

Adult
Sabbath School
Bible Study Guide
Jul | Aug | Sep 2024

Name

The Sanctified Life



LESSON
STUDY HELPS

OVERVIEW

General Introduction for the 3rd Quarter, 2024

The Sanctified Life

‘The sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being, spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of entire consecration. Paul prays that the church at Thessalonica may enjoy this great blessing. “*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 Thessalonians 5:23]’—*The Sanctified Life*, page 7.

‘The apostle [2 Peter 1:3-11] presents before the believers the ladder of Christian progress, every step of which represents advancement in the knowledge of God, and in the climbing of which there is to be no standstill. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are the rounds of the ladder. We are saved by climbing round after round, mounting step after step, to the height of Christ’s ideal for us. Thus He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.’ —*Acts of the Apostles*, page 530.

‘The character of Christianity is decidedly practical. Self and selfish ambition has no place in the mind of him who is daily converted to God. Whatever his hereditary or cultivated tendencies may be, the Holy Spirit’s moulding power on his mind and character leads him into more and still more decided co-operation with the upbuilding of the instrumentalities God has established. Never will he take the side of the power of darkness by striving to weaken and discourage, by seeking to leaven minds with suspicion, distrust, and jealousy. Those who will stand firm as a rock to principle will not become corrupted with the leaven of deception and disaffection.

‘The will of man is safe only when united with the will of God. When merged into the will of God it is a will joined to conscience, rightly exercised in advancing the honour and glory of God. The Lord has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, and the strength. Thus He has taken the whole man. Under the supervision of the divine power the will is to be cultivated to become strong, prompt, firm. It is not to fail nor become discouraged.

‘God’s word sets forth the will that is to be carried into the recesses of the soul. If the human agent consents, God can and will so identify His will with all our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His word, that when obeying His will we are only carrying out the impulses of our minds. All such will not possess an unsanctified, selfish disposition, ready to carry out their own wills, but will have a jealous, earnest, determined zeal for the glory of God. They will not want to do anything in their own strength, and will guard strictly against the danger of promoting self.

‘All who would perfect a Christian character must wear the yoke of Christ. If they would sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, they must learn of Him while on this earth.’ —*Bible Echo*, July 20, 1896.

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LESSON 1

“HOW GOD COMMUNICATES WITH MAN”

March 30 — April 5

? STUDY HELPS : ✓ The Great Controversy, pages 465-472

The Great Controversy**Chapter 27, pp. 465-472****“Modern Revivals”**

In the truths of his Word, God has given to men a revelation of himself; and to all who accept them they are a shield against the deceptions of Satan. It is a neglect of these truths that has opened the door to the evils which are now becoming so widespread in the religious world. The nature and the importance of the law of God have been, to a great extent, lost sight of. A wrong conception of the character, the perpetuity, and obligation of the divine law has led to errors in relation to conversion and sanctification, and has resulted in lowering the standard of piety in the church. Here is to be found the secret of the lack of the Spirit and power of God in the revivals of our time. {GC88 465.1}

There are, in the various denominations, men eminent for their piety, by whom this fact is acknowledged and deplored. Prof. Edward Park, in setting forth the current religious perils, ably says: “One source of danger is the neglect of the pulpit to enforce the divine law. In former days the pulpit was an echo of the voice of conscience. . . . Our most illustrious preachers gave a wonderful majesty to their discourses by following the example of the Master, and giving prominence to the law, its precepts, and its threatenings. They repeated the two great maxims, that the law is a transcript of the divine perfections, and that a man who does not love the law does not love the gospel; for the law, as well as the gospel, is a mirror reflecting the true character of God. This peril leads to another, that of underrating the evil of sin, the extent of it, the demerit of it. In proportion to the rightfulness of the commandment is the wrongfulness of disobeying it.” {GC88 465.2}

“Affiliated to the dangers already named is the danger of underestimating the justice of God. The tendency of the modern pulpit is to strain out the divine justice from the divine benevolence, to sink benevolence into a sentiment rather than exalt it into a principle. The new theological prism puts asunder what God has joined together. Is the divine law a good or an evil? It is a good. Then justice is good; for it is a disposition to execute the law. From the habit of underrating the divine law and justice, the extent and demerit of human disobedience, men easily slide into the habit of underestimating the grace which has provided an atonement for sin.” Thus the gospel loses its value and importance in the minds of men, and soon they are ready to practically cast aside the Bible itself. {GC88 465.3}

Many religious teachers assert that Christ by his death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke, and in contrast to the bondage of the law, they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel. {GC88 466.1}

But not so did prophets and apostles regard the holy law of God. Said David, “I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts.” [Psalm 119:45.] The apostle James, who wrote after the death of Christ, refers to the Decalogue as the “royal law,” and the “perfect law of liberty.” [James 2:8; 1:25.] And the Revelator, half a century after the crucifixion, pronounces a blessing upon them “that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” [Revelation 22:14.] {GC88 466.2}

The claim that Christ by his death abolished his Father's law, is without foundation. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves that it is immutable. The Son of God came to “magnify the law, and make it honourable.” [Isaiah 42:21.] He said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law;” “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law.” [Matthew 5:17, 18.] And concerning himself he declares, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” [Psalm 40:8.] {GC88 466.3}

The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and the character of its Author. God is love, and his law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and man. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” [Romans 13:10.] The character of God is righteousness and truth; such is the nature of his law. Says the psalmist, “Thy law is the truth;” “all thy commandments are righteousness.” [Psalm 119:142, 172.] And the apostle

Paul declares, “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” [Romans 7:12.] Such a law, being an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author. {GC88 466.4}

It is the work of conversion and sanctification to reconcile men to God, by bringing them into accord with the principles of his law. In the beginning, man was created in the image of God. He was in perfect harmony with the nature and the law of God; the principles of righteousness were written upon his heart. But sin alienated him from his Maker. He no longer reflected the divine image. His heart was at war with the principles of God's law. “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” [Romans 8:7.] But “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,” that man might be reconciled to God. Through the merits of Christ he can be restored to harmony with his Maker. His heart must be renewed by divine grace, he must have a new life from above. This change is the new birth, without which, says Jesus, “he cannot see the kingdom of God.” {GC88 467.1}

The first step in reconciliation to God, is the conviction of sin. “Sin is the transgression of the law.” “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” [1 John 3:4; Romans 3:20.] In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God's great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character, and enables him to discern the defects in his own. {GC88 467.2}

The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. He must exercise repentance toward God, whose law has been transgressed, and faith in Christ, his atoning sacrifice. Thus he obtains “remission of sins that are past,” and becomes a partaker of the divine nature. He is a child of God, having received the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries, “Abba, Father!” {GC88 467.3}

