will in a mysterious blend of the human and the divine. Here, by the Spirit, is fulfilled Jesus' prayer: “That they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21).

Though earthly glory should fail, “The Lord is in his holy temple” (verse 20), and all will come out right. Marvel of God's grace, he who has chosen to humble himself will be exalted! (See Luke 4:11 and Phil. 2:8, 9.)

Part 1 GOD'S JUDGMENT

Is there any biblical basis for the idea that God is in some respects under judgment?

Repeatedly throughout the Scriptures God is presented as the Judge of all things and every sinner. Only in an indirect way and in a particular sense is God the object of evaluation.

The primary salvo of charges made by Satan on earth against Adam and Eve was really aimed at God. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Gen. 3:1). While it is true that man is on trial for his response to God's love, there is a way in which God is on trial. His character must be seen for what it has always been, a reconciling of justice and mercy. The battleground of the ages is the human heart and the human will.

"In the day of final judgment, every lost soul will understand the nature of his own rejection of truth. The cross will be presented, and its real bearing will be seen by every mind that has been blinded by transgression. Before the vision of Calvary with its mysterious Victim, sinners will stand condemned. Every lying excuse will be swept away. Human apostasy will appear in its heinous character. Men will see what their choice has been. Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy will then have been made plain. In the judgment of the universe, God will stand clear of blame for the existence or continuance of evil. It will be demonstrated that the divine decrees are not accessory to sin. There was no defect in God's government, no cause for disaffection. When the thoughts of all hearts shall be revealed, both the loyal and the rebellious will unite in declaring, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? . . . for Thy judgments are made manifest.' " Rev. 15:3, 4."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 58.

To what extent has God's plan changed because of Satan's seeming success with man? (See Gen. 3:15 and John 17:4, 5, 10, 16, 20-26.)

God's plan has primarily been delayed. This was to provide the time for man and the universe to be given evidence that God is indeed love. This evidence was given in a thousand ways. It was symbolized throughout the era of animal sacrifices. It was climaxed in Calvary. The security of the triumph in glory has been established.

Consider how fully God's character will be vindicated. (See Phil. 2:10 and *The Great Controversy*, p. 670.)

Further Study: Rev. 15:1-8; *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 103-105

Part 2
"JUST, AND
THE JUSTIFIER"

"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

The words "at this time" refer contextually to the time of Paul. By his day the completeness of the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the whole world had been demonstrated. All that was promised in the sacrifices of the Old Testament was and is fulfilled in the Christ of the New.

Paul did declare the judgment-hour message, and he enunciated the problem succinctly: how God might justly and rightfully count a people righteous who are anything but righteous. If that message was important in Paul's time, how much more so today when God's character is openly scorned and when the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah might not even make headlines.

What is Satan's tactic now in view of the shortness of time? (See Rev. 12:12-17; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 Peter 5:8.)

Satan is interested in multiplying iniquity, thus making it harder for God to be regarded as just in forgiving sins. And the longer the evil trend of our times continues, the more people will be convinced of Satan's lies. We must tell the world that while justice seems to have been delayed, righteousness will prevail. Our redeemed lives will reveal that Christ within leads us to love righteousness and hate iniquity.

What symbol has God given to remind us of His mercy and justice? Gen. 9:12-17; Rev. 4:3.

"As the bow in the cloud is formed by the union of the sunlight and the shower, so the rainbow encircling the throne represented the combined power of mercy and justice. It is not justice alone that is to be maintained; for this would eclipse the glory of the rainbow of promise above the throne; man would see only the penalty of the law. . . . It is the mingling of judgment and mercy that makes salvation complete."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1133.

How did Jesus satisfy justice and make mercy possible? (See Isa. 53:4-11; Rom. 5:8-21.)

"Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but the death penalty must be executed. God, in the gift of His only-begotten Son, met both these requirements. By dying in man's stead, Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 340.

Further Study: Rom. 3:21-31; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91-98

**Part 3
ADOPTION
AS SONS**

On what grounds can sinners “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2)?

“When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. 4:4, 5.)

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He told them to say, “Our Father.” (Note the importance of the word *our*.) Then, after His resurrection, just before He ascended, He reinforced this thought, saying, “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). In such plain words Jesus declared our adoption into the family of God.

