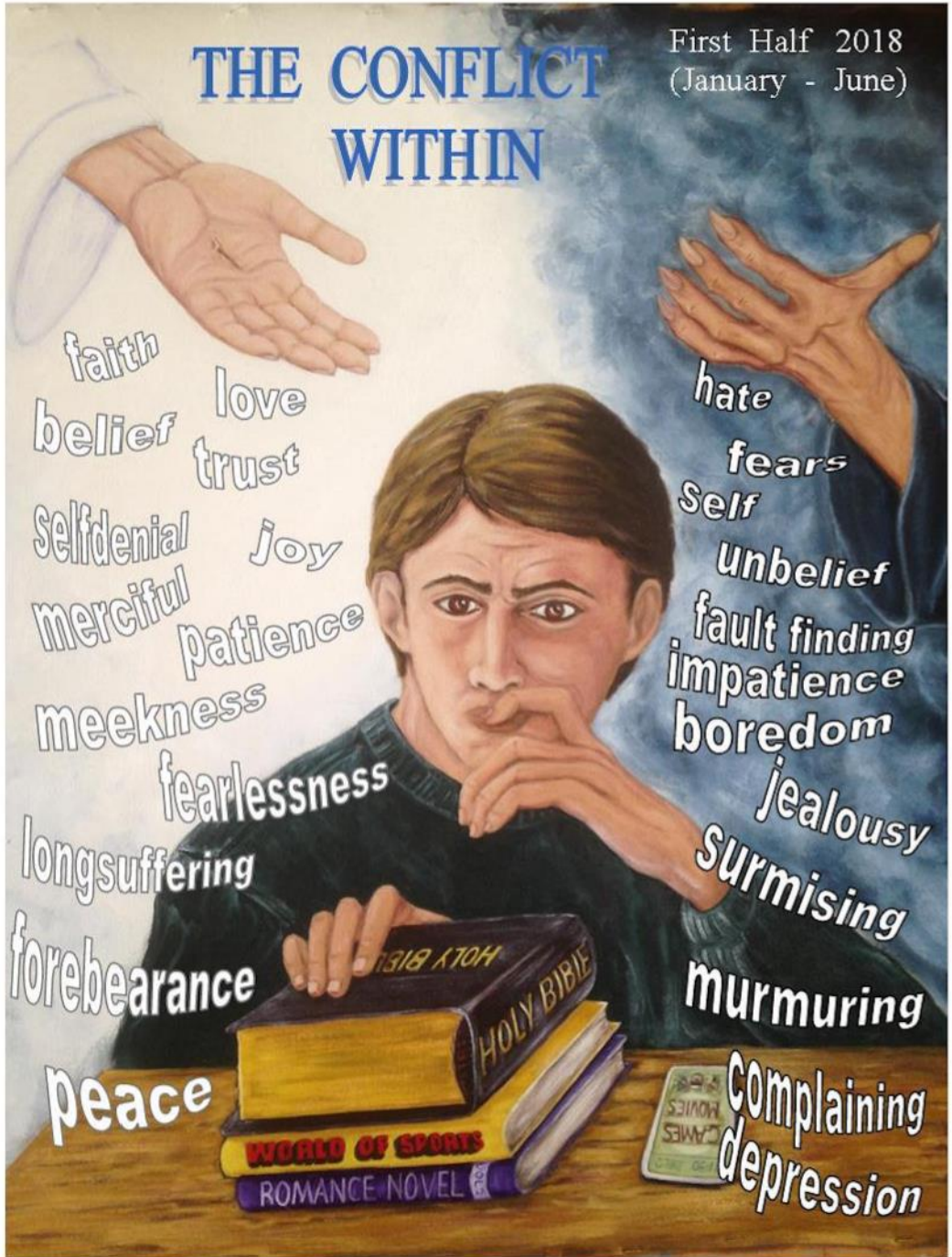


SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS

THE CONFLICT WITHIN

First Half 2018
(January - June)



faith
belief
love
trust
Selfdenial
merciful
meeekness
longsuffering
forebearance
peace
Joy
patience
fearlessness

hate
fears
Self
unbelief
fault finding
impatience
boredom
jealousy
surmising
murmuring
complaining
depression

ADVENT PILGRIMS FELLOWSHIP

**SABBATH SCHOOL
LESSON**

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ADVENT PILGRIMS FELLOWSHIP

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SECTION 1

THE MEANING OF SELF

Introduction

THE true believer strives for conformity to the will and way of God. When conviction of that will reaches his heart he launches into the effort to put it into practise. However as he does so, he meets a strange unexpected conflict, one that he feels within his very being. The apostle Paul describes this in Romans 7:21-23:

“I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”

The apostle puts it in another way in Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

This is coined as the battle between the Spirit and the flesh. Another way of putting it can be self versus the will of God. Indeed self and its relation to righteousness and the will of God is a subject that needs to be well understood by the true Christian.

This is the study of this Sabbath School Lesson, even to understand how self is an ingredient that played a role in the fall of Lucifer and also that of Adam and Eve. To appreciate that there is a self in an unfallen being that needs to be subjected to righteousness is important. But for us who have fallen and have sinful flesh the subject becomes even more important.

“So may God draw near to every student as we research this theme under the counsel of the Spirit of Prophecy in the following: “What does God require? Perfection; nothing less than perfection. But if we would be perfect, we must put no confidence in self. Daily we must know and understand that self is not to be trusted. We need to grasp God’s promises with firm faith. We need to ask for the Holy Spirit with a full realization of our own helplessness. Then when the Holy Spirit works, we shall not

give self the glory. The Holy Spirit will graciously take the heart into His keeping, bringing to it all the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We shall be kept by the power of God through faith.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 353.

Our study will be within “the truths of the gospel and the teachings of the Holy Spirit,” which “will produce in us brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, and an understanding of self” (*The Review and Herald*, May 30, 1882).

Selfless God

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

OBJECTIVES

- To study the character, nature, of God.
- To observe the selflessness of God.
- To learn the meaning of self by beholding the character of God.

GOD'S PERSONALITY

- 1. Does the Bible give a description of God's character?
Deuteronomy 32:1-4; 1 John 4:16**

“The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God's unchanging love.

“The gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. God made to our world the wonderful gift of His only-begotten Son. In the light of this act, it could never be said by the inhabitants of other worlds that God could have done more than He did to show His love for the children of men. He made a sacrifice that defies all computation.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 59.

- 2. What is shown in God's words to Moses? Exodus 34:5-7**

“By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,—God’s thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, "I have declared unto them Thy name,"—"merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,"—"that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." But not alone for His earthborn children was this revelation given. Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look," and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

3. How did God manifest Himself to Elijah? 1 Kings 19:11, 12

“The works of Christ not only declared Him to be the Messiah, but showed in what manner His kingdom was to be established. To John was opened the same truth that had come to Elijah in the desert, when "a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the

earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire:" and after the fire, God spoke to the prophet by a still, small voice. 1 Kings 19:11, 12. So Jesus was to do His work, not by the overturning of thrones and kingdoms, not with pomp and outward display, but through speaking to the hearts of men by a life of mercy and self-sacrifice." —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 36.

GOD'S SELFLESS GIFT

4. What was the supreme manifestation of God's selflessness? John 3:16

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

Jesus said, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again." John 10:17. That is, "My Father has so loved you that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your Substitute and Surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." —*Steps to Christ*, pp. 13, 14.

5. In the gift of His Son, can we discern the true nature of God? Matthew 1:23; John 14:8-11

“None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father’s love to lost humanity.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 14.

“But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. Looking unto Jesus we see that it is the glory of our God to give. "I do nothing of Myself," said Christ; "the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." "I seek not Mine own glory," but the glory of Him that sent Me. John 8:28; 6:57; 8:50; 7:18. In these words is set forth the great principle which is the law of life for the universe. All things Christ received from God, but He took to give. So in the heavenly courts, in His ministry for all created beings: through the beloved Son, the Father’s life flows out to all; through the Son it returns, in praise and joyous service, a tide of love, to the great Source of all. And thus through Christ the circuit of beneficence is complete, representing the character of the great Giver, the law of life.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 21.

6. As Jesus is God manifest in the human – how well can we read the selflessness of God’s nature? Philippians 2:6-8

“Jesus did not count heaven a place to be desired while we were lost. He left the heavenly courts for a life of reproach and insult, and a death of shame. He who was rich in heaven’s priceless treasure, became poor, that through His poverty we might be rich.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 416.

“This wonderful problem—how God could be just and yet the justifier of sinners—is beyond human ken. As we attempt to fathom it, it broadens and deepens beyond our comprehension. When we look with the eye of faith upon the cross of Calvary, and see our sins laid upon the victim hanging in weakness and ignominy there—when we grasp the fact that

this is God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace—we are led to exclaim, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us" (1 John 3:1)!" —*That I May Know Him*, p. 35.

THE LESSON OF CONTRASTS

7. How well can we understand the meaning of self as we contemplate the selfless nature of God? Hebrews 12:2, 3

“In consideration of this, can men have one particle of exaltation? As they trace down the life and sufferings and humiliation of Christ, can they lift their proud heads as if they were to bear no trials, no shame, no humiliation? I say to the followers of Christ, Look to Calvary, and blush for shame at your self-important ideas. All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement. All this was for you who are striving for the supremacy—striving for human praise, for human exaltation; you who are afraid you will not receive all that deference, that respect from human minds, that you think is your due. Is this Christlike?

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." He died to make an atonement, and to become a pattern for every one who would be His disciple. Shall selfishness come into your hearts? And will those who set not before them the pattern, Jesus, extol your merits? You have none except as they come through Jesus Christ. Shall pride be harbored after you have seen Deity humbling Himself, and then as man debasing Himself, till there was no lower point to which He could descend? "Be astonished, O ye heavens," and be amazed, ye inhabitants of the earth, that such returns should be made to our Lord! What contempt! what wickedness! what formality! what pride! what efforts made to lift up man and glorify self, when the Lord of glory humbled Himself, agonized, and

died the shameful death upon the cross in our behalf!" –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, pp. 1127, 1128.

8. Is it possible for our natural state of mind to comprehend this? 1 Corinthians 2:14

“The kingdom of God comes not with outward show. The gospel of the grace of God, with its spirit of self-abnegation, can never be in harmony with the spirit of the world. The two principles are antagonistic. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 509.

NOTES

Self Among The Angels

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Hebrews 1:14

OBJECTIVES

- To observe the characters of the unfallen beings who surround the throne of God.
- To learn from these angels the selflessness of their service.
- To marvel over the power vested in these beings and yet behold the childlike nature they display.

ANGELIC CHARACTERS

1. When God created the angels, does Scripture show the reason for such creation? Hebrews 1:7; Psalm 104:4; 103:19-21

2. Did God install into these angels the same selfless nature which He possessed? Mark 10:45; Hebrews 1:14

“The plan by which alone man’s salvation could be secured, involved all heaven in its infinite sacrifice. The angels could not rejoice as Christ

opened before them the plan of redemption; for they saw that man's salvation must cost their loved Commander unutterable woe. In grief and wonder they listened to His words as He told them how He must descend from heaven's purity and peace, . . . and come in contact with the degradation of earth, to endure its sorrow, shame, and death." —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 79.

"The angels prostrated themselves at the feet of their Commander and offered to become a sacrifice for man. But an angel's life could not pay the debt; only He who created man had power to redeem him. Yet the angels were to have a part to act in the plan of redemption. Christ was to be made "a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." Hebrews 2:9. As He should take human nature upon Him, His strength would not be equal to theirs, and they were to minister to Him, to strengthen and soothe Him under His sufferings. They were also to be ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who should be heirs of salvation. Hebrews 1:14. They would guard the subjects of grace from the power of evil angels and from the darkness constantly thrown around them by Satan." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 64.

3. How does that selfless nature of the unfallen angels manifest itself toward their Creator? Isaiah 6:1-3

"The seraphim around the throne are so filled with reverential awe as they behold the glory of God, that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with admiration. Their praise is for the Lord of hosts. As they look into the future, when the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the triumphant song is echoed from one to another in melodious chant, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts." They are fully satisfied to glorify God; abiding in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 72.

“The angels of God in heaven that have never fallen do His will continually. In all that they do upon their busy errands of mercy to our world, shielding, guiding, and guarding the workmanship of God for ages—both the just and the unjust—they can truthfully say, "All is Thine. Of Thine own do we give Thee.”” —*Faith and Works*, p. 23.

SELFLESS SERVICE

4. Having seen that the angels volunteered to sacrifice themselves for the redemption of sinners, does Inspiration reveal this principle in their service to the fallen race? Hebrews 1:14; Matthew 18:10

“We need to get a view of how the heavenly angels co-operate with human agencies for the uplifting of men. It is the greatest joy of the angels in heaven to spread the shield of their tender love over the souls who turn to God. Their love for those for whom Christ died is beyond measurement. Angels are keeping back the agencies of destruction; for they have an intense desire that sinners shall return to peace and safety. Angels unite with the true, whole-hearted servants of Christ to help those who are in the valley of decision.” —*The Review and Herald*, January 26, 1911.

5. Do we appreciate their selfless service in the revelation of the following words of Inspiration? 1 Peter 1:12

“It is the work of the heavenly angels to come close to the tried, the tempted, the suffering ones. They labor long and untiringly to save the souls for whom Christ has died. And when souls appreciate their advantages, appreciate the heavenly assistance sent them, respond to the Holy Spirit’s working in their behalf; when they put their will on the side

of Christ's will, angels bear the tidings heavenward. . . . And there is rejoicing among the heavenly host." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 36.

"The angels of glory find their joy in giving,—giving love and tireless watchcare to souls that are fallen and unholy. Heavenly beings woo the hearts of men; they bring to this dark world light from the courts above; by gentle and patient ministry they move upon the human spirit, to bring the lost into a fellowship with Christ which is even closer than they themselves can know." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 21.

"Man must pass over the ground over which Christ has passed. As Christ overcame every temptation which Satan brought against Him, so man is to overcome. And those who strive earnestly to overcome are brought into a oneness with Christ that the angels in heaven can never know." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 926.

CHILDLIKE

6. What is the degree of power imparted to the angels, yet what did Jesus say of the greatest of them? 2 Samuel 24:15, 16; Mark 10:13, 14; Matthew 18:1-4

"A single angel destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians and filled the land with mourning. When David offended against God by numbering the people, one angel caused that terrible destruction by which his sin was punished. The same destructive power exercised by holy angels when God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere." —*The Great Controversy*, p. 614.

7. How is the childlike innocence of the angels displayed by Inspiration? Luke 15:10; Isaiah 6:1-3; Job 38:7

“I have seen the tender love that God has for His people, and it is very great. I saw angels over the saints with their wings spread about them. Each saint had an attending angel. If the saints wept through discouragement, or were in danger, the angels that ever attended them would fly quickly upward to carry the tidings, and the angels in the city would cease to sing. Then Jesus would commission another angel to descend to encourage, watch over, and try to keep them from going out of the narrow path; but if they did not take heed to the watchful care of these angels, and would not be comforted by them, but continued to go astray, the angels would look sad and weep. They would bear the tidings upward, and all the angels in the city would weep, and then with a loud voice say, "Amen." But if the saints fixed their eyes upon the prize before them and glorified God by praising Him, then the angels would bear the glad tidings to the city, and the angels in the city would touch their golden harps and sing with a loud voice, "Alleluia!" and the heavenly arches would ring with their lovely songs.” —*Early Writings*, p. 39.

8. Are there other words of Inspiration by which we can appreciate the childlike, selfless nature of the angels? Psalm 24:7-10

“But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought

of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." – *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 109.

“All heaven was waiting to welcome the Saviour to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

“As they drew near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels,—“Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.”

“Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond,—“Who is this King of glory?”

“This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise,—“The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.”

“Again is heard the challenge, “Who is this King of glory?” for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply, “The Lord of hosts; He is the King of glory.” Psalm 24:7-10.

“Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 833.

NOTES

Conflict Within Lucifer

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. Ezekiel 28:15

OBJECTIVES

- To appreciate Lucifer as an unfallen angel after his creation.
- To explore how the selfless nature of the unfallen can be turned into the consideration of self.
- To behold in Lucifer the conflict of self versus selflessness.