Is he now free to transgress God's law? Says Paul: “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.” “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” And John declares, “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” [Romans 3:31; 6:2; 1 John 5:3.] In the new birth the heart is brought into harmony with God, as it is brought into accord with his law. When this mighty change has taken place in the sinner, he has passed from death unto life, from sin unto holiness, from transgression and rebellion to obedience and loyalty. The old life of alienation from God has ended; the new life of reconciliation, of faith and love, has begun. Then “the righteousness of the law” will “be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” [Romans 8:4.] And the language of the soul will be, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.” [Psalm 119:97.] {GC88 468.1}

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” [Psalm 19:7.] Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God, or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin, and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God's law, they do not realize their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ. {GC88 468.2}

Erroneous theories of sanctification, also, springing from neglect or rejection of the divine law, have a prominent place in the religious movements of the day. These theories are both false in doctrine, and dangerous in practical results; and the fact that they are so generally finding favour renders it doubly essential that all have a clear understanding of what the Scriptures teach upon this point. {GC88 468.3}

True sanctification is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonian church, declares, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” And he prays, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.” [1 Thessalonians 4:3; 5:23.] The Bible clearly teaches what sanctification is, and how it is to be attained. The Saviour prayed for his disciples, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth.” [John 17:17, 19.] And Paul teaches that believers are to be “sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” [Romans 15:16.] What is the work of the Holy Spirit? Jesus told his disciples, “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” [John 16:13.] And the psalmist says, “Thy law is the truth.” By the Word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in his law. And since the law of God is “holy, and just, and good,” a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says, “I have kept my Father's commandments.” “I do always those things that please him.” [John 15:10; 8:29.] The followers of Christ are to become like him,—by the grace of God, to form characters in harmony with the principles of his holy law. This is Bible sanctification. {GC88 469.1}

This work can be accomplished only through faith in Christ, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. Paul

admonishes believers, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." [Philippians 2:12, 13.] The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it. Here is where Christ's help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." [1 Corinthians 15:57.] {GC88 469.2}

The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to "go on unto perfection;" to grow up "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Says the apostle Paul: "This one thing I do, 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." [Philippians 3:13, 14.] And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be attained: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. . . . If ye do these things, ye shall never fall." [2 Peter 1:5-10.] {GC88 470.1}

Those who experience the sanctification of the Bible will manifest a spirit of humility. Like Moses, they have had a view of the awful majesty of holiness, and they see their own unworthiness, in contrast with the purity and exalted perfection of the Infinite One. {GC88 470.2}

The prophet Daniel was an example of true sanctification. His long life was filled up with noble service for his Master. He was a man "greatly beloved" [Daniel 10:11.] of Heaven. Yet instead of claiming to be pure and holy, this honoured prophet identified himself with the really sinful of Israel, as he pleaded before God in behalf of his people: "We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies." "We have sinned, we have done wickedly." He declares, "I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people." And when at a later time the Son of God appeared, to give him instruction, he declares, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." [Daniel 9:18, 15, 20; 10:8.] {GC88 470.3}

When Job heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, he exclaimed, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." [Job 42:6.] It was when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord, and heard the cherubim crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts," that he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone." [Isaiah 6:3, 5.] Paul, after he was caught up into the third heaven, and heard things which it was not possible for a man to utter, speaks of himself as "less than the least of all saints." [2 Corinthians 12:2-4 (MARGIN); Ephesians 3:8.] It was the beloved John, that leaned on Jesus' breast, and beheld his glory, who fell as one dead before the feet of the angel. [Revelation 22:8.] {GC88 471.1}

There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary's cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and this thought will lead them to self-abasement. Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour. {GC88 471.2}

The sanctification now gaining prominence in the religious world, carries with it a spirit of self-exaltation, and a disregard for the law of God, that mark it as foreign to the religion of the Bible. Its advocates teach that sanctification is an instantaneous work, by which, through faith alone, they attain to perfect holiness. "Only believe," say they, "and the blessing is yours." No further effort on the part of the receiver is supposed to be required. At the same time they deny the authority of the law of God, urging that they are released from obligation to keep the commandments. But is it possible for men to be holy, in accord with the will and character of God, without coming into harmony with the principles which are an expression of his nature and will, and which show what is well-pleasing to him? {GC88 471.3}

The desire for an easy religion, that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the Word of God? Says the apostle James: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." [James 2:14-24.] {GC88 472.1}

The testimony of the Word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favour of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted. It is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures. {GC88 472.2}

Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while wilfully violating one of God's requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. "Sin is the transgression of the law." And "whosoever sins [transgresses the law] hath not seen him, neither known him." [1 John 3:6.] Though John in his epistles dwells so fully upon love, yet he does not hesitate to reveal the true character of that class who claim to be sanctified while living in transgression of the law of God. "He that saith, I know Him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." [1 John 2:4, 5.] Here is the test of every man's profession. We cannot accord holiness to any man without bringing him to the measurement of God's only standard of holiness in Heaven and in earth. If men feel no weight of the moral law, if they belittle and make light of God's precepts, if they break one of the least of these commandments, and teach men so, they shall be of no esteem in the sight of Heaven, and we may know that their claims are without foundation. {GC88 472.3}

LESSON 2

“THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT”

July 6 — July 12

? STUDY HELP : ✓ The Sanctified Life, pages 7-16.

*E. G. W. Study Help 2**Sabbath, July 6th, 2024***The Sanctified Life****Chapter 1, p. 7-16****True and False Theories Contrasted**

The sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being--spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of entire consecration. Paul prays that the church at Thessalonica may enjoy this great blessing. "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 Thessalonians 5:23). {SL 7.1}

There is in the religious world a theory of sanctification which is false in itself and dangerous in its influence. In many cases those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine article. Their sanctification consists in talk and will worship. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to His divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects. {SL 7.2}

When persons claim that they are sanctified, they give sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ, because they have no true knowledge of Him. The greater the distance between them and their Saviour, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes. {SL 8.1}

While with penitence and humble trust we meditate upon Jesus, whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in His footsteps. By beholding Him we become changed into His divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we shall claim no righteousness of our own, but shall exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon His merits. {SL 8.2}

Self-righteousness Condemned

Our Saviour ever condemned self-righteousness. He taught His disciples that the highest type of religion is that which manifests itself in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. He cautioned them to perform their deeds of charity quietly; not for display, not to be praised or honoured of men, but for the glory of God, expecting their reward hereafter. If they should perform good deeds to be lauded by men, no reward would be given them by their Father in heaven. {SL 8.3}

The followers of Christ were instructed not to pray for the purpose of being heard of men. "But thou, when thou pray, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:6). Such expressions as this from the lips of Christ show that He did not regard with approval that kind of piety so prevalent among the Pharisees. His teachings upon the mount show that deeds of benevolence assume a noble form and acts of religious worship shed a most precious fragrance when performed in an unpretending manner, in penitence and humility. The pure motive sanctifies the act. {SL 8.4}