When we are adopted, we are placed in sonship (daughters are likewise adopted). We are elevated to the position of sonship, and we are fitted to the condition of sonship. We may be sure that God has reasons for adopting people. Reasons used by God are not always, if ever, fully apparent to us; but this is an area which we may investigate in a better, unclouded atmosphere.

John, the last living apostle, in contemplating the reasons behind man’s elevation, could only exclaim, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God” (1 John 3:1). But, as John continues, he tells us of our obligation to purify ourselves, “even as he [Jesus] is pure” (verse 3).

By what means can the life and soul of a sinner be purified? (See 1 John 3:5, 6; Heb. 9:13-15.)

The plan of salvation, in order to bring glory to God, must make full and final disposition of sin. It must provide forgiveness and restoration, adoption, tutoring, acceptance, and transformation. Those who are redeemed by their looking at the cross in faith and repentance cannot but plead for the power of the cross to purge and purify the soul from indwelling sin. They plead with the heavenly Intercessor for the indwelling of His Holy Spirit with transforming power. Yet they never cease to acclaim Christ as the sole provider of their salvation. They recognize continually that their best—in worship, in penitence, in obedience, in sacrifice—is only acceptable to God through the unfailing merits of Jesus their Lord. (See *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 344.)

How are righteousness by faith and performance of duty related?

Further Study: Rom. 8:15-25

Part 4
GOD IN HIS
PEOPLE

What will be one aspect of the joy of the redeemed when they enter with Christ into His glory?

“To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:9).

The fellowship to which Paul refers is communion between God and man in the closest of all relationships—God in man. “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). Paul then states the final goal, “that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (verse 28).

Before the end of time the world will behold a people saved by God’s grace and ascribing glory to Him by their unselfish lives. Do we see this phenomenon at present? Occasionally. But why the mad scramble, even among church members, to attain a different kind of glory, based on wealth and status, as if by these we are to impress the world?

What is the spirit of a dedicated Christian? (See Phil. 1:21.)

“When the apostle Paul, through the revelation of Christ, was converted from a persecutor to a Christian, he declared that he was as one born out of due time. Henceforward Christ was all and in all to him. ‘For me to live is Christ,’ he declared. *This is the most perfect interpretation in a few words, in all the Scriptures, of what it means to be a Christian.* . . . [Paul’s] words show that his mind was centered in Christ, that his whole life was bound up with his Lord. Christ was the author, the support, and the source of his life.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 903. (Emphasis supplied.)

What did Paul see as the basis for a sinner to have hope that he would one day dwell in glory, and reveal the glory of Christ’s character in the meantime? (See Col. 1:27.)

“Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476.

Further Study: Phil. 1:27-30; *Steps to Christ*, “Growing Up Into Christ,” pp. 67-72

What trophies will God display in eternity?

“That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7).

In the earthly life of Jesus one great impulse urged Him forward to victory: the joy of seeing souls saved eternally. This, in part, is the satisfaction that He will receive for the “travail of his soul.”

“Ever before Him, Christ saw the results of His mission. His earthly life, so full of toil and self-sacrifice, was cheered by the thought that He would not have all this travail for naught. By giving His life for the life of men, He would restore in humanity the image of God. He would lift us up from the dust, reshape the character after the pattern of His own character, and make it beautiful with His own glory.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 504.

What will provide Christ with His deepest satisfaction throughout eternity for the sacrifice which divine love undertook in the incarnation? (See Isa. 53:10, 11.)

We shall never know how much joy Christ will have in seeing the redeemed. We can never know just how much it cost Him and the Godhead to provide redemption. The one statement explains the other. The tragedy is that God’s treasure—His redeemed—sets such a low estimate upon itself. It does not believe what God wants to do or what He can do in its behalf. All Heaven was invested in the saving of God’s treasure. But Heaven will yet see such fruits in the redeemed as to feel amply repaid. The investment will bring compound interest and more for eternity. There is no way to compute the value!

We often glory over the seeming successes of our blood brothers and sisters. So our true love for Jesus, our Elder Brother, will find joy in extolling Him, both here and in eternity. He, on His part, regards us as His trophies. He will display us to those who have never fallen. We will be trophies of His grace.

We may all hear Jesus say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34).