LUCIFER'S GLORY

1. Among all the angels, who was in the most honoured and loftiest position? Ezekiel 28:13, 14

“Before his fall he was a covering cherub, distinguished by his excellence. God made him good and beautiful, as near as possible like Himself.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 4*, p. 1163.

“Lucifer in heaven, before his rebellion, was a high and exalted angel, next in honor to God’s dear Son His countenance, like those of the other angels..” –*The Story of Redemption*, p. 13.

2. As a covering cherub, what was Lucifer’s privilege? Zechariah 4:12-14

“It was a being of wonderful power and glory that had set himself against God. Of Lucifer the Lord says, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty." Ezekiel 28:12. Lucifer had been the covering cherub. He had stood in the light of God's presence. He had been the highest of all created beings, and had been foremost in revealing God's purposes to the universe.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 758.

THE MANIFESTATION OF SELF

3. Can self be discovered in such a perfect and glorious being? Ezekiel 28:15, 16 (first part), 17 (first part)

“There was a time when Satan was in harmony with God, and it was his joy to execute the divine commands. His heart was filled with love and joy in serving his Creator, until he began to think that his wisdom was not derived from God, but was inherent in himself, and that he was as worthy as was God to receive honor and power.”

“Little by little, Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. . . . Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself.”—*The Truth About Angels*, pp. 31, 32.

4. What can be observed in the transition from selflessness to self in the experience of Lucifer? Ezekiel 28:12 (last part), 15

“Though God had created Lucifer noble and beautiful, and had exalted him to high honor among the angelic host, yet He had not placed him beyond the possibility of evil. It was in Satan’s power, did he choose to do so, to pervert these gifts. He might have remained in favor with God, beloved and honored by all the angelic throng, presiding in his exalted position with generous, unselfish care, exercising his noble powers to bless others and to glorify his Maker. But, little by little, he began to seek his own honor, and to employ his powers to attract attention and win praise to himself. He also gradually led the angels over whom he ruled to do him service, instead of devoting all their powers to the service of their Creator.” –*The Truth About Angels*, p. 31.

A PERIOD OF CONFLICT WITHIN

5. Having seen that it was Lucifer’s beauty, wisdom, position, wealth, and brightness that turned his mind to self, does God communicate a warning in reference to this danger? 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Corinthians 10:5

“Those who have a natural love for the world and have been remiss in their duty can see their own faults specified in the cases of others who have been reproved. God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts. The conflict will be close between self and the grace of God. Self will strive for the mastery and will be opposed to the work of bringing the life and thoughts, the will and affections, into subjection to the will of Christ. Self-denial and the cross stand all along in the pathway to eternal life, and, because of this, "few there be that find it."” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 2*, p. 687.

6. Did God give Lucifer space to see his danger and recover himself? 2 Peter 3:8, 9

“In great mercy, according to His divine character, God bore long with Lucifer. The spirit of discontent and disaffection had never before been known in heaven. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. Lucifer himself had not at first been acquainted with the real nature of his feelings; for a time he had feared to express the workings and imaginings of his mind; yet he did not dismiss them. He did not see whither he was drifting. But such efforts as infinite love and wisdom only could devise, were made to convince him of his error. His disaffection was proved to be without cause, and he was made to see what would be the result of persisting in revolt. Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong. He saw that "the Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works" (Psalm 145:17); that the divine statutes are just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven. Had he done this, he might have saved himself and many angels. He had not at that time fully cast off his allegiance to God. Though he had left his position as covering cherub, yet if he had been willing to return to God, acknowledging the Creator's wisdom, and satisfied to fill the place appointed him in God's great plan, he would have been reinstated in his office. The time had come for a final decision; he must fully yield to the divine sovereignty or place himself in open rebellion. He nearly reached the decision to return, but pride forbade him. It was too great a sacrifice for one who had been so highly honored to confess that he had been in error, that his imaginings were false, and to yield to the authority which he had been working to prove unjust.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 39.

7. How did God assist Lucifer to recover him?

“To dispute the supremacy of the Son of God, thus impeaching the wisdom and love of the Creator, had become the purpose of this prince of angels. To this object he was about to bend the energies of that master mind, which, next to Christ’s, was first among the hosts of God. But He who would have the will of all His creatures free, left none unguarded to the bewildering sophistry by which rebellion would seek to justify itself. Before the great contest should open, all were to have a clear presentation of His will, whose wisdom and goodness were the spring of all their joy.

“The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father’s throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. About the throne gathered the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng—“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

8. Was there a struggle within Lucifer, a conflict within that demonstrates the reality of self versus selflessness?

“The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them, but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy. The influence of the holy angels seemed for a time to carry him with them. As songs of praise ascended in melodious strains, swelled by thousands of glad voices, the spirit of evil seemed vanquished; unutterable love thrilled his entire being; his soul went out, in harmony with the sinless worshippers, in love to the Father and the Son.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

NOTES

The Conflict Lost

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! Isaiah 14:12

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the point in Lucifer's internal conflict at which his fall was irretrievable.
- To observe the full extent of the baleful effect of the exercise of self.
- To recognise the impossibility of Lucifer's reinstatement although he wanted to repent.

THE FINAL CHOICE

1. During God's provision to assist Lucifer in his struggle with self, does Lucifer confront a decision? Psalm 145:17-19

“The spirit of discontent and disaffection had never before been known in heaven. It was a new element, strange, mysterious, unaccountable. Lucifer himself had not at first been acquainted with the real nature of his feelings; for a time he had feared to express the workings and imaginings of his mind; yet he did not dismiss them. He did not see whither he was drifting. But such efforts as infinite love and wisdom only could devise, were made to convince him of his error. His disaffection was proved to

be without cause, and he was made to see what would be the result of persisting in revolt. Lucifer was convinced that he was in the wrong. He saw that the divine statutes are just, and that he ought to acknowledge them as such before all heaven.” –*The Truth About Angels*, p. 40.

2. Being fully impacted by God’s loving-kindness what was his choice? Psalm 145:8, 9

“The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them, but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy. The influence of the holy angels seemed for a time to carry him with them. . . . But again he was filled with pride in his own glory. His desire for supremacy returned, and envy of Christ was once more indulged.” –*The Truth About Angels*, p. 34.

“Rejecting with disdain the arguments and entreaties of the loyal angels, he [Satan] denounced them as deluded slaves. . . . He would never again acknowledge the supremacy of Christ. He had determined to claim the honor that should have been given him, and take command of all who would become his followers; and he promised those who would enter his ranks a new and better government, under which all would enjoy freedom. Great numbers of the angels signified their purpose to accept him as their leader.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 12.

CONSCIOUS REBELLION

3. After Lucifer made his final choice, how entirely did he express his egotistical attitude? Isaiah 14:13, 14

“A compassionate Creator, in yearning pity for Lucifer and his followers, was seeking to draw them back from the abyss of ruin into which they were about to plunge. But His mercy was misinterpreted. Lucifer pointed to the long-suffering of God as an evidence of his own superiority, an indication that the King of the universe would yet accede to his terms. If the angels would stand firmly with him, he declared, they could yet gain all that they desired. He persistently defended his own course, and fully committed himself to the great controversy against his Maker. Thus it was that Lucifer, "the light bearer," the sharer of God's glory, the attendant of His throne, by transgression became Satan, "the adversary" of God and holy beings and the destroyer of those whom Heaven had committed to his guidance and guardianship.

“Rejecting with disdain the arguments and entreaties of the loyal angels, he denounced them as deluded slaves. The preference shown to Christ he declared an act of injustice both to himself and to all the heavenly host, and announced that he would no longer submit to this invasion of his rights and theirs.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 39, 40.

4. Where did this final choice lead to in heaven? Revelation 12:7-9

“Then there was war in heaven. Angels were engaged in the battle; Satan wished to conquer the Son of God and those who were submissive to His will. But the good and true angels prevailed, and Satan, with his followers, was driven from heaven.” —*Early Writings*, p. 145.

“Christ had worked in the heavenly courts to convince Satan of his terrible error, till at last the evil one and his sympathizers were found in open rebellion against God Himself. Then he claimed a right to take a position above Christ as covering cherub. Expelled from heaven, he came to this earth, determined to work against Christ. He is in no danger of

losing the angels that he deceived. He has them under his banner, enlisted to fight against the Son of God.” –*This Day With God*, p. 256.

5. Why could there be no place found for him and his angels in heaven? Revelation 12:8; Philippians 2:7, 9; James 4:6, 10

“Lucifer had said, "I will be like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:12, 14); and the desire for self-exaltation had brought strife into the heavenly courts, and had banished a multitude of the hosts of God. Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God’s power, but not His character. He sought for himself the highest place, and every being who is actuated by his spirit will do the same. Thus alienation, discord, and strife will be inevitable. Dominion becomes the prize of the strongest. The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of force; every individual regards every other as an obstacle in the way of his own advancement, or a steppingstone on which he himself may climb to a higher place.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 435.

AN IRREVERSIBLE CONDITION

6. When Lucifer found himself cast out, did he make an appeal to be taken back?

“Satan trembled as he viewed his work. He was alone in meditation upon the past, the present, and his future plans. His mighty frame shook as with a tempest. An angel from heaven was passing. He called him, and entreated an interview with Christ. This was granted him. He then related to the Son of God that he repented of his rebellion, and wished again the favor of God. He was willing to take the place God had previously

assigned him, and be under his wise command. Christ wept at Satan's woe, but told him, as the mind of God, that he could never be received into heaven. . . . The seeds of rebellion were still within him." –*The Truth About Angels*, p. 46.

7. What was the reason for this request? Jude 1:6

“Satan stood in amazement at his new condition. His happiness was gone. He looked upon the angels who, with him, were once so happy, but who had been expelled from heaven. . . . Now all seemed changed. Countenances which had reflected the image of their Maker were gloomy and despairing. Strife, discord, and bitter recrimination, were among them. . . . Satan now beholds the terrible results of his rebellion. He shuddered, and feared to face the future, and to contemplate the end of these things.

“The hour for joyful, happy songs of praise to God and His dear Son had come. Satan had led the heavenly choir. He had raised the first note, then all the angelic host united with him, and glorious strains of music had resounded through heaven in honor of God and His dear Son. But now, instead of strains of sweetest music, discord and angry words fall upon the ear of the great rebel leader. . . . The hour of worship draws nigh, when bright and holy angels bow before the Father. No more will he unite in heavenly song. No more will he bow in reverence and holy awe before the presence of the eternal God.” –*The Truth About Angels*, p. 46.

8. Was there a legitimate reason behind God's refusal to take Lucifer back into the heavenly harmony? Hebrews 6:4-6 (first part); 12:17

“After Satan and those who fell with him were shut out of heaven, and he realized that he had forever lost all its purity and glory, he repented, and wished to be reinstated in heaven. He was willing to take his proper place, or any position that might be assigned him. But no; heaven must not be placed in jeopardy. All heaven might be marred should he be taken back; for sin originated with him, and the seeds of rebellion were within him. Both he and his followers wept, and implored to be taken back into the favor of God. But their sin—their hatred, their envy and jealousy—had been so great that God could not blot it out. It must remain to receive its final punishment.” —*Early Writings*, p. 146.

“He repented not of his rebellion because he saw the goodness of God which he had abused. It was not possible that his love for God had so increased since his fall that it would lead to cheerful submission and happy obedience to His law which had been despised. The wretchedness he realized in losing the sweet light of heaven, and the sense of guilt which forced itself upon him, and the disappointment he experienced himself in not finding his expectation realized, were the cause of his grief. To be commander out of heaven was vastly different from being thus honored in heaven. The loss he had sustained of all the privileges of heaven seemed too much to be borne. He wished to regain these.” —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 26.

NOTES

Self In Unfallen Man

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. Genesis 1:27

OBJECTIVES

- To study the meaning of man being created in God's image.
- To seek an understanding of the relish of life which God installed into the human being.
- To appreciate that pursuing the enjoyment of God-given blessings of life is a legitimate exercise of self.

IN GOD'S IMAGE

- 1. As man came fresh from the hand of God, what were the qualities of God that were incorporated into the nature of the human? 1 Timothy 6:17 (last phrase), Ecclesiastes 5:18**

“That God, that Creator, who planted the beautiful Eden for our parents, and has planted for us the lovely trees and flowers, and everything that is beautiful and glorious in nature for the human race to enjoy, designed that we should enjoy it.” —*The Review and Herald*, May 25, 1886.

- 2. Do we understand the meaning of being created in God's image? Genesis 1:26, 27**

“From the first dawn of reason, the human mind should become intelligent in regard to the physical structure. Here Jehovah has given a specimen of Himself, for man was made in the image of God.” —*Child Guidance*, p. 103.

“Man was to bear God’s image, both in outward resemblance and in character. . . . He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.” —*Daughters of God*, p. 22.

3. Is the image of God revealed in the love and desire of the beautiful? Genesis 1:31; 2:9, 12

“God speaks to us in nature. It is His voice we hear as we gaze upon the beauty and richness of the natural world. We view His glory in the beautiful things His hand has made. We stand and behold His works without a veil between. God has given us these things that in beholding the works of His hands, we may learn of Him.

“God has given us these precious things as an expression of His love. The Lord is a lover of the beautiful, and to please and gratify us He has spread before us the beauties of nature, even as an earthly parent seeks to place beautiful things before the children that he loves. The Lord is always pleased to see us happy. Sinful as it is with all its imperfections, the Lord has lavished upon this earth the useful and the beautiful. The beautiful tinted flowers tell of His tenderness and love. They have a language of their own, reminding us of the Giver.” —*This Day With God*, p. 241.

IMPLANTED WANTS

4. Does Inspiration reveal that desires and wants that pertain to the well being of self, are implanted by God? Ecclesiastes 5:19; Psalm 111:2

“In the arrangements for the education of the chosen people it is made manifest that a life centered in God is a life of completeness. Every want He has implanted, He provides to satisfy; every faculty imparted, He seeks to develop.

“The Author of all beauty, Himself a lover of the beautiful, God provided to gratify in His children the love of beauty. He made provision also for their social needs, for the kindly and helpful associations that do so much to cultivate sympathy and to brighten and sweeten life.” —*Education*, p. 41.

“The desire to accumulate wealth is an original affection of our nature, implanted there by our heavenly Father for noble ends.” —*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 148.

5. How did Adam and Eve exercise these implanted desires and wants that constituted the elements of self? Psalm 8:6

“Man was to bear God’s image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is "the express image" (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

LEGITIMATE COMPONENTS OF SELF

6. Among all the blessings God has implanted into the soul, which is the one that self legitimately will cling to? Proverbs 13:14; 14:27

“It is natural for man to cling to life.” –*The Review and Herald*, December 1, 1885.

7. How only can that God-given life be preserved? 1 Peter 3:10; Matthew 16:24, 25

“And all who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world’s need. Self-love, self-interest, must perish. But the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation. The seed buried in the ground produces fruit, and in turn this is planted. Thus the harvest is multiplied. The husbandman preserves his grain by casting it away. So in human life, to give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ’s sake sacrifice their life in this world, will keep it unto life eternal.” –*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 86.

NOTES

Solicitation Of Self

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat... Genesis 3:6

OBJECTIVES

- To explore the workings of temptation.
- To study these workings in the unfallen state of Adam and Eve.
- To observe how the components of self can become the source of sin.

WHAT IS TEMPTATION?

1. Does Scripture give a definition for temptation? James 1:13, 14

“A man is tempted to sin when some attractive object or indulgence is presented before him, and he is drawn to overstep principle, and to violate his conscience in doing that which he knows to be wrong.” —*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1893.

“Temptation comes and is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 90.

2. When does a temptation produce sin? Is the experience of temptation sin? James 1:15

“Temptation is not sin, and it is not an indication of the divine displeasure. The soul that resists temptation reveals to the universe of heaven and to the world the strength and virtue of Christian principle.” – *Manuscript Releases Vol. 12*, p. 80.

A SAMPLE OF TEMPTATION

3. How was the definition of temptation illustrated in the case of Eve in Eden? Genesis 3:6 (first half)

“Eve was intemperate in her desires when she put forth the hand to take of the fruit-forbidden tree. Self-gratification has reigned almost supreme in the hearts of men and women since the fall. Especially has the appetite been indulged, and they have been controlled by it, instead of reason. For the sake of gratifying the taste, Eve transgressed the command of God. He had given her everything her wants required, yet she was not satisfied. Ever since, her fallen sons and daughters have followed the desires of their eyes, and of their taste. They have, like Eve, disregarded the prohibitions God has made, and have followed in a course of disobedience, and, like Eve, have flattered themselves that the consequence would not be as fearful as had been apprehended.” – *Selected Messages Book 2*, p. 411.