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They are not bigoted or self-righteousness; but they are jealous of self, ever fearing lest, a promise being left them, they should come short of complying with the conditions upon which the promises are based. {SL 9.1}

Substituting Feeling for Reason

Many who profess sanctification are entirely ignorant of the work of grace upon the heart. When proved and tested, they are found to be like the self-righteous Pharisee. They will bear no contradiction. They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. They are stubborn and perverse in urging their tenacious claims of holiness, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified persons are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, "God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!" Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend. But it is that which is altogether unlike Christ, the only true pattern. {SL 9.2}

Bible sanctification does not consist in strong emotion. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful. {SL 10.1}

There are those claiming sanctification who make a profession of the truth, like their brethren, and it may be difficult to make a distinction between them; but the difference exists, nevertheless. The testimony of those claiming such an exalted experience will cause the sweet Spirit of Christ to withdraw from a meeting, and will leave a chilling influence upon those present, while if they were truly living without sin, their very presence would bring holy angels into the assembly, and their words would indeed be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11). {SL 10.2}

The Testing Time

In summer, as we look upon the trees of the distant forest, all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not be able to distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as winter approaches, and the frost king encloses them in his icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens are readily discerned. Thus it will be with all who are walking in humility, distrustful of self, but clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. While those who are self-confident, and trust in their own perfection of character, lose their false robe of righteousness when subjected to the storms of trial, the truly righteous, who sincerely love and fear God, wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in prosperity and adversity alike. {SL 11.1}

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed, and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him who sees the secrets of the heart, notices and regards with approval every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the pure gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of Christ's true followers are developed. {SL 11.2}

We feel sad to see professed Christians led astray by the false and bewitching theory that they are perfect, because it is so difficult to undeceive them and lead them into the right path. They have sought to make the exterior fair and pleasing, while the inward adorning, the meekness and lowliness of Christ, is wanting. The testing time will come to all, when the hopes of many who have for years thought themselves secure, will be seen to be without foundation. When in new positions, under varied circumstances, some who have seemed to be pillars in the house of God reveal only rotten timber beneath the paint and varnish. But the humble in heart, who have daily felt the importance of riveting their souls to the eternal Rock, will stand unmoved amid the tempests of trial, because they trusted not to themselves. "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19). {SL 12.1}

Normal Fruit Bearing

Those who take pains to call attention to their good works, constantly talking of their sinless state and endeavouring to make their religious attainments prominent, are only deceiving their own souls by so doing. A healthy man, who is able to attend to the vocations of life and who goes forth day after day to his labour with buoyant spirits and with a healthy current of blood flowing through his veins, does not call the attention of every one he meets to his soundness of body. Health and vigour are the natural conditions of his life, and therefore he is scarcely conscious that he is in the enjoyment of so rich a boon. {SL 12.2}

Thus it is with the truly righteous man. He is unconscious of his goodness and piety. Religious principle has become the spring of his life and conduct, and it is just as natural for him to bear the fruits of the Spirit as for the fig tree to bear figs or for the rosebush to yield roses. His nature is so thoroughly imbued with love for God and his fellow men that he works the works of Christ with a willing heart. {SL 13.1}

All who come within the sphere of his influence perceive the beauty and fragrance of his Christian life, while he himself is unconscious of it, for it is in harmony with his habits and inclinations. He prays for divine light, and loves to walk in that light. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father. His life is hid with Christ in God; yet he does not boast of this, nor seem conscious of it. God smiles upon the humble and lowly ones who follow closely in the footsteps of the Master. Angels are attracted to them, and love to linger about their path. They may be passed by as unworthy of notice by those who claim exalted attainments and who delight in making prominent their good works, but heavenly angels bend lovingly over them and are as a wall of fire round about them. {SL 13.2}

Why Christ Was Rejected

Our Saviour was the light of the world, but the world knew Him not. He was constantly employed in works of mercy, shedding light upon the pathway of all; yet He did not call upon those with whom He mingled to behold His unexampled virtue, His self-denial, self-sacrifice, and benevolence. The Jews did not admire such a life. They considered His religion worthless, because it did not accord with their standard of piety. They decided that Christ was not religious in spirit or character; for their religion consisted in display, in praying publicly, and in doing works of charity for effect. They trumpeted their good deeds, as do those who claim sanctification. They would have all understand that they are without sin. But the whole life of Christ was in direct contrast to this. He sought neither gain nor honour. His wonderful acts of healing were performed in as quiet a manner as possible, although He could not restrain the enthusiasm of those who were the recipients of His great blessings. Humility and meekness characterized His life. And it was because of His lowly walk and unassuming manners, which were in such marked contrast to their own, that the Pharisees would not accept Him. {SL 14.1}

Meekness a Fruit of the Spirit

The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God and a submission of the will to His. The understanding grasps every divine truth, and the will bows to every divine precept, without doubting or murmuring. True meekness softens and subdues the heart and gives the mind a fitness for the engrafted word. It brings the thoughts into obedience to Jesus Christ. It opens the heart to the word of God, as Lydia's was opened. It places us with Mary, as learners at the feet of Jesus. "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Psalm 25:9). {SL 14.2}

The language of the meek is never that of boasting. Like the child Samuel, they pray, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant hears" (1 Samuel 3:9). When Joshua was placed in the highest position of honour, as commander of Israel, he bade defiance to all the enemies of God. His heart was filled with noble thoughts of his great mission. Yet upon the intimation of a message from Heaven he placed himself in the position of a little child to be directed. "What saith my lord unto his servant?" (Joshua 5:14), was his response. The first words of Paul after Christ was revealed to him were, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). {SL 15.1}

Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to control a rash and impetuous temper. When the grace of meekness is cherished by those who are naturally sour or hasty in disposition, they will put forth the most earnest efforts to subdue their unhappy temper. Every day they will gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered. They become assimilated to the Divine Pattern, until they can obey the inspired injunction, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). {SL 15.2}

When a man professes to be sanctified, and yet in words and works may be represented by the impure fountain sending forth its bitter waters, we may safely say, That man is deceived. He needs to learn the very alphabet of what constitutes the life of a Christian. Some who profess to be servants of Christ have so long cherished the demon of unkindness that they seem to love the unhallowed element and to take pleasure in speaking words that displease and irritate. These men must be converted before Christ will acknowledge them as His children. {SL 16.1}

Meekness is the inward adorning, which God estimates as of great price. The apostle speaks of this as more excellent and valuable than gold or pearls or costly array. While the outward adorning beautifies only the mortal body, the ornament of meekness adorns the soul and connects finite man with the infinite God. This is the ornament of God's own choice. He who garnished the heavens with the orbs of light has by the same Spirit promised that "he will beautify the meek with salvation" (Psalm 149:4). Angels of heaven will register as best adorned those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ and walk with Him in meekness and lowliness of mind. {SL 16.2}

There are high attainments for the Christian. He may ever be rising to higher attainments. John had an elevated idea of the privilege of a Christian. He says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1). It is not possible for humanity to rise to a higher dignity than is here implied. To man is granted the privilege of becoming an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. To those who have been thus exalted, are unfolded the unsearchable riches of Christ, which are of a thousandfold more value than the wealth of the world. Thus, through the merits of Jesus Christ, finite man is elevated to fellowship with God and with His dear Son. {SL 16.3}

LESSON 3

“IT WAS IMPUTED TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS”

July 13 — July 19

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Faith & Works, pages 47-50

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, July 13th, 2024***Faith and Works
Chapter 5, pages 47-50****Faith and Works**

MORNING TALK AT BASEL, SWITZERLAND, SEPTEMBER 17, 1885. PUBLISHED IN SIGNS OF THE TIMES, JUNE 16, 1890.

