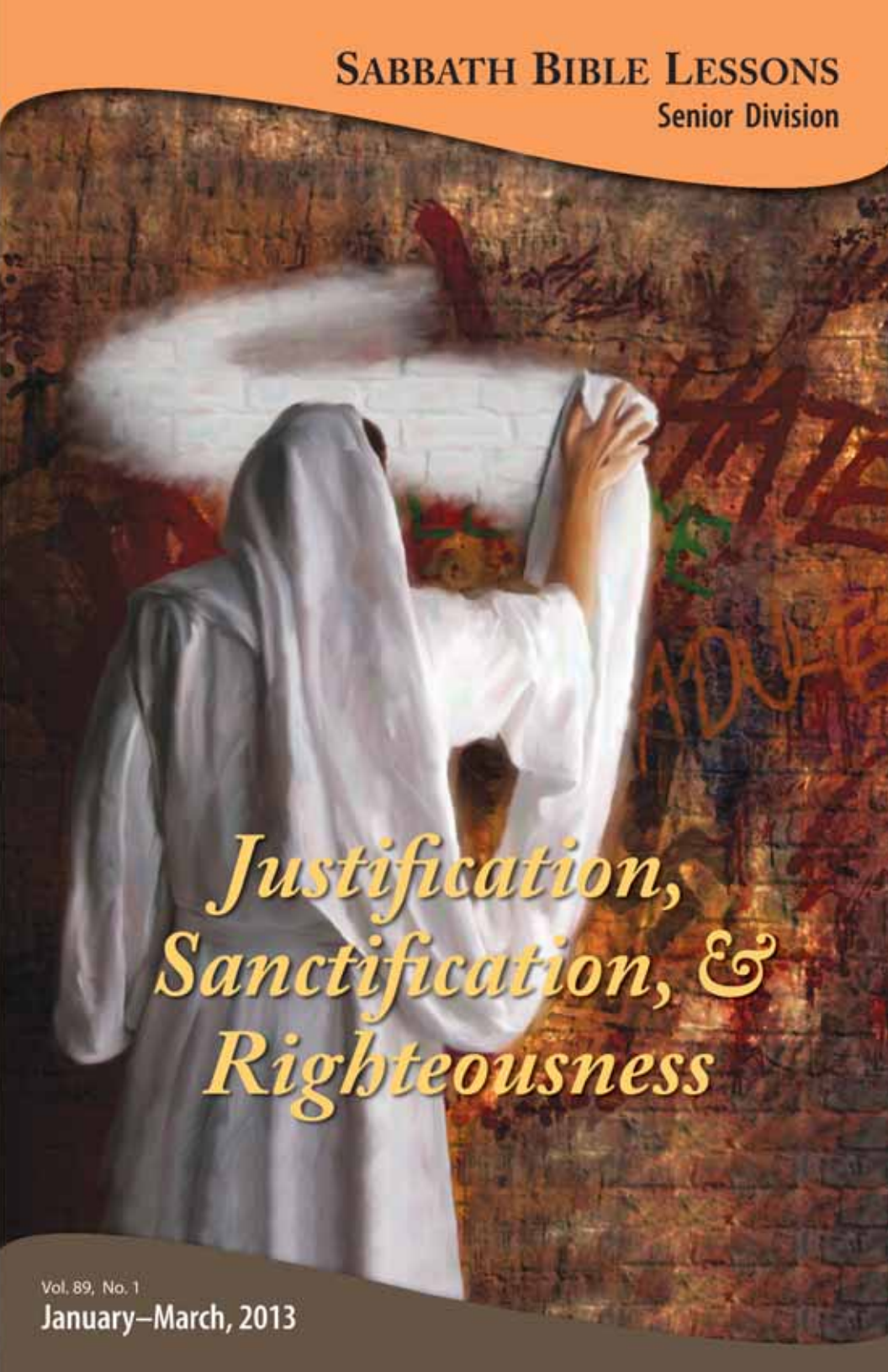


SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS

Senior Division

An artistic painting depicting a person in a white, hooded robe standing with their back to the viewer. They are positioned in front of a wall covered in colorful graffiti. A bright, circular light emanates from a hole in the wall directly behind the person's head, creating a halo effect. The overall scene is set against a dark, textured background.