4. When Adam came onto the scene, do we see a further illustration of self being solicited during temptation? Genesis 3:12, 17 (first two phrases)

“Adam understood that his companion had transgressed the command of God, disregarded the only prohibition laid upon them as a test of their fidelity and love. There was a terrible struggle in his mind. He mourned

that he had permitted Eve to wander from his side. But now the deed was done; he must be separated from her whose society had been his joy. How could he have it thus?" —*Daughters of God*, p. 24.

“She was a part of himself, and he could not endure the thought of separation. If she must die, he would die with her.” —*From Eternity Past*, p. 25.

5. In consideration that they were both in an unfallen state during their experience of temptation, can we see how self is the factor that was being tantalised? Genesis 3:5, 6

“Though created innocent and holy, our first parents were not placed beyond the possibility of wrong-doing. God might have created them without the power to transgress His requirements, but in that case there could have been no development of character; their service would not have been voluntary, but forced. Therefore He gave them the power of choice—the power to yield or to withhold obedience. And before they could receive in fullness the blessings He desired to impart, their love and loyalty must be tested.” —*Education*, p. 23.

“When will men learn that which has been so fully demonstrated in the history of the past? The workings of Satan show that he can be neither idle nor harmless. Yet how pleasing men and women still find Satan’s allurements. Today his arguments are the same that he presented to Eve. He still uses flattery; he still creates envy and distrust, and excites the desire for self-exaltation.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 20*, p. 40.

UNFALLEN SELF TO SIN

6. When does the self in an unfallen being convey to sin? Proverbs 18:1; John 7:18

“Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature.” –*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 43.

“Lucifer in heaven desired to be first in power and authority; he wanted to be God, to have the rulership of heaven; and to this end he won many of the angels to his side. When with his rebel host he was cast out from the courts of God, the work of rebellion and self-seeking was continued on earth. Through the temptation to self-indulgence and ambition Satan accomplished the fall of our first parents; and from that time to the present the gratification of human ambition and the indulgence of selfish hopes and desires have proved the ruin of mankind.” –*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 32.

7. When only is self secure from sin? Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5; Galatians 15:23

“Through Christ’s redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan’s charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all are secure from apostasy. By love’s self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

NOTES

Indulgence of Self

He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity. Ecclesiastes 5:10

OBJECTIVES

- To learn from our first parents the exercise of self-indulgence.
- To observe the temporary sense of well-being when self is indulged.
- To understand the ultimate emptiness gained after self has been indulged.

THE EXERCISE OF SELF

- 1. What parts of self did Eve submit to at the tree of knowledge?
Genesis 3:5, 6 (first section)**

“Eve, unconsciously at first, separated from her husband in her employment. When she became aware of the fact, she felt that there might be danger; but again she thought herself secure, even if she did not remain close by the side of her husband. She had wisdom and strength to know if evil came, and to meet it. This the angels had cautioned her not to do. Eve found herself gazing with mingled curiosity and admiration upon the fruit of the forbidden tree. She saw it was very lovely, and was reasoning with herself why God had so decidedly prohibited their eating or touching it. Now was Satan’s opportunity. He addressed her as though he was able to divine her thoughts: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat

of every tree of the garden?" Thus, with soft and pleasant words, and with musical voice, he addressed the wondering Eve. She was startled to hear a serpent speak. He extolled her beauty and exceeding loveliness, which was not displeasing to Eve. But she was amazed, for she knew that to the serpent God had not given the power of speech." —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1, p. 35.*

2. In the case of Adam, how was self engaged when he responded to Eve's prompting? Genesis 3:12

“Adam quite well understood that his companion had transgressed the only prohibition laid upon them as a test of their fidelity and love. Eve reasoned that the serpent said they should not surely die, and his words must be true, for she felt no signs of God’s displeasure, but a pleasant influence, as she imagined the angels felt. Adam regretted that Eve had left his side; but now the deed was done. He must be separated from her whose society he had loved so well. How could he have it thus? His love for Eve was strong. And in utter discouragement he resolved to share her fate. He reasoned that Eve was a part of himself; and if she must die, he would die with her; for he could not bear the thought of separation from her. He lacked faith in his merciful and benevolent Creator. He did not think that God, who had formed him out of the dust of the ground into a living, beautiful form, and had created Eve to be his companion, could supply her place. After all, might not the words of this wise serpent be correct? Eve was before him, just as lovely and beautiful, and apparently as innocent, as before this act of disobedience. She expressed greater, higher love for him than before her disobedience, as the effects of the fruit she had eaten. He saw in her no signs of death. She had told him of the happy influence of the fruit, of her ardent love for him, and he decided to brave the consequences. He seized the fruit and quickly ate it, and, like Eve, felt not immediately its ill effects.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1, p. 39.*

SELF-GRATIFICATION

3. In the example of Eve's sin, can it be seen that in the act of sin there is an initial sense of pleasure in the gratifying of self? Ecclesiastes 11:7-9

“She ate, and was delighted with the fruit. It seemed delicious to her taste, and she imagined that she realized in herself the wonderful effects of the fruit.

“She then plucked for herself of the fruit and ate, and imagined she felt the quickening power of a new and elevated existence as the result of the exhilarating influence of the forbidden fruit. She was in a strange and unnatural excitement as she sought her husband, with her hands filled with the forbidden fruit. She related to him the wise discourse of the serpent, and wished to conduct him at once to the tree of knowledge. She told him she had eaten of the fruit, and instead of her feeling any sense of death, she realized a pleasing, exhilarating influence. As soon as Eve had disobeyed, she became a powerful medium through which to occasion the fall of her husband.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1*, pp. 37, 38.

4. How similarly did Adam feel after eating the fruit? Proverbs 14:12

“After Adam's transgression he at first imagined that he felt the rising to a new and higher existence.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1*, p. 41.

5. Because the indulgence of self is a pleasant experience, what should we learn in reference to a lasting benefit? Ecclesiastes 5:10, 11; 6:9; 2:10, 11

“The book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon in his old age, after he had fully proved that all the pleasures earth is able to give are empty and unsatisfying. He there shows how impossible it is for the vanities of the world to meet the longings of the soul. His conclusion is that it is wisdom to enjoy with gratitude the good gifts of God, and to do right; for all our works will be brought into judgment.

“Solomon’s autobiography is a mournful one. He gives us the history of his search for happiness. He engaged in intellectual pursuits; he gratified his love for pleasure; he carried out his schemes of commercial enterprise. He was surrounded by the fascinating splendor of court life. All that the carnal heart could desire was at his command; yet he sums up his experience in this sad record...” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 3, p. 1164.*

EMPTY AFTERMATH

6. Once the experience of exhilaration of self-indulgence has passed, what feelings follow? Jeremiah 2:12, 13

“Many of those who heard Jesus were mourners over disappointed hopes, many were nourishing a secret grief, many were seeking to satisfy their restless longing with the things of the world and the praise of men; but when all was gained, they found that they had toiled only to reach a

broken cistern, from which they could not quench their thirst. Amid the glitter of the joyous scene they stood, dissatisfied and sad.” –*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 1*, p. 70.

7. Where only can lasting pleasure be found? Isaiah 55:1, 2; Psalm 16:11

“When at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 103.

“The water to which Christ referred was the revelation of His grace in His Word. His spirit, His teaching, His love is as a satisfying fountain to every soul. Every other source to which men resort proves unsatisfying; but the Word of truth is as cool streams, represented as the waters of Lebanon, which are always satisfying. In Christ is fullness of joy forevermore. The pleasures and amusements of the world are never satisfying, or healing to the soul. But Jesus says, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."” –*Reflecting Christ*, p. 109.

NOTES

Consequences of Indulgence

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Romans 5:12

OBJECTIVES

- To gain the understanding that by the simple indulgence of the self in an unfallen human, serious consequences follow.
- To explore the baleful consequences of such indulgence.
- To receive the lesson that self, however harmless it appears, needs to be diligently guarded.

CAUSE TO EFFECT

1. Does Inspiration speak of the subject of cause to effect? Proverbs 26:2

“There are many important lessons for each to learn. Let all remember that there is not a motive in the heart of any man that the Lord does not clearly see. The motives of each one are weighed as carefully as if the destiny of the human agent depended upon this one result. We need a connection with divine power, that we may have an increase of clear light and an understanding of how to reason from cause to effect. We need to have the powers of the understanding cultivated, by our being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Let us each one consider carefully the solemn truth: God in heaven is true, and there is not a design however intricate, not a motive

however carefully hidden, that He does not clearly understand. He reads the secret devising of every heart. Man may plan out crooked actions for the future, thinking that God does not understand, but in that great day when the books are opened, and every man is judged by the things written in the books, those actions will appear as they are.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 53.

**2. In the case of our first parents, can we discern that by one act of self-indulgence this principle of cause to effect is displayed?
Romans 5:12**

“Example after example might be cited to show the effects of yielding to appetite. It seemed a small matter to our first parents to transgress the command of God in that one act,—the eating from a tree that was so beautiful to the sight and so pleasant to the taste,—but it broke their allegiance to God, and opened the gates to a flood of guilt and woe that has deluged the world.” —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 44.

CONSEQUENCES MANIFESTED

**3. What are some of the consequences of that one act of self?
Romans 5:17 (first phrase), 19 (first half)**

“This was the smallest test that God could devise to prove the obedience of our first parents; but Eve fell under the temptation. Adam accepted the forbidden fruit from the hand of his wife; and by this act the flood-gates of woe were opened upon our world. Adam was endowed with a nature pure and sinless, but he fell because he listened to the suggestions of the enemy. His posterity became depraved; by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” —*The Youth’s Instructor*, June 2, 1898.

“But a change came. Satan tempted Adam, and he fell. He who in heaven had become disloyal and had been cast out, made lying reports of God to the beings He had created, and they listened to his reports and believed

his lie. And sin entered the world, and death by sin. The consequences of our first parents' disloyalty we now have to meet as we work for God, and until the close of this earth's history our labors will become more and more trying."—*Australasian Union Conference Record*, April 15, 1903.

4. As we expand upon the consequences, how horrifying do they become? Romans 3:10-18

“Human beings have degenerated. One after another they fall under the curse, because sin has entered the world, and death by sin. The truth is not made precious by practice. It does not sanctify the soul. It fades from the mind because the heart does not appreciate its value. In consequence the mind becomes more and more darkened by the atmosphere which is malarious because of the perpetuating of Adam's sin. The conscience has lost its sensitiveness. Through a repetition of sin, the impression made on the conscience by sin has no longer force enough to arrest the transgressor, diseased, depraved, and dying. The voice no longer echoes the voice of God, or gives expression to the music of a soul sanctified through the truth. The heart, in which God should be enthroned, is a place from which come forth all kinds of abominations. How has the fine gold become dim?—Man has lost the reflection of God's character.

“This calamity is well-nigh universal. There is no place upon earth where the track of the serpent is not seen and his venomous sting felt. The whole earth is defiled. The curse is increasing as transgression increases. The earth is preparing for purification by fire.”—*The Bible Echo*, May 21, 1900.

A LESSON TO LEARN

5. Was there a lesson for our first parents? Genesis 2:15-17

“The first great moral lesson given Adam was that of self-denial. The reins of self-government were placed in his hands. Judgment, reason, and conscience were to bear sway. . . .

“Adam and Eve were permitted to partake of every tree in the Garden save one. There was only a single prohibition. The forbidden tree was as attractive and lovely as any of the trees in the Garden. It was called the tree of knowledge, because in partaking of that tree, of which God had said, "Thou shalt not eat of it," (Genesis 2:17) they would have a knowledge of sin, an experience in disobedience.” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 14.

6. In consideration that the tree of knowledge was gratifying to the self built into the human being, how harmless does self rationalise the indulgence of itself in partaking of its fruit? Proverbs 18:17; 16:2; 21:2

“Adam did not set his mind in defiance against God, nor did he in any way speak against God; he simply went directly contrary to His express command. And how many today are doing the very same thing, and their guilt is of much greater magnitude because they have the example of Adam’s experience in disobedience and its terrible results to warn them of the consequences of transgressing the law of God. So they have clear light upon this subject, and no excuse for their guilt in denying and disobeying God’s authority. Adam did not stop to calculate the result of his disobedience.” –*Reflecting Christ*, p. 56.

7. What is the lesson for us as we contemplate the story of our first parents fall? Proverbs 3:5

“We can stand down here, . . . and with the aftersight we are privileged to have, we can see what it means to disobey God’s commandments. Adam yielded to temptation and as we have the matter of sin and its consequences laid so distinctly before us, we can read from cause to effect and see the greatness of the act is not that which constitutes sin; but the disobedience of God’s expressed will, which is a virtual denial of God, refusing the laws of His government. The happiness of man is in his obedience to the laws of God. In his obedience to God’s law he is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil.” *–Reflecting Christ, p. 56.*

8. With the example of Adam and Eve before us, can we see how self wrongly exercised produces woe? Isaiah 5:20, 21

“No man can be happy and depart from God’s specified requirements, and set up a standard of his own which he decides he can safely follow. Then there would be a variety of standards to suit the different minds, and the government taken out of the Lord’s hands and human beings grasp the reins of government. The law of self is erected, the will of man is made supreme; and when the high and holy will of God is presented to be obeyed, respected, and honored the human will wants its own way . . . to do its own promptings, and there is a controversy between the human agent and the divine.” *–Reflecting Christ, p. 56.*

NOTES

Self In Sinful Flesh

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Romans 7:23

OBJECTIVES

- To research on another consequence of the sin of our first parents.
- To understand the activity of our physical nature.
- To see how self is heavily entrenched in our fallen state.

A DERANGED ORGANISM

- 1. After exercising self in Adam's perfect body, how did this affect him and his posterity? Isaiah 1:5 (last part), 6**

“The infinite value of the sacrifice required for our redemption reveals the fact that sin is a tremendous evil. Through sin the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted. Sin has degraded the faculties of the soul. Temptations from without find an answering chord within the heart, and the feet turn imperceptibly toward evil.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 8, p. 312.*

“It was by falsifying the character of God and exciting distrust of Him that Satan tempted Eve to transgress. By sin the minds of our first parents were darkened, their natures were degraded, and their conceptions of God were molded by their own narrowness and selfishness. And as men became bolder in sin, the knowledge and the love of God faded from

their minds and hearts. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God," they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 738.

2. With such a deranged organism, does self become a dominating power? Romans 7:23

“The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man’s experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist.” —*Education*, p. 29.

POWER OF THE PHYSICAL NATURE

3. Does the sinful physical nature have a power over us that we cannot resist? Romans 7:14, 15, 18

“The tendencies of our physical nature, unless under the dominion of a higher power, will surely work ruin and death.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 130.

4. How clearly does Inspiration reveal the inner conflict due to the indulgence of self by our first parents and all following generations? Galatians 5:17

“The word of God plainly presents before us this truth, that our physical natures will be brought into warfare with the spiritual.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 4*, p. 215.

5. As sin has deranged the human organism, is anything written in reference to the sinful passions we have to contend with? Romans 8:3

“The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it.” – *The Adventist Home*, p. 127.

“The heat caused by these artificials induces the blood to the brain. The action of the blood upon the lower or animal organs of the brain, causes unnatural activity, tends to recklessness in morals, and the mind and heart is in danger of being corrupted. As the animal organs are excited and strengthened, the moral are enfeebled. The moral and intellectual powers of the mind become servants to the animal.” – *The Review and Herald*, October 17, 1871.

PASSIONS OF SINFUL SELF

6. Do passions that require action have anything to do with self? Ephesians 2:1-3; Psalm 81:11, 12

“With worldly youth the love of society and pleasure becomes an absorbing passion. To dress, to visit, to indulge the appetite and passions, and to whirl through the round of social dissipation appear to be the great end of existence. They are unhappy if left in solitude. Their chief desire is to be admired and flattered and to make a sensation in society; and when this desire is not gratified, life seems unendurable.” – *The Adventist Home*, p. 547.