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). There are many in the Christian world who claim that all that is necessary to salvation is to have faith; works are nothing, faith is the only essential. But God's Word tells us that faith without works is dead, being alone. Many refuse to obey God's commandments, yet they make a great deal of faith. But faith must have a foundation. {FW 47.1}

God's promises are all made upon conditions. If we do His will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavour to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but He will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey His commandments, we may cry, "Faith, faith, only have faith," and the response will come back from the sure Word of God, "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God's grace we must do our part; we must faithfully work and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. {FW 47.2}

We are workers together with God. You are not to sit in indolence, waiting for some great occasion, in order to do a great work for the Master. You are not to neglect the duty that lies directly in your pathway, but you are to improve the little opportunities that open around you. . . . {FW 47.3}

To Wrestle, Labour, and Strive

We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labour, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. We are to set the Lord ever before us. With clean hands, with pure hearts, we are to seek to honour God in all our ways. Help has been provided for us in Him who is mighty to save. The spirit of truth and light will quicken and renew us by its mysterious workings; for all our spiritual improvement comes from God, not from ourselves. The true worker will have divine power to aid him, but the idler will not be sustained by the Spirit of God. {FW 48.1}

In one way we are thrown upon our own energies; we are to strive earnestly to be zealous and to repent, to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts from every defilement; we are to reach the highest standard, believing that God will help us in our efforts. We must seek if we would find, and seek in faith; we must knock, that the door may be opened unto us. The Bible teaches that everything regarding our salvation depends upon our own course of action. If we perish, the responsibility will rest wholly upon ourselves. If provision has been made, and if we accept God's terms, we may lay hold on eternal life. We must come to Christ in faith, we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure. {FW 48.2}

The forgiveness of sin is promised to him who repents and believes; the crown of life will be the reward of him who is faithful to the end. We may grow in grace by improving through the grace we already have. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world if we would be found blameless in the day of God. Faith and works go hand in hand; they act harmoniously in the work of overcoming. Works without faith are dead, and faith without works is dead. Works will never save us; it is the merit of Christ that will avail in our behalf. Through faith in Him, Christ will make all our imperfect efforts acceptable to God. The faith we are required to have is not a do-nothing faith;

saving faith is that which works by love and purifies the soul. He who will lift up holy hands to God without wrath and doubting will walk intelligently in the way of God's commandments. {FW 48.3}

If we are to have pardon for our sins, we must first have a realization of what sin is, that we may repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We must have a solid foundation for our faith; it must be founded on the Word of God, and its results will be seen in obedience to God's expressed will. Says the apostle, "Without . . . [holiness] no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). {FW 49.1}

Faith and works will keep us evenly balanced and make us successful in the work of perfecting Christian character. Jesus says, "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter in the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Speaking of temporal food, the apostle said, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). The same rule applies to our spiritual nourishment; if any would have the bread of eternal life, let him make efforts to obtain it. {FW 49.2}

We are living in an important and interesting period of this earth's history. We need more faith than we have yet had; we need a firmer hold from above. Satan is working with all power to obtain the victory over us, for he knows that he has but a short time in which to work. Paul had fear and trembling in working out his salvation; and should not we fear lest a promise being left us, we should any of us seem to come short of it, and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life? We should watch unto prayer, strive with agonizing effort to enter in at the strait gate. {FW 49.3}

Jesus Makes Up for Our Deficiency

There is no excuse for sin or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and He wishes us to follow in His steps. He has suffered, He has sacrificed as none of us can, that He might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through His grace, we might be transformed into His likeness. {FW 49.4}

When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and He makes up for the deficiency with His own divine merit. But He will not accept those who claim to have faith in Him and yet are disloyal to His Father's commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easy-going, accommodating, crossless religion. {FW 50.1}

But Jesus says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matthew 16:24). {FW 50.2}

LESSON 4

“DANIEL PURPOSED IN HIS HEART”

July 20 — July 26

? STUDY HELP : ✓ The Sanctified Life, pages 18-23

The Sanctified Life Chapter 2, pages 18-23

Daniel's Temperance Principles

The prophet Daniel was an illustrious character. He was a bright example of what men may become when united with the God of wisdom. A brief account of the life of this holy man of God is left on record for the encouragement of those who should afterward be called to endure trial and temptation. {SL 18.1}

When the people of Israel, their king, nobles, and priests were carried into captivity, four of their number were selected to serve in the court of the king of Babylon. One of these was Daniel, who early gave promise of the remarkable ability developed in later years. These youth were all of princely birth, and are described as "children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them" (Daniel 1:4). Perceiving the superior talents of these youthful captives, King Nebuchadnezzar determined to prepare them to fill important positions in his kingdom. That they might be fully qualified for their life at court, according to Oriental custom, they were to be taught the language of the Chaldeans, and to be subjected for three years to a thorough course of physical and intellectual discipline. {SL 18.2}

The youth in this school of training were not only to be admitted to the royal palace, but it was provided that they should eat of the meat and drink of the wine which came from the king's table. In all this the king considered that he was not only bestowing great honour upon them, but securing for them the best physical and mental development that could be attained. {SL 19.1}

Meeting the Test

Among the viands placed before the king were swine's flesh and other meats which were declared unclean by the law of Moses, and which the Hebrews had been expressly forbidden to eat. Here Daniel was brought to a severe test. Should he adhere to the teachings of his fathers concerning meats and drinks, and offend the king, and probably lose not only his position but his life? or should he disregard the commandment of the Lord, and retain the favour of the king, thus securing great intellectual advantages and the most flattering worldly prospects? {SL 19.2}

Daniel did not long hesitate. He decided to stand firm in his integrity, let the result be what it might. He "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank" (Daniel 1:8). {SL 19.3}

Not Narrow or Bigoted

There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking as of too little consequence to require such a decided stand--one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly advantage. But those who reason thus will find in the day of judgment that they turned from God's express requirements and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They will find that what seemed to them unimportant was not so regarded of God. His requirements should be sacredly obeyed. Those who accept and obey one of His precepts because it is convenient to do so, while they reject another because its observance would require a sacrifice, lower the standard

of right and by their example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God. "Thus saith the Lord" is to be our rule in all things. {SL 19.4}