*Justification,  
Sanctification, &  
Righteousness*

Vol. 89, No. 1

January–March, 2013

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*Sabbath Bible Lessons*, a daily study program, is based solely on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy without additional comments. The quotations are as brief as possible to provide concise, direct thoughts. Brackets [ ] are supplied in some cases to ensure clarity, proper context, and smooth readability. Further study in the source materials is strongly recommended.

**Illustrations:** Sermonview on front cover; RF123 on p. 46, and back cover; MapResources on pp. 4, 46, and back cover.

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# Foreword

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel’s message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 91, 92.

As the people who have been called to proclaim the message of “Christ Our Righteousness” with great power, it is important that we understand just what is that message and its practical implications. While there are many aspects to this message, in this edition of *Sabbath Bible Lessons* we will be reviewing the topics of justification, sanctification, and righteousness.

Paul declared the mystery of the gospel to be “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). He further exhorted the Philippians: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). What was the mind of Christ, but “to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work” (John 4:34). What is the work of God but to restore men and women to the image of God as they were created in the beginning. This is only possible by the gospel which “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16), and by faith in the promise: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).

It is our sincere prayer that the message of Justification, Sanctification, and Righteousness through Christ is understood not merely as a theory but as a practical living experience by all of us.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## First Sabbath Offering for the Convention Center in Belém, Brazil

Dear brothers and sisters in the faith and blessed hope in Christ, “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days” (Ecclesiastes 11:1). On behalf of our believers from the Brazilian Amazon region, we come to you through this means of communication of the truth—the *Sabbath Bible Lessons*—to appeal to your generosity in relation to the advancement of the work of the third angel’s message in our region.



The Amazon Field comprises four major states of the north and northeast of Brazil, with a population of approximately 17 million that inhabit an area of 2 million km<sup>2</sup>. Most of this population lives on the banks of the great Amazon River and its tributaries, and another considerable part of the population inhabits the hinterland regions of the states of Maranhão and Piauí. Adding up all these factors require considerable efforts and large expenditures of resources to evangelize and communicate with members and interested souls.

Another factor that urges us to plan for missionary activities in this region is its strategic proximity to other countries that need to be evangelized: Guyana, French Guiana, and Suriname.

Our desire is to cooperate more with this work, but we need first to establish ourselves firmly as the prophet Isaiah wrote in chapter 54:2: “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.” In looking ahead to prepare and strengthen volunteer missionaries, especially among the young people, we bought a beautiful piece of land approximately 30 kilometers away from the present headquarters of the Amazon Field in Belém, the capital of Pará, and now we need to invest in the infrastructure and construction of the new building.

We appeal to all Sabbath School students to help us in this project. May God reward you richly as you donate liberally to His cause. “The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself” (Proverbs 11:25).

*Your brethren and sisters from the North Brazilian Union*

# The Plan of Redemption

“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).

“The glorious plan of man’s salvation was brought about through the infinite love of God the Father. In this divine plan is seen the most marvelous manifestation of the love of God to the fallen race.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 200.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 63–70.

*Sunday*

*December 30*

## 1. IN THE BEGINNING

- a. **How simply does the Scripture explain the nature of Adam and Eve at creation? In what did they find pleasure? Genesis 1:26, 27.**

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“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.

- b. **What state of affairs existed in the whole universe at the beginning? Genesis 1:31; Job 38:7.**

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“So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies.”—*Ibid.*, p. 35.