“Whoever eats too much, or of food which is not healthful, is weakening his power to resist the clamors of other appetites and passions. Many parents, to avoid the task of patiently educating their children to habits of

self-denial, indulge them in eating and drinking whenever they please. The desire to satisfy the taste and to gratify inclination does not lessen with the increase of years; and these indulged youth, as they grow up, are governed by impulse, slaves to appetite. When they take their place in society, and begin life for themselves, they are powerless to resist temptation. In the glutton, the tobacco-devotee, the wine-bibber, and the inebriate, we see the evil results of erroneous education and of self-indulgence.” —*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 76.

7. Adam and Eve followed their own self-indulgent choice; what is the condition of all who are born thereafter? Romans 5:19 (first part)

“The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1128.

8. How dominating is self in an unconverted man? 2 Corinthians 4:3-5

“The youth of today have not obtained that education and training that will lead them to put on the whole armor of God, and be able to resist temptation, depending upon the Holy Spirit to strengthen and empower them to fight manfully the battles of the Lord. They have formed the habit of working to do something to uplift themselves, and thus they are left to their own strength. Their words, their spirit, their actions, are not after the likeness of Christ. Self, self, self, is revealed in everything they are connected with.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 4*, p. 154.

“When the Testimonies came, "they made of no account the words of reproof given to them. By precept and example they were filled with their own doings, and counteracted the work to be done. They would not concede to right; they would not consent to correct wrongs, and to walk in the light. Self, self, self, was their center. No unity was seen, but disorder and dissension was manifested.” —*Pamphlet n°146*, p. 18.

NOTES

Installation Of Enmity

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed... Genesis 3:15

OBJECTIVES

- To study what it was that God put into our first parents that constituted enmity between them and Satan.
- To learn that every human born on earth has this installation of enmity.
- To appreciate the benefit of this enmity.

A COMPONENT OF GOODNESS

- 1. When our first parents fell for Satan's sophistry, did they have any harmony toward God in their heart? Genesis 3:8-10; 1 John 4:18**

"God declares, "I will put enmity." This enmity is not naturally entertained. When man transgressed the divine law, his nature became evil, and he was in harmony, and not at variance, with Satan. There exists naturally no enmity between sinful man and the originator of sin. Both became evil through apostasy. The apostate is never at rest, except as he obtains sympathy and support by inducing others to follow his example. For this reason, fallen angels and wicked men unite in desperate companionship. Had not God specially interposed, Satan and man would

have entered into an alliance against Heaven; and instead of cherishing enmity against Satan, the whole human family would have been united in opposition to God.” –*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 4*, p. 324.

2. What component did God have to install into their hearts to provide hope for the human race? Genesis 3:15

“God pledged Himself to introduce into the hearts of human beings a new principle—a hatred of sin, of deception, of pretense, of everything that bears the marks of Satan’s guile.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 28.

“God declares, “I will put enmity.” This enmity is supernaturally put, and not naturally entertained.” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 16.

3. How can this component be defined? Colossians 1:26, 27

“It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul that creates the enmity against Satan. Without this grace, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding.” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 16.

FOR EVERY HUMAN

4. Is any human exempt from this gift of God? John 1:9; Acts 17:27, 28; John 12:32

“Christ is the "Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John 1:9. As through Christ every human being has life, so also through Him every soul receives some ray of divine light. Not only intellectual but spiritual power, a perception of right, a desire for goodness, exists in every heart.” –*Education*, p. 29.

5. How does the apostle Paul throw light upon this subject? Romans 2:11-16

TO THWART SATAN’S POWER

6. Does this enmity affect man’s relationship with evil and Satan? Ephesians 6:12

“But when Satan heard that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, he knew that though he had succeeded in depraving human nature . . . , yet by some mysterious process God would restore to man his lost power, and enable him to resist and overcome his conqueror.”

“The new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts, enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whenever a man is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, when he resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, there is seen the operation of a principle wholly from above. The Holy Spirit must be constantly imparted to man, or he has no disposition to contend against the powers of darkness.” –*That I May Know Him*, p. 16.

7. Instead of compliance with Satan, is there a conflict established in the heart of man by this enmity? Galatians 5:17

“The natural heart is a battle-field, upon which there is a constant warfare; conscience seeking to hold sway, and passion also struggling for the victory.” –*The Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1881.

8. Having made the choice to submit to Satan’s temptation and thus become a slave to sin, has man been given a second chance to be able to choose whether to serve Satan or God by the implantation of enmity? Deuteronomy 30:19; 1 Peter 3:10, 11

“The instant man accepted the temptations of Satan, and did the very things God had said he should not do, Christ, the Son of God, stood between the living and the dead, saying, “Let the punishment fall on Me. I will stand in man’s place. He shall have another chance.”” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 75.

“God has given us the power of choice; it is ours to exercise. We cannot change our hearts, we cannot control our thoughts, our impulses, our affections. We cannot make ourselves pure, fit for God’s service. But we can *choose* to serve God, we can give Him our will; then He will work in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 176.

NOTES

Battle Between Spirit And Flesh

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other... Galatians 5:17

OBJECTIVES

- To expand on the conflict established in the human soul.
- To show that God's thoughts do have a psychological effect on the sinner's mind.
- To study the natural man's enmity against the thoughts of God.

GOD'S THOUGHTS

- 1. What is written of God's thoughts in contrast to man's thoughts?
Isaiah 55:8, 9; 46:9; Job 11:7**

“Though the finite minds of men are inadequate to enter into the counsels of the Infinite One, or to understand fully the working out of His purposes, yet often it is because of some error or neglect on their own part that they so dimly comprehend the messages of Heaven. Not infrequently the minds of the people, and even of God's servants, are so blinded by human opinions, the traditions and false teaching of men, that they are able only partially to grasp the great things which He has revealed in His word. Thus it was with the disciples of Christ, even when

the Saviour was with them in person. Their minds had become imbued with the popular conception of the Messiah as a temporal prince, who was to exalt Israel to the throne of the universal empire, and they could not understand the meaning of His words foretelling His sufferings and death.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 344.

**2. How do God’s thoughts surprise the sinner condemned?
Jeremiah 29:11; Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11**

“What fullness, what love and assurance are found in these words from the lips of God Himself, proclaiming His love, His pity and interest in the children of His care.” –*Selected Messages Book 2*, p. 231.

3. As these thoughts are exposed to the sinner, does his natural heart find a good response? 1 Corinthians 2:14

“Minds beclouded with evil cannot appreciate the value of the truth as it is in Jesus. When iniquity is cherished, men do not feel the necessity of making diligent effort with prayer and reflection, to understand that they must know or lose heaven. They have so long been under the shadow of the enemy that they view truth as men behold objects through a smoked and imperfect glass; for all things are dark and perverted in their eyes. Their spiritual vision is feeble and untrustworthy; for they look upon the shadow, and turn away from the light.” –*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 104.

MAN’S NATURAL THOUGHTS

4. Is anything written to show the resistance of the natural heart to God’s overtures of compassion to the sinner? Isaiah 30:15, 16; Romans 8:7, 8

5. Because of the resistance of the natural heart, did God extend Himself to try and break through man's barrier? Isaiah 30:17, 18; 9:2, 6; John 3:16

“But the gift of Christ reveals the Father's heart. It testifies that the thoughts of God toward us are "thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Jeremiah 29:11. It declares that while God's hatred of sin is as strong as death, His love for the sinner is stronger than death. Having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear, which is necessary to the completion of His work. No truth essential to our salvation is withheld, no miracle of mercy is neglected, no divine agency is left unemployed. Favor is heaped upon favor, gift upon gift. The whole treasury of heaven is open to those He seeks to save. Having collected the riches of the universe, and laid open the resources of infinite power, He gives them all into the hands of Christ, and says, All these are for man. Use these gifts to convince him that there is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness will be found in loving Me.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 57.

6. By bringing the sinner to the consequence of his resistance and showing compassion by the gift of His Son, do man's thoughts develop internal conflict? Luke 2:34, 35; Romans 2:15 (last half)

“To live such a life, to exert such an influence, costs at every step effort, self-sacrifice, discipline. It is because they do not understand this that many are so easily discouraged in the Christian life. Many who sincerely consecrate their lives to God’s service are surprised and disappointed to find themselves, as never before, confronted by obstacles and beset by trials and perplexities. They pray for Christlikeness of character, for a fitness for the Lord’s work, and they are placed in circumstances that seem to call forth all the evil of their nature. Faults are revealed of which they did not even suspect the existence. Like Israel of old they question, “If God is leading us, why do all these things come upon us?”” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

7. How is this internal conflict described by Inspiration? Galatians 5:17; Romans 7:21-23

“The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare.” —*Mind, Character and Personality Vol. 2*, p. 516.

“A warfare may be expected at any time, for the tempter sees that he is losing one of his subjects. A battle must be fought with the attributes which Satan has been strengthening for his own use. The human agent sees what he has to contend with—a strange power opposed to the idea of attaining the perfection that Christ holds out.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6*, p. 1098.

8. Is there counsel given as to how to handle this internal warfare for victory on the right side? Romans 8:1-5; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words "flesh" or "fleshly" or "carnal lusts" embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness.” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 127.

“In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. "Be of good cheer," He says; "I have overcome the world."” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 122.

MEDITATION

“What voice will you acknowledge as the voice of God? What power has the Lord in reserve to correct your errors and show you your course as it is? What power to work in the church? If you refuse to believe until every shadow of uncertainty and every possibility of doubt is removed, you will never believe. The doubt that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to faith. Faith rests upon evidence, not demonstration. The Lord requires us to obey the voice of duty, when there are other voices all around us urging us to pursue an opposite course. It requires earnest attention from us to distinguish the voice which speaks from God. We must resist and conquer inclination, and obey the voice of conscience without parleying or compromise, lest its promptings cease, and will and impulse control.” —*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 27.

God's Permissive And Perfect Will

And 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

OBJECTIVES

- To learn how God needs to meet the insubordinate, selfwilled mind of the sinner in order to save him.
- To observe the strategy God uses to bring the sinner to his knees.
- To come to a heart-commitment to accept God's perfect will.

THE SINNER'S STATE OF MIND

1. Does the Bible give us an insight into the mind of fallen sinful humanity? Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 73:6-9, 11, 12; 2 Peter 2:10

2. If God were to enforce His will on this state of mind, would He be able to help them? Isaiah 1:4-6

“The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan’s deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God’s government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan. This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world’s dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

GOD’S STRATEGY

3. What does a proud sinner need to come to in order to discern the winning love of God? Isaiah 2:10-12

“What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself.” –*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 456.

4. How does God manage to humiliate the proud human being without interfering with his freedom of choice? Recall Isaiah 30:16-18 i.e. Ezekiel 14:1-5, 7; Psalm 106:13-15

“The Lord had, through His prophets, foretold that Israel would be governed by a king; but it does not follow that this form of government was best for them or according to His will. He permitted the people to follow their own choice, because they refused to be guided by His counsel. Hosea declares that God gave them a king in His anger. Hosea 13:11. When men choose to have their own way, without seeking counsel from God, or in opposition to His revealed will, He often grants their desires, in order that, through the bitter experience that follows, they may be led to realize their folly and to repent of their sin. Human pride and wisdom will prove a dangerous guide. That which the heart desires contrary to the will of God will in the end be found a curse rather than a blessing.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 605.

- 5. Can it be shown that God does have a will which is not in reality His perfect will? 2 Samuel 2:7, 8; 1 Samuel 15:1-3; 2 Chronicles 20:17; Deuteronomy 17:14, 15, 17**

A LESSON TO LEARN

- 6. As God uses His permissive will to cause the sinner to be humbled, and come to repentance, is it wise to appeal to this will by the converted man in his battle with the flesh? Romans 8:5; 13:13, 14**

“I entreat you, brethren, to come to Christ and drink; drink freely of the water of salvation. Do not appeal to your own feelings. Do not think that sentimentalism is religion.”

“Each one will have a close struggle to overcome sin in his own heart. This is at times a very painful and discouraging work; because, as we see the deformities in our character, we keep looking at them, when we should look to Jesus and put on the robe of His righteousness. Everyone who enters the pearly gates of the city of God will enter there as a conqueror, and his greatest conquest will have been the conquest of self.”

—*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 9*, p. 182.

7. What is the counsel given in Scripture in reference to God’s perfect will? Romans 12:2

“By beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are actually to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. We expect too little, and we receive according to our faith. We are not to cling to our own ways, our own plans, our own ideas; we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds that we may prove "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Besetting sins are to be conquered and evil habits overcome. Wrong dispositions and feelings are to be rooted out and holy tempers and emotions begotten in us by the Spirit of God.” —*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 2*, p. 600.

8. Which mind only can recognise God’s perfect will into which we must be transformed? Philippians 2:5; 2 Timothy 1:7; Ephesians 4:22-24

“Through the merits of Christ you may part with that which scars and deforms the soul, and which develops a misshapen character. You must put away the old man with his errors and take the new man, Christ Jesus. Adopt His life as your guide then your talents and intellect will be devoted to God’s service.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 4, p. 92.*

NOTES

The Challenge of Perfection

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13

OBJECTIVES

- To establish God's objective in dealing with sinful humanity.
- To comprehend God's idea of perfection.
- To recognise the challenge God's estimate of perfection poses to the self in the human.

GOD'S IDEAL FOR MAN

- 1. Having learnt in this quarter that God wants to save sinful humanity, how does Inspiration express this plan of God?
Hebrews 7:25; Lamentation 3:25, 26; Luke 19:10**

“But by disobedience this was forfeited. Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. Yet the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his

creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.” —*Education*, p. 15.

2. Are we given the meaning of salvation? Matthew 1:21; Psalm 130:7, 8

“Christ invites all to come to Him, but when they come, they are to lay aside their sins. All their vices and follies, all their pride and worldliness, are to be laid at [the foot of] His cross. This He requires because He loves them, and desires to save them; not in their sins but from their sins. He who accepts the truth longs for transformation, and the light comes to him in bright rays.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 169.

3. To what extent is this salvation to reach? Matthew 5:48; James 1:4; Jude 1:2

“God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. The living God has given in His holy law a transcript of His character. The greatest Teacher the world has ever known is Jesus Christ; and what is the standard He has given for all who believe in Him? “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48. As God is perfect in His high sphere of action, so man may be perfect in his human sphere.

“The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. There is opened before us a path of continual advancement. We have an object to reach, a standard to gain, which includes everything good and pure and noble and elevated. There should be continual striving and constant progress onward and upward toward perfection of character.” —*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 365.

GOD’S HOLINESS

4. Are we really to reach the perfection of God? Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; 1 John 3:2, 3

“Love is manifested in kindness, gentleness, forbearance, and longsuffering. The expression of the countenance is changed. The peace of heaven is revealed. There is seen a habitual gentleness, a more than human love. Humanity becomes a partaker of divinity. Christ is honored by perfection of character. As these changes are perfected, angels break forth in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude.” —*Selected Messages Book 3*, p. 239.

5. How are we to reach such an ideal? 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:11-13

“Looking unto Jesus we obtain brighter and more distinct views of God, and by beholding we become changed. Goodness, love for our fellow men, becomes our natural instinct. We develop a character which is the counterpart of the divine character. Growing into His likeness, we

enlarge our capacity for knowing God. More and more we enter into fellowship with the heavenly world, and we have continually increasing power to receive the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of eternity.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 355.

GOD’S SELFLESSNESS

6. Having seen the selflessness of God’s character at the beginning of this lesson, do we comprehend the challenge posed in the quest for God’s holiness? Philippians 2:5-8

“Christ revealed God to His disciples in a way that performed in their hearts a special work, such as He desires to do in our hearts. There are many who, in dwelling too largely upon theory, have lost sight of the living power of the Saviour’s example. They have lost sight of Him as the humble, self-denying worker. What they need is to behold Jesus. Daily we need the fresh revealing of His presence. We need to follow more closely His example of self-renunciation and self-sacrifice.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 457.