A Faultless Character

Daniel was subjected to the severest temptations that can assail the youth of today; yet he was true to the religious instruction received in early life. He was surrounded with influences calculated to subvert those who would vacillate between principle and inclination; yet the Word of God presents him as a faultless character. Daniel dared not trust to his own moral power. Prayer was to him a necessity. He made God his strength, and the fear of God was continually before him in all the transactions of his life. {SL 20.1}

Daniel possessed the grace of genuine meekness. He was true, firm, and noble. He sought to live in 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. {SL 20.2}

The character of Daniel is presented to the world as a striking example of what God's grace can make of men fallen by nature and corrupted by sin. The record of his noble, self-denying life is an encouragement to our common humanity. From it we may gather strength to nobly resist temptation, and firmly, and in the grace of meekness, stand for the right under the severest trial. {SL 21.1}

God's Approval Dearer Than Life

Daniel might have found a plausible excuse to depart from his strictly temperate habits; but the approval of God was dearer to him than the favour of the most powerful earthly potentate--dearer even than life itself. Having by his courteous conduct obtained favour with Melzar, the officer in charge of the Hebrew youth, Daniel made a request that they might not eat of the king's meat or drink of his wine. Melzar feared that should he comply with this request, he might incur the displeasure of the king, and thus endanger his own life. Like many at the present day, he thought that an abstemious diet would render these youth pale and sickly in appearance and deficient in muscular strength, while the luxurious food from the king's table would make them ruddy and beautiful and would promote physical and mental activity. {SL 21.2}

Daniel requested that the matter be decided by a ten days' trial--the Hebrew youth during this brief period being permitted to eat of simple food, while their companions partook of the king's dainties. The request was finally granted, and then Daniel felt assured that he had gained his case. Although but a youth, he had seen the injurious effects of wine and luxurious living upon physical and mental health. {SL 22.1}

God Vindicates His Servant

At the end of the ten days the result was found to be quite the opposite of Melzar's expectations. Not only in personal appearance, but in physical activity and mental vigour, those who had been temperate in their habits exhibited a marked superiority over their companions who had indulged appetite. As a result of this trial, Daniel and his associates were permitted to continue their simple diet during the whole course of their training for the duties of the kingdom. {SL 22.2}

The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of these Hebrew youth, and His blessing attended them. He "gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams" (Daniel 1:17). At the expiration of the three years of training, when their ability and acquirements were tested by the king, he "found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (verse 20). {SL 22.3}

Self-control a Condition of Sanctification

The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. It presents a lesson for all, and especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life. In the experience of Daniel and his companions we have an instance of the triumph of principle over temptation to indulge the appetite. It shows us that through religious principle young men may triumph over the lusts of the flesh and remain true to God's requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice. {SL 23.1}

What if Daniel and his companions had made a compromise with those heathen officers and had yielded to the pressure of the occasion by eating and drinking as was customary with the Babylonians? That single instance of departure from principle would have weakened their sense of right and their abhorrence of wrong. Indulgence of appetite would have involved the sacrifice of physical vigour, clearness of intellect, and spiritual power. One wrong step would probably have led to others, until, their connection with Heaven being severed, they would have been swept away by temptation. {SL 23.2}

God has said, "Them that honour me I will honour" (1 Samuel 2:30). While Daniel clung to his God with unwavering trust, the Spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While he was instructed of man in the duties of court life, he was taught of God to read the mysteries of future ages and to present to coming generations, through figures and similitudes, the wonderful things that would come to pass in the last days. {SL 24.1}

LESSON 5

“UNTO OBEDIENCE”

July 27 — August 2

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Acts of the Apostles, pages 559-561

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, July 27th, 2024***Acts of the Apostles
Chapter 55, pages 559-561****Transformed By Grace**

Such transformation of character as is seen in the life of John is ever the result of communion with Christ. There may be marked defects in the character of an individual, yet when he becomes a true disciple of Christ, the power of divine grace transforms and sanctifies him. Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed from glory to glory, until he is like Him whom he adores. {AA 559.1}

John was a teacher of holiness, and in his letters to the church he laid down unerring rules for the conduct of Christians. "Every man that hath this hope in him," he wrote, "purifies himself, even as He is pure." "He that saith he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 3:3; 2:6. He taught that the Christian must be pure in heart and life. Never should he be satisfied with an empty profession. As God is holy in His sphere, so fallen man, through faith in Christ, is to be holy in his sphere. {AA 559.2}

"This is the will of God," the apostle Paul wrote, "even your sanctification." 1 Thessalonians 4:3. The sanctification of the church is God's object in all His dealings with His people. He has chosen them from eternity, that they might be holy. He gave His Son to die for them, that they might be sanctified through obedience to the truth, divested of all the littleness of self. From them He requires a personal work, a personal surrender. God can be honoured by those who profess to believe in Him, only as they are conformed to His image and controlled by His Spirit. Then, as witnesses for the Saviour, they may make known what divine grace has done for them. {AA 559.3}

True sanctification comes through the working out of the principle of love. "God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16. The life of him in whose heart Christ abides, will reveal practical godliness. The character will be purified, elevated, ennobled, and glorified. Pure doctrine will blend with works of righteousness; heavenly precepts will mingle with holy practices. {AA 560.1}

Those who would gain the blessing of sanctification must first learn the meaning of self-sacrifice. The cross of Christ is the central pillar on which hangs the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "If any man will come after Me," Christ says, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." 2 Corinthians 4:17; Matthew 16:24. It is the fragrance of our love for our fellow men that reveals our love for God. It is patience in service that brings rest to the soul. It is through humble, diligent, faithful toil that the welfare of Israel is promoted. God upholds and strengthens the one who is willing to follow in Christ's way. {AA 560.2}

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience. {AA 560.3}

None of the apostles and prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived the nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God has honoured with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. {AA 561.1}

So will it be with all who behold Christ. The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen. We shall know that our sufficiency is in Christ alone and shall make the apostle's confession our own: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Romans 7:18; Galatians 6:14. {AA 561.2}

Let the recording angels write the history of the holy struggles and conflicts of the people of God; let them record their prayers and tears; but let not God be dishonoured by the declaration from human lips, "I am sinless; I am holy." Sanctified lips will never give utterance to such presumptuous words. {AA 561.3}

LESSON 6

“BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND”

August 3 — August 9

? STUDY HELP : ✓ My Life Today, page 318

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, August 3rd, 2024***My Life Today,****Chapter 11, A Victorious Life, p. 318****November 10****The Will is the Deciding Power**

Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. [Romans 12:2]

There is nothing that can keep you away from God but a rebellious will.

The will is the governing power in the nature of man. If the will is set right, all the rest of the being will come under its sway. The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the choice, the deciding power, the kingly power, which works in the children of men unto obedience to God or to disobedience.