In order to be a part of God’s eternal riches, what am I willing to do with the control of my will today?

“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*, p. 333.

Further Study: Eph. 2:1-10; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 26, 249

Part 6
WORLD FULL
OF GLORY

What must precede a full and final display of God's glory?

“Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity? For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:13, 14).

We are living at a time when many “people . . . weary themselves for very vanity.” Many of us are old enough to remember when life seemed to move at a measured pace, when one income was sufficient for one family and when people had time and inclination to visit their friends. People would attend church on Sabbath morning and visit the sick and the needy in the afternoon and also during the week.

“He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this also is vanity” (Eccl. 5:10).

What message can be preached that will promote the glory of the Lord? (See Rev. 18:1-4.)

“The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 984.

We have studied many aspects of the glory of God during this quarter. What will be the peak of this present world's reflection of glory upon the Father? (See Phil. 2:10, 11.)

In the process of bringing every knee to bow at the name of Jesus—both those who love Him and those who hate Him—God will have brought “many sons to glory” (Heb. 2:10, NIV). As a result, the original family plan of Eden will be fully restored and even exceeded. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, will call us His brothers and sisters. And it will be more than a gesture, more than a name.

He who made us holy and we who shall have been made holy will be of the same family, to the glory of God the Father. May God hasten that day! (See Heb. 2:10-13.)

Will I make God's glory the supreme goal of my life?

Further Study: Phil. 2:21

Lessons for 3rd quarter '82

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the Adult Lessons for the third quarter of 1982 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. The title of this series is "The Christian in the World."

First lesson

A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE WORLD

Memory Text, John 3:16, 17

1. *Made by God (Heb. 11:3)*
2. *Owned by God (Ps. 24:1)*
3. *The World as People (John 1:9, 10)*
4. *The World Is Evil (1 John 5:19)*
5. *Reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:19)*
6. *In the World, But. . . (John 17:15)*

Second lesson

THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD?

Memory Text, Eph. 1:12

1. *The Church a Fortress (Isa. 40:9)*
2. *The Church as Salt (Matt. 5:13)*
3. *A Holy Nation (1 Peter 2:9)*
4. *Yeast (Matt. 13:33)*
5. *Aliens and Exiles (Heb. 11:13)*
6. *Ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20)*