7. What further detail does Inspiration give regarding this challenge? Matthew 16:24, 25

“A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. Christ first chose us, paying an infinite price for our redemption; and the true believer chooses Christ as first and last and best in everything. But this union costs us something. It is a union of utter dependence, to be entered into by a proud being. All who form this union must feel their need of the atoning blood of Christ. They must have a

change of heart. They must submit their own will to the will of God. There will be a struggle with outward and internal obstacles. There must be a painful work of detachment as well as a work of attachment. Pride, selfishness, vanity, worldliness—sin in all its forms—must be overcome if we would enter into a union with Christ. The reason why many find the Christian life so deplorably hard, why they are so fickle, so variable, is that they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 231.

8. Does this challenge continue throughout the life of the believer? 1 Corinthians 15:31; 2 Corinthians 4:10, 11

“After the union with Christ has been formed, it can be preserved only by earnest prayer and untiring effort. We must resist, we must deny, we must conquer self. Through the grace of Christ, by courage, by faith, by watchfulness, we may gain the victory.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 231.

MEDITATION

“But because this experience is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him. He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ’s strength for victory.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 476.

NOTES

SECTION 2

HOW TO CONQUER

Introduction

HAVING come to understand the core source of sin with all its baleful effects, while simultaneously observing the selfless nature of God by which He desires to save the fallen, we now pursue a study by which we may conquer not only sin but its very source.

Our study in this section is to behold the revelation of Jesus Christ in the detail of His atonement with fallen mankind. By careful research into Scripture and Spirit of Prophecy declarations we will explore how the second person of the Godhead selflessly relinquished His equality with God to receive our sinful flesh with all its baleful consequences. As He met the internal conflict of the selfism of sinful flesh and dealt with it in His spiritual nature which was His selfless divine nature, we will behold the conflict within Christ which He conquered.

In pursuing this study we rely upon the Holy Spirit who “will guide you into all truth,” and, referring to Christ, ”shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” John 16:13, 14. By His presence within us we may experience the revelations of the Holy Spirit and learn to identify with Jesus in His conflict and thus learn of Him to conquer our conflict within.

May this be the experience of every Sabbath School member of the Advent Pilgrims Fellowship and thus secure a position with Christ on that sea of glass.

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” Revelation 15:2, 3.

The Woman's Seed

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel.
Genesis 3:15

OBJECTIVES

- To appreciate the provision God made when our first parents indulged in sin.
- To study the meaning behind the term – woman's seed.
- To understand the conflict forecast upon the one identified by the woman's seed.

GOD'S MERCIFUL PROVISION

- 1. After our first parents indulged in the sin of partaking of the forbidden tree, what would be the condition of their posterity? Romans 5:12, 19 (first part), John 8:34**

“God gave our first parents a pure and upright character, in harmony with His law; and had they remained obedient, they would have bequeathed the same character to their posterity. But they listened to Satan's specious temptations, and transgressed this holy law, and the result was death. And the sons and daughters of Adam, instead of coming into the world, as God first made man, righteous and heirs of eternal life, have been the

victims of sin and death and woe. This is the result of the transgression of God's law in Eden." —*The Bible Echo*, July 29, 1895.

"The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and did fall through transgressing. Because of sin, his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1128.

2. Did God provide something for Adam and Eve by which their posterity could benefit? Genesis 3:15

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:19. —*The Story of Redemption*, p. 60

"The covenant of grace was first made with man in Eden, when after the fall, there was given a divine promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. To all men this covenant offered pardon, and the assisting grace of God for future obedience through faith in Christ. It also promised them eternal life on condition of fidelity to God's law. Thus the patriarchs received the hope of salvation." —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 131.

3. By receiving this provision, would our first parents be qualified to pass on to their posterity a seed of hope? Psalm 102:28

"This hope of redemption through the advent of the Son of God as Saviour and King, has never become extinct in the hearts of men. From the beginning there have been some whose faith has reached out beyond the shadows of the present to the realities of the future. Adam, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—through these and other worthies the Lord has preserved the precious revealings

of His will. And it was thus that to the children of Israel, the chosen people through whom was to be given to the world the promised Messiah, God imparted a knowledge of the requirements of His law, and of the salvation to be accomplished through the atoning sacrifice of His beloved Son.” –*Prophets and Kings*, p. 682.

THE WOMAN’S SEED

4. Because Adam and Eve embraced their Saviour, is there a difference between their seed and the serpent’s seed? Psalm 112:1, 2, 10; Proverbs 11:17-21

“The curse upon the ground at first had been felt but lightly; but now a double curse rested upon it. Cain and Abel represent the two classes, the righteous and the wicked, the believers and unbelievers, which should exist from the fall of man to the second coming of Christ. Cain’s slaying his brother Abel, represents the wicked who will be envious of the righteous, and will hate them because they are better than themselves. They will be jealous of the righteous, and will persecute and put them to death because their right-doing condemns their sinful course.” –*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1*, p. 57.

5. How only could the seed of faith and obedience be transmitted to their posterity? Proverbs 1:7-9; 4:10-13, 20-22; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 3:9

“To his children, and to their children, to the ninth generation, [Adam] delineated the perfections of his Eden home; and also his fall and its

dreadful results, and the load of grief brought upon him on account of the rupture in his family, which ended in the death of Abel. He related to them the sufferings God had brought him through, to teach him the necessity of strictly adhering to his law. He declared to them that sin would be punished in whatever form it existed. He entreated them to obey God, who would deal mercifully with them if they should love and fear him.” –*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 1*, p. 58.

“In the children committed to her care, every mother has a sacred charge from God. "Take this son, this daughter," He says; "train it for Me; give it a character polished after the similitude of a palace, that it may shine in the courts of the Lord forever."” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 376.

6. When the promised seed finally arrived, did it reveal the ingredient of a holy birth? Romans 1:3, 4; Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:20-23

BORN INTO CONFLICT

7. Did Christ, the woman’s seed, meet conflict from the day He was born? Revelation 12:4

“Satan was unwearied in his efforts to overcome the Child of Nazareth. From His earliest years Jesus was guarded by heavenly angels, yet His life was one long struggle against the powers of darkness. That there should be upon the earth one life free from the defilement of evil was an offense and a perplexity to the prince of darkness. He left no means untried to ensnare Jesus. No child of humanity will ever be called to live a holy life amid so fierce a conflict with temptation as was our Saviour.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 71.

8. How was this conflict internalised as an experience in Christ? Romans 8:3; Galatians 5:17

“This character was revealed in the life of Christ. That He might by His own example condemn sin in the flesh, He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh. Constantly he beheld the character of God; constantly He revealed this character to the world.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 322.

“The pitying Saviour stands right by your side to help you. He would send every angel out of glory while you are struggling to overcome sin, so that Satan cannot have the victory over you. Christ . . . took man’s human nature upon Him that He might come right down to man in the temptation wherewith man is beset. The pitiful Redeemer knows just how to help us in every one of our strivings.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 263.

NOTES

Christ In Sinful Flesh

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. Hebrews 2:14

OBJECTIVES

- To obtain scriptural evidence that Christ received the sinful flesh of the human race in order to help them conquer sin.
- To understand that Jesus simultaneously possessed a sinless, divine nature.
- To appreciate that this knowledge is essential for our salvation.

SAVING KNOWLEDGE

1. In the mediatorial prayer of Jesus, does He give the answer to the pressing need to our salvation? John 17:1-3

“Such an education must be based upon the word of God. Here only are its principles given in their fullness. The Bible should be made the foundation of study and of teaching. The essential knowledge is a knowledge of God and of Him whom He has sent.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 401.

“Do we learn from Christ every day? If we do not, we shall certainly come short of the knowledge that is essential. We can not afford to be weaklings in our Christian experience: for we can not tell when our

account may be settled for eternity. We must constantly increase in faith, and in likeness to Jesus Christ. If we will humble ourselves, the Lord will lift us up. We may try to lift ourselves up, but this will not be reckoned in our favor, in the day when Christ estimates character.” –*The Review and Herald*, August 15, 1907.

2. How do the Scriptures reemphasise this important knowledge? 1 John 5:20; Proverbs 2:3-5, 9-11

“It is of immense importance, in the light of the lessons of Christ, that every human being should study the Scriptures, that he may be convinced in whom his hopes of eternal life are centered. The Bible should ever have been made the great, grand book of study, which has come down to us from heaven, and is the word of life. Should that book which tells us what we must do in order to be saved, be set aside in a corner, and human productions be exalted as the great wisdom in education? The very knowledge children and youth need to obtain for usefulness in this life, and that they may carry with them in the future life, is found in the word of God. But this is not encouraged and presented before them as the most essential knowledge, and as that which will give the most correct information of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.” – *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 384.

KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

3. What is to be known of Jesus in our conflict with sin? Romans 8:1-4

“That He might by His own example condemn sin in the flesh, He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh.” –*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 322.

**4. Do we understand the meaning of “likeness of sinful flesh”?
Hebrews 2:14; Romans 7:18 i.e. 1 Peter 2:24**

**5. How valuable is this knowledge in our struggle with sin in our
flesh? 1 Peter 2:21, 22; Hebrews 4:15, 16**

“And when we see that sin in us is striving for the mastery, then we must strive. . . .

“The pitying Saviour stands right by your side to help you. He would send every angel out of glory while you are struggling to overcome sin, so that Satan cannot have the victory over you. Christ . . . took man’s human nature upon Him that He might come right down to man in the temptation wherewith man is beset. The pitiful Redeemer knows just how to help us in every one of our strivings.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 263.

TWO NATURES WITHIN

**6. While Jesus inherited sinful flesh by birth, did He have a sinless
component within Him as well? 1 Peter 1:19; Hebrews 7:26**

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

“The human nature of Christ was like unto ours. And suffering was really more keenly felt by Him, for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 268.

7. Does Inspiration expand on the two natures Christ partook of?

“He took upon His *sinless* nature our *sinful* nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7A*, p. 450.

“Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which by disobedience Adam had lost, for himself and for the world. In His own character Jesus manifested to the world the character of God; He pleased not Himself, but went about doing good. His whole history, for more than thirty years, was one of pure, disinterested benevolence.” —*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1902.

“The love that Christ manifested can not be comprehended by mortal man. It is a mystery too deep for the human mind to fathom. Christ did in reality

unite the offending nature of man with his own sinless nature, because by this act of condescension he would be enabled to pour out his blessings in behalf of the fallen race. Thus he has made it possible for us to partake of his nature. By making himself an offering for sin, he opened a way whereby human beings might be made one with him. He placed himself in man's position, becoming capable of suffering. The whole of his earthly life was a preparation for the altar." —*The Review and Herald*, July 17, 1900.

MEDITATION

“Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7A*, p. 453.

NOTES

Christ's Conflict

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin. 1 Peter 4:1

OBJECTIVES

- To expand on the two natures Christ possessed.
- To show the effect these two opposing natures would have on His life's experience.
- To demonstrate that Jesus suffered a lifelong conflict which intensified up to the death of the cross.

SINFUL AND SINLESS

1. Does Inspiration confirm that Jesus really was given the sinful nature of the fallen human race? Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:16-18

“Christ assumed our fallen nature, and was subject to every temptation to which man is subject.”

“Christ became one with the human family—bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. . . . He pledged Himself to endure all the temptations that man must endure, that He might know how to succor those who are tempted.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 17*, p. 29.

2. How further does inspiration reveal that this sinful human nature was combined with His sinless divine nature? Hebrew 4:15

“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.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 926.

“This love was manifested, but it cannot be comprehended by mortal man. It is a mystery too deep for the human mind to fathom. Christ did in reality unite the offending nature of man with His own sinless nature, because by this act of condescension, He would be enabled to pour out His blood in behalf of the fallen race.”—*Manuscript Releases Vol. 17*, p. 26.

INTERNAL CONFLICT

3. With such opposing aspects within the person of Jesus, what natural observation can be made in reference to His internal experience? Isaiah 53:3, 4

“Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, Christ "suffered being tempted." While He was free from the taint of sin, the refined sensibilities of His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to Him. Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the archapostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation.” —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 165.

4. In our contemplation of these things, can we discern the trauma, the internal agony Christ suffered all His life? Isaiah 63:9

“He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege.” –*The Faith I Live By*, p. 49.

A LIFELONG ANGUISH

5. In seeking to reach us in our temptations from within and without, is the suffering of Jesus deeply internal? Hebrews 4:15

“Those who claim that it was not possible for Christ to sin, cannot believe that He really took upon Himself human nature. But was not Christ actually tempted, not only by Satan in the wilderness, but all through His life, from childhood to manhood? In all points He was tempted as we are, and because He successfully resisted temptation under every form, He gave man the perfect example, and through the ample provision Christ has made, we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust.”
–*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 929.

6. Contemplate this deep suffering as it is revealed in Scripture. Lamentation 1:12-14

“How few have any conception of the anguish which rent the heart of the Son of God during His thirty years of life upon earth. The path from the manger to Calvary was shadowed by sorrow and grief. He was the Man of Sorrows, and endured such heartache as no human language can

portray. He could have said in truth, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow" (Lamentations 1:12). His suffering was the deepest anguish of the soul; and what man could have sympathy with the soul anguish of the Son of the infinite God? Hating sin with a perfect hatred, He yet gathered to His soul the sins of the whole world, as He trod the path to Calvary, suffering the penalty of the transgressor. Guiltless, He bore the punishment of the guilty; innocent, yet offering Himself to bear the penalty of the transgression of the law of God. The punishment of the sins of every soul was borne by the Son of the infinite God. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer. He who knew no sin became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. In assuming the nature of man, He placed Himself where He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, that by His stripes we might be healed." —*That I May Know Him*, p. 66.

7. How was this internal conflict intensified as Christ approached the cross? Matthew 26:37-39; Psalm 22:14-16

“He went a little distance from them—not so far but that they could both see and hear Him—and fell prostrate upon the ground. He felt that by sin He was being separated from His Father. The gulf was so broad, so black, so deep, that His spirit shuddered before it. This agony He must not exert His divine power to escape. As man He must suffer the consequences of man's sin. As man He must endure the wrath of God against transgression.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 686.

8. As the selfism of sin was so foreign to His selfless nature, was His death caused by more than His physical trauma? Psalm 40:12

“Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 13.

MEDITATION

“What a sight was this for Heaven to look upon! Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend. God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He stooped to poverty and to the deepest abasement among men. For our sake He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich.”—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 165.

NOTES

Demonstration Of A Conqueror

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Revelation 3:21

OBJECTIVES

- To recapture Christ's conflict from the previous lesson.
- To study the exercise of the faith of Jesus by which He gained the victory over the selfism of sin.
- To embrace His example in our conflict with self and sin.

CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS

- 1. What are we admonished to consider in reference to Christ?
Hebrews 12:2-4; 3:1**

“I ask you to consider him, who though the Majesty of heaven, the King of Glory, took humanity upon him, and came to this world to show what those who serve him may become. God has given you precious knowledge regarding the treatment of the sick.” —*Spalding and Magan Collection*, p. 344.

**2. Do we see Jesus struggling with the selfsame conflicts as ours and even greater? How detailed is His suffering of our conflict?
Hebrews 5:7-9**

“We are not to be so overwhelmed with the thought of our sins and errors that we shall cease to pray. Some realize their great weakness and sin, and become discouraged. Satan casts his dark shadow between them and the Lord Jesus, their atoning sacrifice. They say, It is useless for me to pray. My prayers are so mingled with evil thoughts that the Lord will not hear them.

“These suggestions are from Satan. In His humanity Christ met and resisted this temptation, and He knows how to succor those who are thus tempted. In our behalf, He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears"..."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 78.

THE FAITH OF JESUS

3. How are we to conquer our conflicts and thus be saved from sin and self? Revelation 14:12; Galatians 2:20

“We are to copy no human being. There is no human being wise enough to be our criterion. We are to look to the man Christ Jesus, who is complete in the perfection of righteousness and holiness. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the pattern man. His experience is the measure of the experience that we are to gain. His character is our model. Let us, then, take our minds off the perplexities and the difficulties of this

life and fix them on Him, that by beholding we may be changed into His likeness.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 166.

4. In our struggle to overcome our sins do we see in Jesus a relevant faith by which to conquer? Psalm 31:1-5; Luke 23:46

”Suddenly the gloom lifted from the cross, and in clear, trumpetlike tones, that seemed to resound throughout creation, Jesus cried, "It is finished." "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." A light encircled the cross, and the face of the Saviour shone with a glory like the sun. He then bowed His head upon His breast, and died.

“Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. He was acquainted with the character of His Father; He understood His justice, His mercy, and His great love. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father’s favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 756.