You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises and your faith are of no account until you put your will on the right side. If you will fight the fight of faith with your will power, there is no doubt that you will conquer.

Your part is to put your will on the side of Christ. When you yield your will to His, He immediately takes possession of you, and works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure. Your nature is brought under the control of His Spirit. Even your thoughts are subject to Him. If you cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, you can control the will, and thus an entire change will be wrought in your life. When you yield up your will to Christ, your life is hid with Christ in God. It is allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You have a strength from God that holds you fast to His strength; and a new life, even the life of faith, is possible to you.

You can never be successful in elevating yourself, unless your will is on the side of Christ, cooperating with the Spirit of God. Do not feel that you cannot; but say, "I can, I will." And God has pledged His Holy Spirit to help you in every decided effort.

LESSON 7

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”

August 10 — August 16

? STUDY HELP : ✓ The Faith I Live By, page 19.

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, August 10th, 2024***The Faith I Live By
Chapter 1, p. 19****January 12****The Secret of Power****Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.****Psalm 119:9**

It is one thing to treat the Bible as a book of good moral instruction, to be heeded so far as is consistent with the spirit of the times and our position in the world; it is another thing to regard it as it really is—the Word of the living God, the Word that is our life, the Word that is to mould our actions, our words, and our thoughts. To hold God's Word anything less than this is to reject it.

The Word of God is a character-detector, a motive-tester. We are to read this Word with heart and mind open to receive the impressions that God will give. We must not think that the reading of the Word can accomplish that which only He whom the Word reveals, who stands behind the Word, can accomplish. Some are in danger of hastening to the conclusion that because they hold firmly to the doctrines of the truth, they are actually in possession of the blessings which these doctrines declare shall come to the receiver of truth. Many keep the truth in the outer court. Its sacred principles have not a controlling influence over the words, the thoughts, the actions.

In this perilous day of evil, when allurements to vice and corruption are on every hand, let the earnest, heartfelt cry of the young be raised to heaven: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" And may his ears be open and his heart inclined to obey the instruction given in the answer: "By taking heed thereto according to thy word." The only safety for the youth in this age of pollution is to make God their trust. Without divine help they will be unable to control human passions and appetites. In Christ is the very help needed.

Truth must reach down to the deepest recesses of the soul, and cleanse away everything unlike the spirit of Christ, and the vacuum be supplied by the attributes of His character who was pure and holy and undefiled, that all the springs of the heart may be as flowers, fragrant with perfume, a sweet smelling savour, a savour of life unto life.

LESSON 8

“HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS”

August 17 — August 23

? STUDY HELP : ✓ That I May Know Him, page 361

E. G. W. Study Help 1***Sabbath, August 17th, 2024*****That I May Know Him
Chapter 12, p. 361****December 21****Robed in His Perfection**

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

1 John 2:28

Jesus came into the world to save sinners, not in their sins but from their sins, and to sanctify them through the truth; and in order that He may become a perfect Saviour to us, we must enter into union with Him by a personal act of faith. Christ has chosen us, we have chosen Him, and by this choice we become united to Him and are to live from henceforth, not unto ourselves, but unto Him who has died for us. But this union can only be preserved by constant watchfulness, lest we fall into temptation and make a different choice, for we are free always to take another master if we so desire. Union with Christ means an unfailing preference for Him in every act and thought.

We are to consider ourselves as constituting the family of Christ, and we are to follow Him as dear children. Adopted into the household of God, shall we not honour our Father and our kindred? . . .

We must establish an unyielding enmity between our souls and our foe, but we must open our hearts to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. We want Satan's darkness to be shut out and the light of Heaven to flow in. We want to become so sensitive to holy influences that the lightest whisper of Jesus will move our souls. . . . Then we shall delight to do the will of God, and Christ can own us before the Father and before the holy angels as those who abide in Him. . . .

But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotless and infinite purity we shall feel as did Daniel when he beheld the glory of the Lord and said, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption" (Daniel 10:8). We cannot say, "I am sinless" till this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus, the blessed hope is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, complete in Christ, robed in His righteousness and perfection.

LESSON 9

“THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS”

August 24 — August 30

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Maranatha, The Lord is Coming, page 95

E. G. W. Study Help 1***Sabbath, August 24th, 2024*****Maranatha, The Lord is Coming
Chapter 3, p. 95****March 28th****The Scriptures Our Safeguard****Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?****Hebrews 1:14**

So long as the people of God preserve their fidelity to Him, so long as they cling by living faith to Jesus, they are under the protection of heavenly angels, and Satan will not be permitted to exercise his hellish arts upon them to their destruction. But those who separate themselves from Christ by sin are in great peril. . . .

Satan is now more earnestly engaged in playing the game of life for souls than at any previous time; and unless we are constantly on our guard, he will establish in our hearts, pride, love of self, love of the world, and many other evil traits. He will also use every possible device to unsettle our faith in God and in the truths of His Word. If we have not a deep experience in the things of God, if we have not a thorough knowledge of His Word, we shall be beguiled to our ruin by the errors and sophistries of the enemy. False doctrines will sap the foundations of many, because they have not learned to discern truth from error. Our only safeguard against the wiles of Satan is to study the Scriptures diligently, to have an intelligent understanding of the reasons of our faith, and faithfully to perform every known duty. The indulgence of one known sin will cause weakness and darkness, and subject us to fierce temptation. . . .

Are we opening the door of the heart to Jesus, and closing every means of entrance to Satan? Are we daily obtaining clearer light, and greater strength, that we may stand in Christ's righteousness? Are we emptying our hearts of all selfishness, and cleansing them, preparatory to receiving the latter rain from heaven? . . .

The work of overcoming is a great work. Shall we take hold of it with energy and perseverance? Unless we do, our "filthy garments" will not be taken from us. We need never expect that these will be torn from us violently; we must first show a desire to rid ourselves of them. We must seek to separate sin from us, relying upon the merits of the blood of Christ; and then in the day of affliction, when the enemy presses us, we shall walk among the angels.