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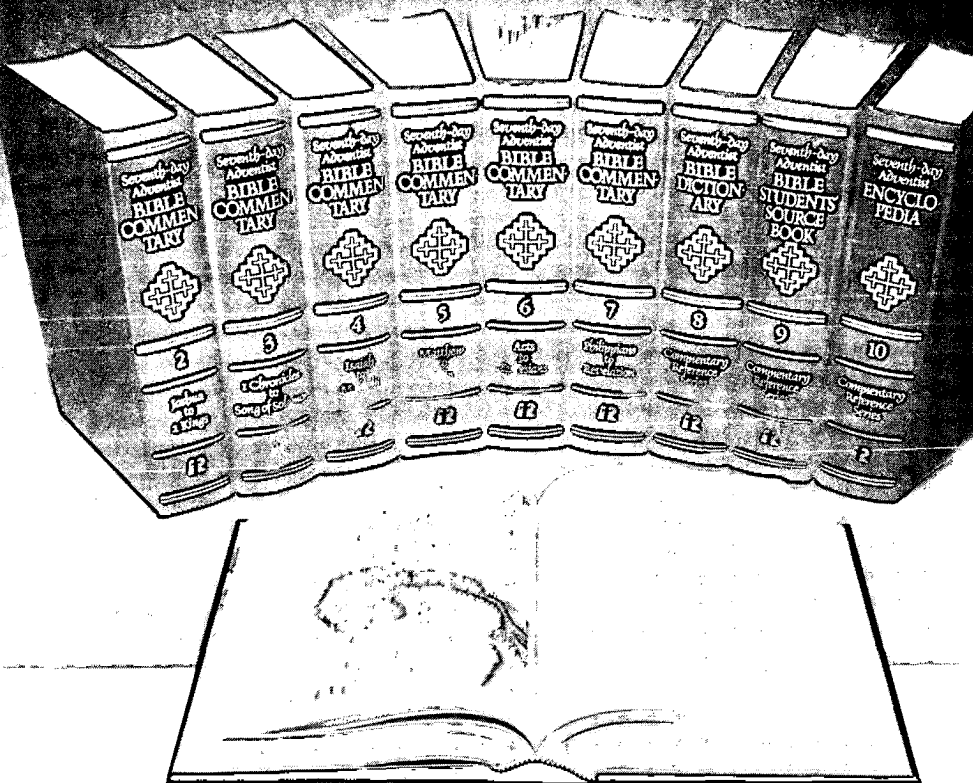
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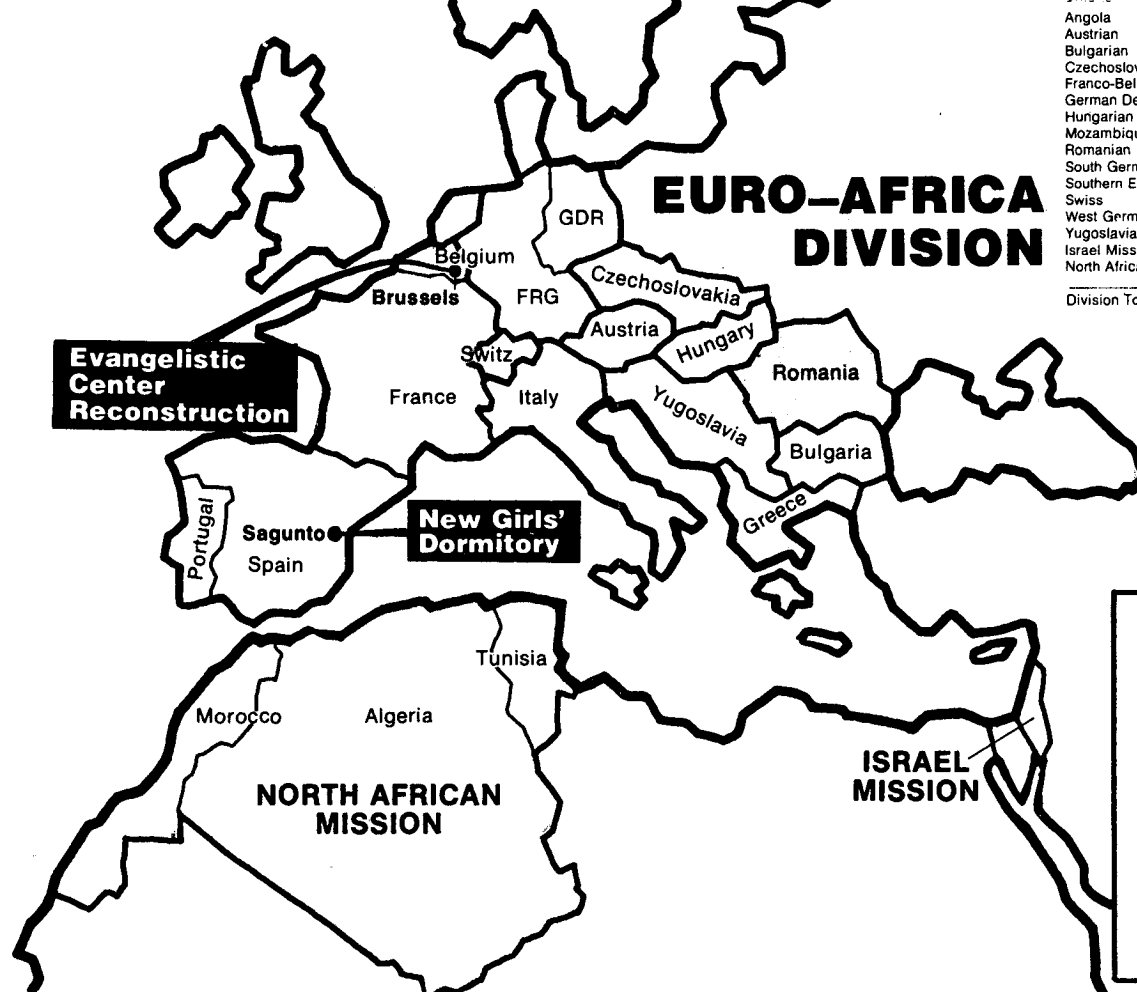


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Figures as of Fourth Quarter