5. Being the author of the faith by which we may conquer, what naturally follows for us to do in our relation to Jesus? 1 Peter 2:21-23

“No man, woman, or youth can attain to Christian perfection and neglect the study of the word of God. By carefully and closely searching His word we shall obey the injunction of Christ, “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of

Me.” This search enables the student to observe closely the divine Model, for they testify of Christ. The Pattern must be inspected often and closely in order to imitate it. As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself defects of character; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees he cannot be a follower without a very great change in his life. Still he studies, with a desire to be like his great Exemplar; he catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master; by beholding he becomes changed. “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” —*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p.17

FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE

6. How do the Scriptures admonish us in order to follow Christ’s example? Phillipians 2:5-8

“It is the love of self that brings unrest. When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved. Then we shall not be seeking the highest place. We shall desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. We shall understand that the value of our work does not consist in making a show and noise in the world, and in being active and zealous in our own strength. The value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Trust in God brings holier qualities of mind, so that in patience we may possess our souls.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

7. With Christ’s mind in us, will we overcome self and sin? 1 Peter 4:1

“In our own strength it is impossible for us to deny the clamors of our fallen nature. Through this channel Satan will bring temptation upon us. Christ knew that the enemy would come to every human being, to take advantage of hereditary weakness, and by his false insinuations to ensnare all whose trust is not in God. And by passing over the ground which man must travel, our Lord has prepared the way for us to overcome. It is not His will that we should be placed at a disadvantage in the conflict with Satan. He would not have us intimidated and discouraged by the assaults of the serpent. "Be of good cheer," He says; "I have overcome the world."” –*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 152.

8. As Jesus gave the example of an overcomer, and we follow Him, what fellowship does He declare is our privilege? Revelation 3:21

“The example of Christ shows us that our only hope of victory is in continual resistance of Satan’s attacks. He who triumphed over the adversary of souls in the conflict of temptation understands Satan’s power over the race and has conquered him in our behalf. As an overcomer He has given us the advantage of His victory, that in our efforts to resist the temptations of Satan we may unite our weakness to His strength, our worthlessness to His merits. And, sustained by His enduring might under strong temptation, we may resist in His all-powerful name and overcome as He overcame.” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3*, p. 480.

MEDITATION

“It was through inexpressible suffering that our Redeemer placed redemption within our reach. In this world He was unhonored and unknown, that through His wonderful condescension and humiliation He might exalt man to receive heavenly honors and immortal joys in His kingly courts. Will fallen man murmur because heaven can be obtained only by conflict, self-abasement, and toil?” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3*, p. 480.

Follow Me

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke 9:23

OBJECTIVES

- Having studied the Conqueror, to research the admonitions to copy Him.
- To explore the meaning of following Jesus.
- To appreciate the benefit of following Jesus.

SCRIPTURAL ADMONITIONS

- 1. Why did Jesus come to this earth leaving the security of heaven?
Luke 19:10; Titus 2:11-14**

“What evidence have we of the matchless love of Jesus in that He left heaven and came to the earth to help us. He has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”” —*The Upward Look*, p. 328.

“Let us remember Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Let us remember that he lived not to please himself. He left heaven to take his place in the ranks of fallen beings, to endure humiliation and abuse. Without humbling himself to the death of the cross, he could not have borne the penalty of transgression.” —*Review and Herald*, September 16, 1902.

2. In consideration of question one, do we have admonitions relevant to Christ's self-sacrifice? John 13:15; Luke 9:23

“Few will follow the example of our Saviour in earnest, frequent prayer to God for strength to endure the trials, and to perform the daily duties, of this life. Christ is the captain of our salvation, and by His own sufferings and sacrifice, has given an example to all His followers, that watchfulness and prayer and persevering effort were necessary on their part if they would rightly represent the love which dwelt in His bosom for the fallen race.” —*Prayer*, p. 168.

TO FOLLOW HIM

3. What must we do in order to follow Jesus? Ezekiel 43:10; 1 Timothy 1:15, 16

“We are under obligations to God to be constantly learning of Christ how to guide and control our thoughts, our feelings, and our passions. O, how fearfully lax we are in our duty to ourselves, in allowing our ideas to be moulded by our own faulty will, and in allowing ourselves to be controlled by circumstances. We must study the pattern, Jesus Christ. Self-culture and divine grace will strengthen us in moral power. Every faculty should be employed to make of us all that Christ has made provision that we should become. How many are losing the balance of their minds for want of heart culture! All goodness commences in the heart.” —*The Bible Echo*, October 15, 1893.

4. After careful study of the pattern man, does Inspiration qualify the natural conclusion? John 2:6

“The only begotten Son of the infinite God has, by his words [and], his practical example left us a plain pattern which we are to copy. By his words he has educated us to obey God, and by his own practice he has showed us how we can obey God.

“Not only did Christ give explicit rules showing how we may become obedient children but he showed us in his own life and character just how to do those things which are right and acceptable with God, so there is no excuse why we should not do those things which are pleasing in his sight.” –*Selected Messages Book 3*, pp. 138, 139.

“Christ came to do His Father’s will. Are we following in His steps? All who have named the name of Christ should be constantly seeking for a more intimate acquaintance with Him, that they may walk even as He walked, and do the works of Christ. We should appropriate the lessons of His life to our lives. Christ "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Here is the work of self-denial upon which we must enter with cheerfulness, in imitation of the example of our Redeemer. The Christian’s life must be one of conflict and of sacrifice. The path of duty should be followed, not the path of inclination and choice.” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3*, p. 538.

**5. How else does Scripture address the aspect of following Jesus? 2
Corinthians 5:15-17; Colossians 2:6, 7, 10-12; John 17:23**

PEACE AND REST

6. Does Jesus address the benefit offered in following Him? Matthew 11:28-30

“Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you"—the yoke of restraint and obedience—"and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." We are to find rest by wearing His yoke and bearing His burdens. In being co-workers with Christ in the great work for which He gave His life, we shall find true rest. When we were sinners, He gave His life for us. He wants us to come to Him and learn of Him. Thus we are to find rest. He says He will give us rest. "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." In doing this you will find in your own experience the rest that Christ gives, the rest that comes from wearing His yoke and lifting His burdens.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1090.

7. In reference to our conflict within, does following Jesus give us the skill to conquer? Romans 7:22-25 (first sentence); 2 Corinthians 10:3, 5

“The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. 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"!” – *The Sancified Life*, p. 92.

8. Where does following Jesus finally culminate? Ephesians 4:13; 2 Peter 1:10, 11

“None are living Christians unless they have a daily experience in the things of God and daily practice self-denial, cheerfully bearing the cross and following Christ. Every living Christian will advance daily in the divine life. As he advances toward perfection, he experiences a conversion to God every day; and this conversion is not completed until he attains to perfection of Christian character, a full preparation for the finishing touch of immortality.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 2*, p. 505.

NOTES

Keeping Focused

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18

OBJECTIVES

- To explore Inspiration in reference to the influence on our character of the things that we behold.
- Considering that Christ is our example, to make Him the object of our view.
- To establish the importance of keeping Jesus constantly in view.

VISUAL INFLUENCES

1. Does Jesus show that what you behold with your eye affects you? Matthew 6:22, 23

“It is a law of the mind that it gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is trained to dwell. If occupied with commonplace matters only, it will become dwarfed and enfeebled.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 596.

“The psalmist describes the effect produced upon the worshiper by the adoration of idols. He says, “They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.” Psalm 115:8. It is a law of the human mind that by beholding we become changed. Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of truth, purity, and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity, if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate

infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower.” –*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 91.

2. How does Jesus admonish to affect our vision of things around us? Luke 11:35, 36; Psalm 18:28

“All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory over them; for these are the avenues to the soul. ...

“The brain nerves which communicate to the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man, and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system, lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind.” –*Healthful Living*, p. 54.

OBJECT OF OUR VIEW

3. If what we behold has such a profound effect on our life, where should we look to gain the victory in our inner conflict? Hebrews 12:2, 3; Isaiah 45:22

4. What is the meaning behind the expression, “Looking unto Jesus”; how can I look upon someone I don’t see? Hebrews 11:1

“As we view Christ by the eye of faith, we see the necessity of becoming pure in thought and holy in character. Christ invites us to draw near to

Him, and promises that He will draw nigh to us. Looking upo Him, we behold the invisible God, who clothed His divinity with humanity in order that through humanity He might shed forth a subdued and softened glory, so that our eyes might be enabled to rest upon Him, and our souls not be extinguished by His undimmed splendor. We behold God through Christ, our Creator and Redeemer. It is our privileg to contemplate Jesus by faith, and see Him standing between humanity and the eternal throne. He is our Advocate, presenting our prayers and offerings as spiritual sacriices to God. Jesus is the great sinless propitiation, and through His merit, God and man may hold converse together.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7, p. 925.*

5. How is the meaning of looking to Jesus further enlarged? 2 Corinthians 3:18

“Beholding Christ means studying His life as given in His Word. We are to dig for truth as for hidden treasure. We are to fix our eyes upon Christ. When we take Him as our personal Saviour, this gives us boldness to approach the throne of grace. By beholding we become changed, morally assimilated to the One who is perfect in character. By receiving His imputed righteousness, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, we become like Him. The image of Christ is cherished, and it captivates the whole being.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6, p. 1098.*

FIXING OUR EYES UPON HIM

6. Is there a term used by Jesus that emphasises the importance of focusing exclusively upon Jesus? Luke 11:34

“When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself. Satan will constantly present allurements to

induce us to break this tie—to choose to separate ourselves from Christ. Here is where we need to watch, to strive, to pray, that nothing may entice us to *choose* another master; for we are always free to do this. But let us keep our eyes fixed upon Christ, and He will preserve us. Looking unto Jesus, we are safe. Nothing can pluck us out of His hand. In constantly beholding Him, we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 72.

7. Does Inspiration magnify the experience gained by looking upon Jesus?

“As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself serious defects; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees the necessity for radical changes in his life. Still he studies with a desire to become like his great Exemplar. He catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master. By beholding, by "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," he becomes changed into the same image.

“It is not by looking away from Him that we imitate the life of Jesus, but by talking of Him, by dwelling upon His perfections, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying—through faith and love, and by earnest, persevering effort—to approach the perfect Pattern. By having a knowledge of Christ—His words, His habits, and His lessons of instruction—we borrow the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, and become imbued with the spirit we have so much admired. Jesus becomes to us "the chiefest among ten thousand," the One "altogether lovely".” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6*, p. 1098.

8. How all-absorbing should this focus upon Jesus be? Psalm 27:4

“Unless he makes it his life business to behold the uplifted Saviour, and by faith to accept the merits which it is his privilege to claim, the sinner can no more be saved than Peter could walk upon the water unless he kept his eyes fixed steadily upon Jesus.” —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 93.

Willing To Suffer

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Romans 8:17

OBJECTIVES

- To examine Inspiration for information regarding the desires and lusts that course through us.
- To recall the conflict Jesus suffered by receiving our sinful flesh.
- To take hold of the example of Christ to suffer in the flesh so not to indulge its sinful desires.

DESIRES AND LUSTS

- 1. Due to the fall of man, what is written about his desires and lusts?**
Ephesians 2:2, 3

“Without the transforming process which can come alone through divine power, the original propensities to sin are left in the heart in all their strength, to forge new chains, to impose a slavery that can never be broken by human power.” —*Evangelism*, p. 192.

- 2. After conversion, do we still indulge sinful desires of the mind?**
Colossians 3:5-10; Ephesians 2:1

“Conversion is a work that most do not appreciate. It is not a small matter to transform an earthly, sin-loving mind and bring it to understand the unspeakable love of Christ, the charms of His grace, and the excellency of God, so that the soul shall be imbued with divine love and captivated with the heavenly mysteries. When he understands these things, his former life appears disgusting and hateful. He hates sin, and, breaking his heart before God, he embraces Christ as the life and joy of the soul. He renounces his former pleasures. He has a new mind, new affections, new interest, new will; his sorrows, and desires, and love are all new. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which have heretofore been preferred before Christ, are now turned from, and Christ is the charm of his life, the crown of his rejoicing. Heaven, which once possessed no charms, is now viewed in its riches and glory; and he contemplates it as his future home, where he shall see, love, and praise the One who hath redeemed him by His precious blood.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 2, p. 294.*

3. How do we exercise the new mind in reference self? Romans 6:13, 14; 8:13; Galatians 5:24

“We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. . . . The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness.” —*God’s Amazing Grace, p. 97.*

4. With our new mind, namely that of Christ, is there a part of us which will cause us grief? Romans 8:22, 23; Galatians 5:17

“We should preserve the strictest chastity in thought, and word, and deportment. Let us remember that God sets our secret sins in the light of His countenance. There are thoughts and feelings suggested and aroused by Satan that annoy even the best of men, but if they are not cherished, if they are repulsed as hateful, the soul is not contaminated with guilt, and no other is defiled by their influence. O that we each might become a savor of life unto life to those around us!” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 140.

THE BEST OF MEN

5. Who was the best of men and did he experience the sufferings from the flesh? 1 Timothy 2:3-5; Lamentations 1:12-14

“Jesus Himself, while He dwelt among men, was often in prayer. Our Saviour identified Himself with our needs and weakness, in that He became a suppliant, a petitioner, seeking from His Father fresh supplies of strength, that He might come forth braced for duty and trial. He is our example in all things. He is a brother in our infirmities, "in all points tempted like as we are;" but as the sinless one His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and a privilege. He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father. And if the Saviour of men, the Son of God, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of fervent, constant prayer.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

6. Is there a definition of temptation which verifies that Christ suffered this experience? James 1:13-15; Hebrews 4:15

“I will try to answer this important question: As God he could not be tempted: but as a man he could be tempted, and that strongly, and could yield to the temptations. His human nature must pass through the same test and trial Adam and Eve passed through. His human nature was created; it did not even possess the angelic powers. It was human, identical with our own. He was passing over the ground where Adam fell. He was now where, if he endured the test and trial in behalf of the fallen race, he would redeem Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall, in our own humanity.” —*Selected Messages Book 3*, p. 129.

LEARNING OF CHRIST

7. In consideration of the excruciating suffering the pure mind of Christ was exposed to, can we learn of Him how to deal with ours? Romans 7:24, 25 (first part)

“This should be the Christian’s consolation. Christ, as man’s representative, has overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.” —*The Signs of the Times*, January 24, 1878.

8. By looking to and studying the life of Jesus, can we be endued with a willingness to suffer in the flesh instead of indulging it? Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 4:1

“The Word makes the proud humble, the perverse meek and contrite, the disobedient obedient. The sinful habits natural to man are interwoven with the daily practice. But the Word cuts away the fleshly lusts. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the mind. It divides the joints and marrow, cutting away the lusts of the flesh, making men willing to suffer for their Lord.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 928.

MEDITATION

“Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view. I saw that those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ’s sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of the living God, pass through the time of trouble, see the King in His beauty, and dwell in the presence of God and of pure, holy angels.” —*Early Writings*, p. 67.

NOTES

Victory Of Suffering

For 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. Hebrews 2:10

OBJECTIVES

- To reflect upon the victory of Christ over sin through His sufferings.
- To study the sufferings of self-denial that bring the victory over sin.
- To appreciate our union with Christ in conquering.

CHRIST'S VICTORY

1. Have Christ's sufferings been the source of His purity and obedience? Hebrews 5:8, 9

“He took upon him humanity that he might know the infirmities and temptations of humanity, that he might know how to help and save men. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. Was he not perfect before?—Yes. But he was made a perfect Saviour, learning obedience by the things which he suffered, that humanity might have a perfect character and be fitted for the society of the angels of Heaven. Man was not able, in his own behalf, to meet and overcome the prince of darkness; but Christ overcame him in man's behalf and broke his power over the human race, so that through his merits they might be overcomers in their own behalf.” —*The Signs of the Times*, May 20, 1889.

2. What was the cheerful note of Christ's words as we are called to suffer with Him? John 16:33

“Trials will come. Christ, the Captain of our salvation, was made perfect through suffering. His followers will encounter the enemy many times and will be severely tried, but they need not despair. Christ says to them: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 8*, p. 212.