LESSON 10

“I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU LIFE AND DEATH”

August 31 — September 6

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Selected Messages, book 1, pages 140-141

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, August 31st, 2024***Selected Messages****Book 1, Chapter 36, p. 140-141****A Blessing Turned Into a Curse**

God has been testing the fidelity of His people, proving them to see what use they would make of His intrusted precious blessing. This blessing came from our Intercessor and Advocate in the heavenly courts; but Satan was ready to enter any avenue that was open for him, in order that he might turn the light and blessing into darkness and cursing. {1SM 140.1}

How may the blessing be turned into a curse? By persuading the human agent not to cherish the light, or not to reveal to the world that it has been effective in transforming the character. Imbued with the Holy Spirit, the human agent consecrates himself to cooperate with divine agencies. He bears the yoke of Christ, lifts his burdens, and works in Christ's line to gain precious victories. He walks in the light as Christ is in the light. The scripture is fulfilled to him, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians 3:18). {1SM 140.2}

Another year has now passed into eternity with its burden of record; and the light which shone from heaven upon you was to prepare you to arise and shine, to show forth the praises of God to the world as His commandment-keeping people. You were to be living witnesses; but if no special endeavour of a high and holy character bears testimony before the world, if no higher effort has been made than that which is seen in the popular churches of the day, then the name of God has not been honoured, and His truth has not been magnified before the world, by presenting divine credentials in the people who have received great light. If they have had no greater appreciation of the manifest power of God than to eat and drink, and rise up to play, as did ancient Israel, then how can the Lord trust His people with rich and gracious manifestations? If they act directly contrary in almost every respect to the known will of God, and are found in carelessness, in levity, in selfishness, in ambition and pride, corrupting their way before the Lord, how can He give them another outpouring of the Holy Spirit? {1SM 140.3}

God has the richest blessing for His people; but He cannot bestow it until they know how to treat the precious gift in showing forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; 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" (Hebrews 12:1, 2). A portion of the joy which was set before Christ, was the joy of seeing His truth armed with the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, impressing His image upon the life and character of His followers. {1SM 141.1}

Divine intelligences cooperate with human agencies as they seek to magnify the law and make it honourable. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. It is in the converted soul that the world sees a living testimony. Then shall the Lord of heaven have room to work? Shall He find a place in the hearts of those who claim to believe the truth? Shall His pure, disinterested benevolence meet with a response from the human agent? Shall the world see a display of the glory of Christ in the characters of those who profess to be His disciples? Shall Christ be favoured and glorified in seeing His own sympathy and love pouring forth in streams of goodness and truth from His human agents? In implanting His gospel in the heart, He is pouring out the resources of heaven for the blessing of the world. "We are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). {1SM 141.2}

What has the rich blessing of God done for those who were humble and contrite in heart to receive it? Has the

blessing been cherished? Have the receivers been showing forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light? There are some who are already questioning the work that was so good, and that should have been most highly appreciated. They are looking upon it as a certain species of fanaticism. {1SM 141.3}

LESSON 11

“NOT BY FAITH ONLY”

September 7 — September 13

? STUDY HELP : ✓ The Great Controversy, pages 472

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, September 7th, 2024***The Great Controversy,
Chapter 27, Modern Revivals, p. 472**

The desire for an easy religion, that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but what saith the Word of God? Says the apostle James: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." [James 2:14-24.] {GC88 472.1}

The testimony of the Word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favour of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted. It is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures. {GC88 472.2}

Let none deceive themselves with the belief that they can become holy while wilfully violating one of God's requirements. The commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. "Sin is the transgression of the law." And "whosoever sins [transgresses the law] hath not seen him, neither known him." [1 John 3:6.] Though John in his epistles dwells so fully upon love, yet he does not hesitate to reveal the true character of that class who claim to be sanctified while living in transgression of the law of God. "He that saith, I know Him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." [1 John 2:4, 5.] Here is the test of every man's profession. We cannot accord holiness to any man without bringing him to the measurement of God's only standard of holiness in Heaven and in earth. If men feel no weight of the moral law, if they belittle and make light of God's precepts, if they break one of the least of these commandments, and teach men so, they shall be of no esteem in the sight of Heaven, and we may know that their claims are without foundation. {GC88 472.3}

LESSON 12

“ENTER INTO THY CLOSET”

September 14 — September 20

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pages 84-85

*E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, September 14th, 2024***Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing,****Chapter 4, p. 84-85****“The True Motive in Service”**

The Pharisees had stated hours for prayer; and when, as often came to pass, they were abroad at the appointed time, they would pause wherever they might be—perhaps in the street or the market place, amid the hurrying throngs of men—and there in a loud voice rehearse their formal prayers. Such worship, offered merely for self-glorification, called forth unsparing rebuke from Jesus. He did not, however, discountenance public prayer, for He Himself prayed with His disciples and in the presence of the multitude. But He teaches that private prayer is not to be made public. In secret devotion our prayers are to reach the ears of none but the prayer-hearing God. No curious ear is to receive the burden of such petitions. {MB 83.3}

"When thou pray, enter into thy closet." Have a place for secret prayer. Jesus had select places for communion with God, and so should we. We need often to retire to some spot, however humble, where we can be alone with God. {MB 84.1}

"Pray to thy Father which is in secret." In the name of Jesus we may come into God's presence with the confidence of a child. No man is needed to act as a mediator. Through Jesus we may open our hearts to God as to one who knows and loves us. {MB 84.2}

In the secret place of prayer, where no eye but God's can see, no ear but His can hear, we may pour out our most hidden desires and longings to the Father of infinite pity, and in the hush and silence of the soul that voice which never fails to answer the cry of human need will speak to our hearts. {MB 84.3}

"The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. He waits with unwearied love to hear the confessions of the wayward and to accept their penitence. He watches for some return of gratitude from us, as the mother watches for the smile of recognition from her beloved child. He would have us understand how earnestly and tenderly His heart yearns over us. He invites us to take our trials to His sympathy, our sorrows to His love, our wounds to His healing, our weakness to His strength, our emptiness to His fullness. Never has one been disappointed who came unto Him. "They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed." Psalm 34:5. {MB 84.4}

Those who seek God in secret telling the Lord their needs and pleading for help, will not plead in vain. "Thy Father which sees in secret Himself shall reward thee openly." As we make Christ our daily companion we shall feel that the powers of an unseen world are all around us; and by looking unto Jesus we shall become assimilated to His image. By beholding we become changed. The character is softened, refined, and ennobled for the heavenly kingdom. The sure result of our intercourse and fellowship with our Lord will be to increase piety, purity, and fervour. There will be a growing intelligence in prayer. We are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of diligence and zeal. {MB 85.1}

The soul that turns to God for its help, its support, its power, by daily, earnest prayer, will have noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth and duty, lofty purposes of action, and a continual hungering and thirsting after righteousness. By maintaining a connection with God, we shall be enabled to diffuse to others, through our association with them, the light, the peace, the serenity, that rule in our hearts. The strength acquired in prayer to God, united with persevering effort in training the mind in thoughtfulness and care-taking, prepares one for daily duties and keeps the spirit in peace under all circumstances. {MB 85.2}

If we draw near to God, He will put a word in our mouth to speak for Him, even praise unto His name. He will teach us a strain from the song of the angels, even thanksgiving to our heavenly Father. In every act of life, the light and love of an indwelling Saviour will be revealed. Outward troubles cannot reach the life that is lived by faith in the Son of God. {MB 85.3}

LESSON 13

“THE END OF YOUR FAITH”

September 21 — September 27

? STUDY HELP : ✓ Christian Service, pages 271-275

E. G. W. Study Help 1**Sabbath, September 21st, 2024****Christian Service,
Chapter 27, p. 271-275****"Reward of Service"**