3. How did Jesus convey the sanctifying sufferings of His as a benchmark for our sanctifying sufferings? John 17:19; Hebrews 2:10

“The youth are called upon to copy the pattern given them. They cannot do this in their own strength; for human nature is erring. Through studying the life and character of Jesus, desire is awakened in the heart to have the mind of Christ, to learn of him meekness and lowliness of spirit. Jesus said, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified." It is his desire that his followers shall reflect his image. One unsanctified act on the part of our Saviour, would have marred the pattern, and he could not have been a perfect example for us; but although he was tempted in all points like as we are, he was yet without one taint of sin.” –*The Youth's Instructor*, October 13, 1892.

“What He taught, He lived. "I have given you an example," He said to His disciples; "that ye should do as I have done." "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 13:15; 15:10. Thus in His life, Christ's words had perfect illustration and support. And more than this; what He taught, He was. His words were the expression, not only of His own life experience, but of His own character. Not only did He teach the truth, but He was the truth. It was this that gave His teaching, power.” –*Education*, p. 78.

SELF-DENYING SUFFERING

4. As the pattern man, did Jesus demonstrate the attitude towards temptation? Hebrews 2:18

“Christ alone had experience in all the sorrows and temptations that befall human beings. Never another of woman born was so fiercely beset by temptation; never another bore so heavy a burden of the world’s sin and pain. Never was there another whose sympathies were so broad or so tender. A sharer in all the experiences of humanity, He could feel not only for, but with, every burdened and tempted and struggling one.” – *Education*, p. 78.

5. What is it that makes temptation a suffering for a converted follower of Christ? James 1:14, 15

“A man is tempted to sin when some attractive object or indulgence is presented to him, and he is drawn to overstep principle, and to violate his conscience in doing that which he knows to be wrong.” – *The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1893.

6. Does Inspiration expand on the description of this suffering? Psalm 42:5-7; 22:14, 15

“There are toils and conflicts and self-denials for us all. Not one will escape them. We must tread the path where Jesus leads the way, it may

be in tears, in trials, in bereavement, in sorrow for sins, or in seeking for the mastery over depraved desires, unbalanced characters, and unholy tempers. It requires earnest efforts to present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. It takes the entire being, complete consecration, entire submission. There must be no chamber of the mind where Satan can hold sway, and carry out his devices. Self must be crucified. Sacrifices must be made that will seem like taking the very life-blood from the heart.” –*Gospel Workers* (1892), p. 470.

VICTORY WITH CHRIST

7. How did Apostle Paul express his quest of union with Christ’s sufferings? Philippians 3:8-10

“By the life and the death of Christ, the thoughts of men also are brought to view. From the manger to the cross, the life of Jesus was a call to self-surrender, and to fellowship in suffering. It unveiled the purposes of men. Jesus came with the truth of heaven, and all who were listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit were drawn to Him. The worshipers of self belonged to Satan’s kingdom. In their attitude toward Christ, all would show on which side they stood. And thus everyone passes judgment on himself.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 57.

8. Is victory over sin and self promised to those who embrace the sufferings of Christ? Psalm 119:67, 71; 1 Peter 4:12, 13

“The word is: Go forward; discharge your individual duty, and leave all consequences in the hands of God. If we move forward where Jesus leads the way we shall see His triumph, we shall share His joy. We must share the conflicts if we wear the crown of victory. Like Jesus, we must be made perfect through suffering. Had Christ’s life been one of ease, then might we safely yield to sloth. Since His life was marked with continual self-denial, suffering, and self-sacrifice, we shall make no complaint if we are partakers with Him. We can walk safely in the darkest path if we have the Light of the world for our guide.” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 71.

MEDITATION

“There is such a thing as being partakers of the divine nature. We shall be tempted in a variety of ways, but when we are tempted we need to remember that a provision has been made whereby we may overcome. . . . Those who truly believe in Christ are made partakers of the divine nature and have power that they can appropriate under every temptation. They will not fall under temptation and be left to defeat. In time of trial they will claim the promises and by these escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 197.

NOTES

Self In The Redeemed

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. 1 Peter 4:2

OBJECTIVES

- To show that the converted soul has the mind of Christ.
- To understand the mindset of such a soul.
- To magnify the selflessness of the converted.

A CONVERTED MIND

- 1. Does the Bible invite the believer to receive a new mind?**
Philippians 2:5-8; 2 Timothy 1:7

“Jesus desires to efface the image of the earthly from the minds of His followers, and to impress upon them the image of the heavenly, that they may become one with Himself, reflecting His character, and showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 303.

- 2. How does Apostle Paul describe the attitude of this mind?**
Galatians 2:20

“Paul realized that his sufficiency was not in himself, but in the presence of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influence filled his heart, bringing every thought into subjection to Christ. . . . In the apostle’s teachings, Christ was the central figure. “I live,” he declared, “yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Self was hidden; Christ was revealed and exalted.” –*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 246.

THE DIVINE MINDSET

3. What is the nature of the new mind the soul receives from Christ? 2 Peter 1:2-4

“When man is a partaker of the divine nature, the love of Christ will be an abiding principle in the soul, and self and its peculiarities will not be exhibited.” –*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 1*, p. 243.

“It is the love of self that brings unrest. When we are born from above, the same mind will be in us that was in Jesus, the mind that led Him to humble Himself that we might be saved. Then we shall not be seeking the highest place. We shall desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. We shall understand that the value of our work does not consist in making a show and noise in the world, and in being active and zealous in our own strength. The value of our work is in proportion to the impartation of the Holy Spirit. Trust in God brings holier qualities of mind, so that in patience we may possess our souls.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 330.

4. If we have the selfless mind of God which was our study at the beginning of this lesson, will this dominate our living interactions? 1 Peter 4:1, 2

“God expects those who bear the name of Christ to represent Him in thought, word, and deed. Their thoughts are to be pure and their words

and deeds noble and uplifting, drawing those around them nearer to the Saviour.

“In the life of the true Christian there is nothing of self. Self is dead. There was no selfishness in the life that Christ lived while on this earth. Bearing our nature, He lived a life wholly devoted to the service of others.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 166.

SELFLESSNESS IN THE SOUL

5. Does Daniel express a similar principle to that of Apostle Paul? Daniel 10:8 i.e. Isaiah 6:5

“He who beholds Christ in His self-denial, His lowliness of heart, will be constrained to say, as did Daniel, when he beheld One like the sons of men, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption." Daniel 10:8. The independence and self-supremacy in which we glory are seen in their true vileness as tokens of servitude to Satan. Human nature is ever struggling for expression, ready for contest; but he who learns of Christ is emptied of self, of pride, of love of supremacy, and there is silence in the soul. Self is yielded to the disposal of the Holy Spirit. Then we are not anxious to have the highest place. We have no ambition to crowd and elbow ourselves into notice; but we feel that our highest place is at the feet of our Saviour. We look to Jesus, waiting for His hand to lead, listening for His voice to guide. The apostle Paul had this experience, and he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 15.

6. In which other way is the attitude of a converted soul described? Colossians 3:1-3

“It is the love of self that destroys our peace. While self is all alive, we stand ready continually to guard it from mortification and insult; but when we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects or slights to heart. We shall be deaf to reproach and blind to scorn and insult. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, R. V.” –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 16.

7. Is there another word that helps us to understand selflessness in the redeemed? James 3:13

“Lowliness and meekness of mind, which ever characterized the life of the divine Son of God, possessed by His true followers, bring contentment, peace, and happiness that elevate them above the slavery of artificial life.” –*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 2*, p. 802.

“Let all cultivate meekness, and learn lessons from Him who is meek and lowly in heart.” –*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 168.

8. What are the benefits reaped by opening the heart to the selflessness of Jesus? Psalm 149:4; 37:11

“The meekness of Christ, manifested in the home, will make the inmates happy; it provokes no quarrel, gives back no angry answer, but soothes the irritated temper and diffuses a gentleness that is felt by all within its

charmed circle. Wherever cherished, it makes the families of earth a part of the one great family above.” –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 16.

“The meek "shall inherit the earth." It was through the desire for self-exaltation that sin entered into the world, and our first parents lost the dominion over this fair earth, their kingdom. It is through self-abnegation that Christ redeems what was lost. And He says we are to overcome as He did. Revelation 3:21. Through humility and self-surrender we may become heirs with Him when "the meek shall inherit the earth."” –*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 17.

NOTES

Let This Mind Be In You

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

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the meaning behind Christ's expression of "Let your light shine."
- To learn that in God's selflessness man is given the freedom to accept or reject God's grace.
- To appreciate that the divine mind, which needs to be in us, is gained only by exercising our choice.

TO LET

- 1. In Christ's words of "Let your light shine" or "Let not your heart be troubled", do we sense a suggestion of resignation, to let go and let something happen? Matthew 5:16; John 14:1**

"Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, *Let your light shine*. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord's glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range of your influence." —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 420.

- 2. How is the thought in question one magnified in John 14:27?**

“When it appeared to Luther that all was lost, God raised up a friend and helper for him. The pious Staupitz opened the word of God to Luther’s mind, and bade him look away from himself, cease the contemplation of infinite punishment for the violation of God’s law, and look to Jesus, his sin-pardoning Saviour. "Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, cast yourself into the arms of your Redeemer. Trust in him,—in the righteousness of his life,—in the atonement of his death. Listen to the Son of God. He became man to give you the assurance of divine favor. Love him who has first loved you." Thus spoke this messenger of mercy. His words made a deep impression upon Luther’s mind. After many a struggle with long-cherished errors, he was enabled to grasp the truth, and peace came to his troubled soul.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 4*, p. 98.

THE CHOICE TO RECEIVE

3. Does Scripture reveal that God waits for us to give Him the right to work salvation in us? Proverbs 23:26; Isaiah 30:18, 19

“At the birth of Jesus the angel announced, Peace on earth, and good will to men. And now at His first appearance to the disciples after His resurrection, the Saviour addressed them with the blessed words, "Peace be unto you." Jesus is ever ready to speak peace to souls that are burdened with doubts and fears. He waits for us to open the door of the heart to Him, and say, Abide with us. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 803.

“When men begin to weave in the human threads to compose the pattern of the web, the Lord is in no hurry. He waits until men shall lay down their own human inventions and will accept the Lord’s way and the Lord’s will.” —*Evangelism*, p. 215.

4. Does God enunciate this choice He gives us? Deuteronomy 30:15, 19, 20; Revelation 3:8

“The true Witness has given us the assurance that He has set before us an open door, which no man can shut. Those who are seeking to be faithful to God may be denied many of the privileges of the world; their way may be hedged up and their work hindered by the enemies of truth; but there is no power that can close the door of communication between God and their souls. The Christian himself may close this door by indulgence in sin, or by rejection of heaven’s light. He may turn away his ears from hearing the message of truth, and in this way sever the connection between God and his soul. . . . Neither man nor Satan can close the door which Christ has opened for us.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7, p. 961.*

RECEIVE THE DIVINE MIND

5. In the light of the previous questions, what then is meant with “Let this mind be in you”? Philipians 2:5

“How, then, are we to be saved? "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," so the Son of man has been lifted up, and everyone who has been deceived and bitten by the serpent may look and live. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. The light shining from the cross reveals the love of God. His love is drawing us to Himself. If we do not resist this drawing, we shall be led to the foot of the cross in repentance for the sins that have crucified the Saviour. Then the Spirit of God through faith produces a new life in the soul. The thoughts and desires are brought into obedience to the will of Christ. The heart, the mind, are created anew in the image of Him who works in us to subdue all things to Himself. Then the law of God is written in the mind and heart, and we can say with Christ, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." Psalm 40:8.” –*The Desire of Ages, p. 175.*

6. Is God able to give us His mind if we resist? Hosea 6:4-7

“So long as we are in the world, we shall meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If Christ dwells in us, we shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful amid frets and irritations. Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self, and grow into a noble heroism. This is our allotted task; but it cannot be accomplished without help from Jesus, resolute decision, unwavering purpose, continual watchfulness, and unceasing prayer. Each one has a personal battle to fight. Not even God can make our characters noble or our lives useful, unless we become co-workers with Him. Those who decline the struggle lose the strength and joy of victory.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 487.

7. What is our allotted task? Micah 6:8

“Man is allotted a part in this great struggle for everlasting life; he must respond to the working of the Holy Spirit. It will require a struggle to break through the powers of darkness, but the Spirit that works in him can and will accomplish this. But man is no passive instrument to be saved in indolence. He is called upon to strain every muscle in the struggle for immortality, yet it is God that supplies the efficiency.

“Here are man’s works, and here are God’s works. . . . With these two combined powers, man will be victorious, and receive a crown of life at last. . . . He puts to the stretch every spiritual nerve and muscle that he may be a successful overcomer in this work, and that he may obtain the precious boon of eternal life.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 91.

8. By not resisting, do we receive the insights of that mind? 1 Corinthians 2:12-16

“Only under the direction of the Omniscient One shall we, in the study of His works, be enabled to think His thoughts after Him.” —*Education*, p. 134.

“O, if you loved Him as He has loved you, you would not shun an experience in the dark chapters of the suffering of the Son of God! . . . When we contemplate the humiliation of Christ, beholding His self-denial and self-sacrifice, we are filled with amazement at the manifestation of divine love for guilty man. When for Christ’s sake we are called to pass through trials that are of a humiliating nature, if we have the mind of Christ, we shall suffer them with meekness, not resenting injury, or resisting evil. We shall manifest the spirit that dwelt in Christ.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 324.

MEDITATION

No one, not even God, can carry us to heaven unless we make the necessary effort on our part. We must put features of beauty into our lives. We must expel the unlovely natural traits that make us unlike Jesus. While God works in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure, we must work in harmony with Him. The religion of Christ transforms the heart. It makes the worldly-minded man heavenly-minded. Under its influence the selfish man becomes unselfish because this is the character of Christ. The dishonest, scheming man becomes upright, so that it is second nature to him to do unto others as he would have others do unto him. The profligate is changed from impurity to purity. He forms correct habits, for the gospel of Christ has become to him a savor of life unto life.” —*Heaven*, p. 95.

NOTES

Sabbath Rest

And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. Isaiah 32:17

OBJECTIVES

- To learn that when self is fully resigned, there is a state of restfulness within.
- To find the connection between the rest from the internal conflict and the Sabbath rest.
- To embrace the restfulness offered by the gospel and thus become secure from bearing burdens on the Sabbath.

REST FROM THE CONFLICT

- 1. As this lesson pamphlet has revealed Christ's atonement with us in our conflict within, can we appreciate His appeal? Matthew 11:28-30**

“We are to bear the yoke of Christ that we may be placed in complete union with Him. "Take my yoke upon you," He says.... Wearing the yoke unites finite man in companionship with the dearly beloved Son of God. Lifting the cross cuts away self from the soul, and places man where he learns how to bear Christ's burdens. We can not follow Christ without wearing His yoke, without lifting the cross and bearing it after Him. If our will is not in accord with the divine requirements, we are to deny our inclinations, give up our darling desires, and step in Christ's footsteps.” – *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 69.

2. What in essence is the source of restlessness? Proverbs 11:2, 3; 13:10

“It is the love of self that brings unrest.” –*My Life Today*, p. 181.

“It is the love of self that destroys our peace. While self is alive we stand ready continually to guard it from mortification and insult; but when self is dead, and our life hid with Christ in God, we shall not take neglects or slights to heart.” –*In Heavenly Places*, p. 249.

3. What in essence is the skill He offers to find the rest from the battle between the spirit and the flesh? Matthew 11:29; Psalm 40:1-4

“The soul finds rest only in cherishing meekness and lowliness of heart. The peace of Christ is never found where selfishness reigns. The soul cannot grow in grace when it is self-centered and proud. Jesus assumed the position that man must take in order that the peace of Christ may abide in the heart. Those who have offered themselves to Christ to become His disciples must deny self daily, must lift up the cross and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. They must go where His example leads the way.” –*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 1*, p. 45.

“If you are willing to learn meekness and lowliness of heart in Christ’s school, He will surely give you rest and peace. It is a terribly hard struggle to give up your own will and your own way. But this lesson learned, you will find rest and peace. Pride, selfishness, and ambition must be overcome; your will must be swallowed up in the will of Christ. The whole life may become one constant love sacrifice, every action a manifestation,

and every word an utterance of love. As the life of the vine circulates through stem and cluster, descends into the lower fibers, and reaches to the topmost leaf, so will the grace and love of Christ burn and abound in the soul, sending its virtues to every part of the being, and pervading every exercise of body and mind.” –*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1091.

INTERNAL SABBATH REST

4. Was there a promise given to the Hebrews of rest and quietude which their pride rejected? Isaiah 30:15; 32:17

5. Is there a lesson for us in the rejection by the Hebrews? Hebrews 4:1, 2

“The exhortation of the apostle applies to us as well as to those to whom this epistle was directed. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them." Christ taught the people the principles of Christianity, speaking from the pillar of cloud and of fire, by day and by night; but they did not obey his words, and the apostle presents before us the consequence of their disobedience, stating that they were overthrown in the wilderness because of their rebellion. He says, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Shall we who are living near the close of this world's history "take heed"? Shall we heed the apostle's warning, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it"? The Lord would have his people trust in him and abide in his love, but that does not mean that we shall have no fear or misgivings. Some seem to think that if a man has a wholesome fear of the

judgments of God, it is a proof that he is destitute of faith; but this is not so. A proper fear of God, in believing his threatenings, works the peaceable fruits of righteousness, by causing the trembling soul to flee to Jesus.” —*The Review and Herald*, October 21, 1890.

6. How does the apostle connect this promised rest with the Sabbath? Hebrews 4:3-6, 9, 10

BEARING NO BURDEN

7. Does Inspiration refer to burden bearing on the Sabbath day? Jeremiah 17:21. Can this also mean the burden of sin?

“In each of you there is a disposition to see the faults of the other, and of all others; but you are each blind to your own faults and many errors. You are both nervous, easily excited and irritated. You need the meekness of wisdom. You cling tenaciously to your own frailties, passions, and prejudices as though if you let them go you would no more have happiness in this life, when they are thorns, pricking, bruising thorns. Jesus invites you to lay down the yoke you have been bearing, which has been galling your neck, and take His yoke, which is easy, and His burden, which is light. How wearisome is the load of self-love, covetousness, pride, passion, jealousy, and evil surmising. Yet how closely do men clasp these curses, and how loath are they to give them up. Christ understands how grievous are these self-imposed burdens, and He invites us to lay them down. The heavy-laden and weary souls He invites to come to Him, and take His burden, which is light, in exchange for the burdens which they bind upon themselves. He says: "Ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." The requirements of our Saviour are all consistent and harmonious, and if

cheerfully borne will bring peace and rest to the soul.” –*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 4*, p. 240.

8. If we have not received the gospel rest, can we keep the Sabbath in truth? Isaiah 58:12-14; 61:1-4

“Our great need as a people is that we come into right relation to God. We can not afford to let one day pass in which we have not laid hold by living faith on the God of Israel. We need the clear light of the Sun of Righteousness to shine upon us. This light is given to those who keep holy the Lord’s Sabbath: but we can not keep this day holy unless we serve the Lord in the manner brought to view in the scripture: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free; and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him? and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" This is the work that rests upon every soul who accepts the service of Christ.” – *The General Conference Bulletin*, May 31, 1909.

“No other institution which was committed to the Jews tended so fully to distinguish them from surrounding nations as did the Sabbath. God designed that its observance should designate them as His worshipers. It was to be a token of their separation from idolatry, and their connection with the true God. But in order to keep the Sabbath holy, men must themselves be holy. Through faith they must become partakers of the righteousness of Christ. When the command was given to Israel, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," the Lord said also to them, "Ye shall be holy men unto Me." Exodus 20:8; 22:31. Only thus could the Sabbath distinguish Israel as the worshipers of God.” –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 283.

MEDITATION

“Some who come to God by repentance and confession, and even believe that their sins are forgiven, still fail of claiming, as they should, the promises of God. They do not see that Jesus is an ever-present Saviour; and they are not ready to commit the keeping of their souls to Him, relying upon Him to perfect the work of grace begun in their hearts. While they think they are committing themselves to God, there is a great deal of self-dependence. There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God, and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation, and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual bondage, and they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus.

“There is need of constant watchfulness, and of earnest, loving devotion; but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves nor to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there is an abiding, peaceful trust. Every burden is light; for the yoke which Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. This is walking in the light as Christ is in the light.”—*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 353.

NOTES

Sentimentalism Versus Divine Joy

And they come up to thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. Ezekiel 33:31

OBJECTIVES

- To differentiate between sentimentalism and true spirituality.
- To understand the meaning of sentimentalism.
- To appreciate a joy disassociated from self.

SENTIMENTALISM

1. How is sentimentalism identified by Inspiration? Ezekiel 33:31, 32

“Christ calls upon His people to believe and practice His word. Those who receive and assimilate this word, making it a part of every action, of every attribute of character, will grow strong in the strength of God. It will be seen that their faith is of heavenly origin. They will not wander into strange paths. Their minds will not turn to a religion of sentimentalism and excitement. Before angels and before men, they will stand as those who have strong, consistent Christian characters.” – *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 8, p. 300.*

2. Does Jesus make reference to Old Testament expression of this non-practising sentimentalism? Isaiah 29:13; Mark 7:5-9

“The way the Jewish teachers explained the Scriptures, their endless repetitions of maxims and fiction, called forth from Christ the words: "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me." They performed in the temple courts their round of service. They offered sacrifices typifying the great Sacrifice, saying by their ceremonies, "Come, my Saviour;" yet Christ, the One whom all these ceremonies represented, was among them, and they would not recognize nor receive Him. The Saviour declared: "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:8, 9.

“Christ is saying to His servants today, as He said to His disciples: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." But men are as slow now to learn the lesson as in Christ's day. God has given His people warning after warning; but the customs, habits, and practices of the world have had so great power on the minds of His professed people that His warnings have been disregarded.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6, p. 249.*

3. Can sentimentalism manifest itself as a spiritual item in the life of a professed Christian for a time? Mark 4:16, 17

“Some are stony-ground hearers. They readily receive anything new and exciting. The word of truth they receive with joy. They talk earnestly, with ardor and zeal, in reference to their faith and hope, and may even administer reproof to those of long experience for some apparent deficiency or for their lack of enthusiasm. But when they are tested and proved by the heat of trial and temptation, when the pruning knife of God is applied, that they may bring forth fruit unto perfection, their zeal dies, their voices are silent. No longer do they boast in the strength and power of truth.

“This class are controlled by feeling. They have not depth and stability of character. Principle does not reach down deep, underlying the springs of action. They have in word exalted the truth, but are not doers of it. The seed of truth has not rooted down below the surface. The heart has not been renewed by the transforming influence of the Spirit of God. And when the truth calls for working men and women, when sacrifices have to be made for the truth’s sake, they are somewhere else; and when trials and persecution come, they fall away because they have no depth of earth.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3*, pp. 111, 112.

4. Is self an integrated item of sentimentalism? Hebrews 4:12

“The highest qualification of the mind will not, cannot, supply the place of true simplicity, of genuine piety. The Bible may be studied as a branch of human science would be; but its beauty, the evidence of its power to save the soul that believes, is a lesson that is never thus learned. If the practice of the Word is not brought into the life, then the sword of the Spirit has not wounded the natural heart. It has been shielded in poetic fancy. Sentimentalism has so wrapped it about that the heart has not sufficiently felt the keenness of its edge, piercing and cutting away the sinful shrines where self is worshipped.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 203.

5. As self is part of our natural state, our natural man, will this rejoice in the benefits gained from the gospel, yet reject its self-denying cross? 1 Corinthians 2:14; John 6:60-63, 66

“There are those who receive the precious truth with joy; they are exceedingly zealous, and express amazement that all cannot see the things that are so plain to them. They urge others to embrace the doctrine that they find so satisfying. They hastily condemn the hesitating and those who carefully weigh the evidences of the truth and consider it in all its bearings. They call such ones cold and unbelieving. But in the time of trial these enthusiastic persons falter and fail. They did not accept the cross as a part of their religious life, and they turn from it with dampened ardor, and refuse to take it up.

“If life moves smoothly with this class, if their way is never crossed, if all things are in harmony with their inclinations, they appear to be consistent Christians. But they faint beneath the fiery test of temptation; they cannot endure reproach for the truth’s sake.” —*The Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 2*, pp. 238, 239.

SELFLESS JOY

6. If sentimentalism is the receiving of the word with gladness, then how can we know whether our gladness is genuine? Psalm 19:7, 8, 10; 1 Corinthians 15:31; Psalm 97:11, 12;

“Those who make so much show of rejoicing, saying they are in Christ, but do not obey the commandments of God, do not partake of the nourishment of the living vine. All who are grafted into the parent stock will have a vital union with the living vine. They will love that which Christ loves; their taste will be identical with his. Jesus plainly stated that when we treasure up his words and do them, we give evidence that we have that genuine love which makes us one with the Father. We are one in taste and inclination. The Spirit of Jesus fills the Christian with his love, his obedience, his joy. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."” –*The Signs of the Times*, December 28, 1891.

7. What is true spiritual joy? Philippians 4:4-7

“If the mind is centered upon heavenly things, the conversation will run in the same channel. The heart will overflow at the contemplation of the Christian's hope, the exceeding great and precious promises left on record for our encouragement; and our rejoicing in view of the mercy and goodness of God need not be repressed; it is a joy that no man can take from us.” –*Evangelism*, p. 642.

“All your happiness, peace, joy, and success in this life are dependent upon genuine, trusting faith in God. This faith will prompt true obedience to the commandments of God. Your knowledge and faith in God is the strongest restraint from every evil practice, and the motive to all good.” –*Messages to Young People*, p. 410.

8. Can there be gladness and joy in bearing the cross and suffering self-denial and internal conflict? Matthew 5:10-12; 1 Peter 4:12, 13

“And all the way up the steep road leading to eternal life are well-springs of joy to refresh the weary. Those who walk in wisdom’s ways are, even in tribulation, exceeding joyful; for He whom their soul loveth, walks, invisible, beside them. At each upward step they discern more distinctly the touch of His hand; at every step brighter gleamings of glory from the Unseen fall upon their path; and their songs of praise, reaching ever a higher note, ascend to join the songs of angels before the throne. "The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18, R.V., margin).” –*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 264.

NOTES

Eternal Selflessness

But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. Isaiah 65:18

OBJECTIVES

- To summarise how self marred the peace of God's realm.
- To recap on the conflict within that self unleashed.
- To reflect upon the action of our selfless God to bring about the victory over self for it never to arise again.

DISTURBANCE OF PEACE

1. How was the peace of God's kingdom disturbed? Isaiah 14:12-14; Revelation 12:7, 8

“All heaven had rejoiced to reflect the Creator's glory and to show forth His praise. And while God was thus honored, all had been peace and gladness. But a note of discord now marred the celestial harmonies. The service and exaltation of self, contrary to the Creator's plan, awakened forebodings of evil in minds to whom God's glory was supreme. The heavenly councils pleaded with Lucifer. The Son of God presented before him the greatness, the goodness, and the justice of the Creator, and the sacred, unchanging nature of His law. God Himself had established the order of heaven; and in departing from it, Lucifer would dishonor his Maker, and bring ruin upon himself. But the warning, given in infinite

love and mercy, only aroused a spirit of resistance. Lucifer allowed jealousy of Christ to prevail, and he became the more determined.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 494.

2. With what malice did Lucifer determine to mar the bliss of Eden and the human race? Genesis 3:4-8

“When Satan became fully conscious that there was no possibility of his being brought again into favor with God, his malice and hatred began to be manifest. He consulted with his angels, and a plan was laid to still work against God’s government. When Adam and Eve were placed in the beautiful garden, Satan was laying plans to destroy them. In no way could this happy couple be deprived of their happiness if they obeyed God. Satan could not exercise his power upon them unless they should first disobey God and forfeit His favor. Some plan must therefore be devised to lead them to disobedience that they might incur God’s frown and be brought under the more direct influence of Satan and his angels. It was decided that Satan should assume another form and manifest an interest for man. He must insinuate against God’s truthfulness and create doubt whether God did mean just what He said; next, he must excite their curiosity, and lead them to pry into the unsearchable plans of God—the very sin of which Satan had been guilty—and reason as to the cause of His restrictions in regard to the tree of knowledge.” –*Early Writings*, p. 146.

THE CONFLICT WITHIN

3. Where originally there was peace within, was this disturbed by the indulgence of self? Genesis 3:8-10; 1 John 4:18 (last half)

“Adam yielded to temptation, and as we have the matter of sin and its consequences laid so distinctly before us, we can read from cause to effect and see the greatness of the act is not that which constitutes sin; but the disobedience of God’s expressed will, which is a virtual denial of God, refusing the laws of His government. . . .

“The law of self is erected, human will is made supreme, and when the high and holy will of God is presented to be obeyed, respected, and honored, the human will wants its own way, to do its own promptings, and there is a controversy between the human agent and the Divine.” – *Christ Triumphant*, p. 25.

4. What did God introduce to provide a path for the recovery from self-indulgence? Genesis 3:15

“It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul that creates the enmity against Satan. Without this grace, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. The new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts, enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whenever a man is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, when he resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, there is seen the operation of a principle wholly from above. The Holy Spirit must be constantly imparted to man, or he has no disposition to contend against the powers of darkness.” – *That I May Know Him*, p. 16.

GOD’S SELFLESS INTERVENTION

5. Connected with the declaration of enmity, is there an introduction of God’s selflessness? Philippians 2:5-8

“Satan’s lying charges against the divine character and government appeared in their true light. He had accused God of seeking merely the exaltation of Himself in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, and had declared that, while the Creator exacted self-denial from all others, He Himself practiced no self-denial and made no sacrifice. Now it was seen that for the salvation of a fallen and sinful race, the Ruler of the universe had made the greatest sacrifice which love could make; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. It was seen, also, that while Lucifer had opened the door for the entrance of sin by his desire for honor and supremacy, Christ had, in order to destroy sin, humbled Himself and become obedient unto death.” –*The Great Controversy*, p. 502.

6. By opening our hearts to God’s selflessness for our redemption, do we receive the same selfless divine nature? Philippians 2:5; 2 Peter 1:2-4; 1 Corinthians 2:15, 16

“Christ did not exalt people by ministering to their pride. He humbled Himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Unless human pride is humbled and subdued, unless the stubborn heart is made tender by the Spirit of Christ, it is not possible for Him to impress His divine similitude upon us. He, the humble Nazarene, might have poured contempt upon the world’s pride, for He was commander in the heavenly courts. But He came to our world in humility, in order to show that it is not riches or position or authority or honorable titles that the universe of heaven respects and honors, but those who will follow Christ, making any position of duty honorable by the virtue of their character through the power of His grace.” –*Christ Triumphant*, p. 232.

7. For those who are sealed with the mind of Christ, ever to retain it, what is their eternal state? Revelation 22:11 (last half); 21:27; Isaiah 60:21

“Who can tell what will be the result of a self-denying, cross-bearing life? Eternity will reveal the result of following Jesus, and all will be amazed at the fruit that will be made manifest.” —*The Southern Work*, p. 38.

“Those who have sought the development and perfection of Christian character by exercising their faculties in good works, in sowing the seeds of truth beside all waters, will, in the world to come, reap that which they have sown. The work begun upon earth will reach its consummation in the higher and holier life, to endure through all eternity. The self-denial and self-sacrifice required in the cultivation of the heart in doing the works of Christ, will be infinitely overbalanced by the rich reward of the eternal weight of glory, the joys of the life which measures with the life of God.” —*The Review and Herald*, January 2, 1879.

8. As all inhabitants of God’s realm have witnessed the selfless nature of their God in the redemption of humanity, will self ever arise again to mar the celestial tranquility? Nahum 1:9; Isaiah 65:17, 18

“God’s wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look," and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and

lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.”

“And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold; and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of voices unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise.” —*The Truth About Angels*, pp. 298, 299.

“The efficiency of the cross guards the redeemed race from the danger of a second fall. The life and death of Christ effectually unveils the deceptions of Satan, and refutes his claims. The sacrifice of Christ for a fallen world draws not only men, but angels unto Him [in] bonds of indissoluble union. Through the plan of salvation the justice and mercy of God are fully vindicated, and to all eternity rebellion will never again arise, affliction never again touch the universe of God.” —*The Truth About Angels*, p. 296.

NOTES