In fellowship with God, with Christ, and with holy angels, they are surrounded with a heavenly atmosphere, an atmosphere that brings health to the body, vigour to the intellect, and joy to the soul.—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 306. {ChS 271.1}

The pleasure of doing good to others imparts a glow to the feelings which flashes through the nerves, quickens the circulation of the blood, and induces mental and physical health. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 56. V{ChS 271.2}

Strength.--Let a strong man be shut away from labour, and he becomes feeble. That church or those persons who shut themselves away from bearing burdens for others, who shut themselves up to themselves, will soon suffer spiritual feebleness. It is labour that keeps the strong man strong. And spiritual labour, toil, and burden-bearing, is what will give strength to the church of Christ. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 22. {ChS 271.3}

Peace.--In doing for others, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace which will be a sufficient reward. When actuated by a high and noble desire to do others good, they will find true happiness in a faithful discharge of life's manifold duties. This will bring more than an earthly reward; for every faithful, unselfish performance of duty is noticed by the angels, and shines in the life record. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 132. {ChS 271.4}

Future Reward

Eternal Life.--By earnest, thoughtful efforts to help where help is needed, the true Christian shows his love for God and for his fellow beings. He may lose his life in service; but when Christ comes to gather His jewels to Himself, he will find it again. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, p. 56. {ChS 271.5}

A Gracious Welcome Home.--Stand on the threshold of eternity, and hear the gracious welcome given to those who in this life have co-operated with Christ, regarding it as a privilege and an honour to suffer for His sake. . . . There the redeemed ones greet those who directed them to the uplifted Saviour. They unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. All tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven, as the redeemed stand around the throne of God. All take up the joyful strain, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain," and hath redeemed us to God.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 506, 507. {ChS 271.6}

If the record shows that this has been their life, that their characters have been marked with tenderness, self-denial, and benevolence, they will receive the blessed assurance and benediction from Christ, "Well done." "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 525. {ChS 272.1}

Heavenly Environment.--Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the day is coming when the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving,—the robe of Christ's righteousness. All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. The years will move on in gladness. Over the scene the morning

stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, "There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 504. {ChS 272.2}

Joy.--It is the reward of Christ's workers to enter into His joy. That joy, to which Christ Himself looks forward with eager desire, is presented in His request to His Father, "I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 309. {ChS 272.3}

In our life here, earthly, sin-restricted, though it is, the greatest joy and the highest education are in service. And in the future state, untrammelled by the limitations of sinful humanity, it is in service that our greatest joy and our highest education will be found,—witnessing, and ever as we witness learning anew "the riches of the glory of this mystery," "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—*Education*, p. 309. {ChS 272.4}

They share in the sufferings of Christ, and they will share also in the glory that shall be revealed. One with Him in His work, drinking with Him the cup of sorrow, they are partakers also of His joy.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 12. {ChS 273.1}

Fruitage of Seed-Sowing.--Every impulse of the Holy Spirit leading men to goodness and to God, is noted in the books of heaven, and in the day of God everyone who has given himself as an instrument for the Holy Spirit's working will be permitted to behold what his life has wrought. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 310. {ChS 273.2}

When the redeemed stand before God, precious souls will respond to their names who are there because of the faithful, patient efforts put forth in their behalf, the entreaties and earnest persuasions to flee to the Stronghold. Thus those who in this world have been labourers together with God will receive their reward. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, pp. 196, 197. {ChS 273.3}

What rejoicing there will be as these redeemed ones meet and greet those who have had a burden in their behalf! And those who have lived, not to please themselves, but to be a blessing to the unfortunate who have so few blessings, --how their hearts will thrill with satisfaction! They will realize the promise, "Thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 519. {ChS 273.4}

In heaven we shall see the youth whom we helped, those whom we invited to our homes, whom we led from temptation. We shall see their faces reflecting the radiance of the glory of God. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 348. {ChS 273.5}

To be a co-worker with Christ and the heavenly angels in the great plan of salvation! What work can bear any comparison with this! From every soul saved, there comes to God a revenue of glory, to be reflected upon the one saved, and also upon the one instrumental in his salvation. —*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 2, p. 232. {ChS 273.6}

The redeemed will meet and recognize those whose attention they have directed to the uplifted Saviour. What blessed converse they will have with these souls! "I was a sinner," it will be said, "without God and without hope in the world; and you came to me, and drew my attention to the precious Saviour as my only hope. And I believed in Him. I repented of my sins, and was made to sit together with His saints in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Others will say: "I was a heathen in heathen lands. You left your friends and comfortable home, and came to teach me how to find Jesus, and believe in Him as the only true God. I demolished my idols, and worshiped God, and now I see Him face to face. I am saved, eternally saved, ever to behold Him whom I love. I then saw Him only with the eye of faith, but now I see Him as He is. I can now express my gratitude for His redeeming mercy to Him who loved me, and washed me from my sins in His own blood."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 518. {ChS 274.1}

Others will express their gratitude to those who fed the hungry and clothed the naked. "When despair bound my soul in unbelief, the Lord sent you to me," they say, "to speak words of hope and comfort. You brought me food for my physical necessities, and you opened to me the Word of God, awakening me to my spiritual needs. You treated me as a brother. You sympathized with me in my sorrows, and restored my bruised and wounded soul, so that I could grasp the hand of Christ that was reached out to save me. In my ignorance you taught me patiently that I had a Father in heaven who cared for me. You read to me the precious promises of God's Word. You inspired in me

faith that He would save me. My heart was softened, subdued, broken, as I contemplated the sacrifice which Christ had made for me. I became hungry for the bread of life, and the truth was precious to my soul. I am here, saved, eternally saved, ever to live in His presence, and to praise Him who gave His life for me."—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 518, 519. {ChS 274.2}

Patiently Wait for the Reward

If the time seems long to wait for our Deliverer to come; if, bowed by affliction and worn with toil, we feel impatient for our commission to close, and to receive an honourable release from the warfare, let us remember--and let the remembrance check every murmur--that God leaves us on earth to encounter storms and conflicts, to perfect Christian character, to become better acquainted with God our Father and Christ our Elder Brother, and to do work for the Master in winning many souls to Christ, that with glad heart we may hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 25, 1881. {ChS 274.3}

Be patient, Christian soldier. Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come. The night of weary waiting, and watching, and mourning is nearly over. The reward will soon be given; the eternal day will dawn. There is no time to sleep now,--no time to indulge in useless regrets. He who ventures to slumber now will miss precious opportunities of doing good. We are granted the blessed privilege of gathering sheaves in the great harvest; and every soul saved will be an additional star in the crown of Jesus, our adorable Redeemer. Who is eager to lay off the armour, when by pushing the battle a little longer, he will achieve new victories and gather new trophies for eternity?—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 25, 1881. {ChS 275.1}

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