## 2. CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL

- a. **What was the consequence of sin upon humanity and nature? What has the transgression of God's law brought to this world? Genesis 3:17–19; Romans 5:12.**
- 

“God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law—the law of love—that has brought woe and death.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 9.

“By venturing to disregard the will of God upon one point, our first parents opened the floodgates of woe upon the world. And every individual who follows their example will reap a similar result. The love of God underlies every precept of His law, and he who departs from the commandment is working his own unhappiness and ruin.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 52.

- b. **Under whose power did both humanity and the earth fall? How did Christ refer to that power? Romans 6:16; Luke 4:5, 6; John 14:30.**
- 

“Not only man but the earth had by sin come under the power of the wicked one, and was to be restored by the plan of redemption. At his creation Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. ‘Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage’ (2 Peter 2:19). When man became Satan's captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became the ‘god of this world’ (2 Corinthians 4:4). He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 67.

“Mighty issues for the world were at stake in the conflict between the Prince of light and the leader of the kingdom of darkness. After tempting man to sin, Satan claimed the earth as his, and styled himself the prince of this world. Having conformed to his own nature the father and mother of our race, he thought to establish here his empire. He declared that men had chosen him as their sovereign. Through his control of men, he held dominion over the world. Christ had come to disprove Satan's claim. As the Son of man, Christ would stand loyal to God. Thus it would be shown that Satan had not gained complete control of the human race, and that his claim to the world was false. All who desired deliverance from his power would be set free. The dominion that Adam had lost through sin would be recovered.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 114, 115.



### 3. THE RESULT OF SIN

- a. What change came in the nature of men and women after the Fall? From what deplorable condition was humanity to escape? John 8:44 (first part); Ephesians 2:1–3.
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“In the beginning God created man in His own likeness. He endowed him with noble qualities. His mind was well balanced, and all the powers of his being were harmonious. But the Fall and its effects have perverted these gifts. Sin has marred and well-nigh obliterated the image of God in man.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 595.

“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 Great Controversy*, p. 505.

- b. Without the regenerating mercy of God, what natural human tendency continues to exist even today? Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4.
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“Man through sin has been severed from the life of God. His soul is falsified through the machinations of Satan, the author of sin. Of himself he is incapable of sensing sin, incapable of appreciating and appropriating the divine nature. Were it brought within his reach there is nothing in it that his natural heart would desire it. The bewitching power of Satan is upon him. All the ingenious subterfuges the devil can suggest are presented to his mind to prevent every good impulse. Every faculty and power given him of God has been used as a weapon against the divine Benefactor. So, although He loves him, God cannot safely impart to him the gifts and blessings He desires to bestow.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 340.

“All who are not decided followers of Christ are servants of Satan. In the unregenerate heart there is love of sin and a disposition to cherish and excuse it.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 508.

“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.

#### 4. AN EVIDENCE OF GOD'S LOVE

- a. **What characteristic of the Godhead responded to the need of fallen humanity? What motivated Christ to offer Himself as the sacrifice? 1 John 4:9, 10.**
- 

"The Son of God, heaven's glorious Commander, was touched with pity for the fallen race. His heart was moved with infinite compassion as the woes of the lost world rose up before Him."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 63.

"Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life [of self-denial and thoughtful care for others]. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God 'manifest in the flesh' (1 Timothy 3:16). . . .

"But this great sacrifice [of the Son of God] 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."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 12, 13.

- b. **When was the plan of salvation established for the guilty race? What principle of God's government is made manifest by this plan? Revelation 13:8; Romans 16:25; Psalm 89:14.**
- 

"The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of 'the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal' (Romans 16:25, RV). It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence and made provision to meet the terrible emergency."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

"The sacrifice to which infinite love impelled the Father and the Son, that sinners might be redeemed, demonstrates to all the universe—what nothing less than this plan of atonement could have sufficed to do—that justice and mercy are the foundation of the law and government of God."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 503.



## 5. THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

- a. What is the purpose of God through the plan of redemption? 1 John 3:1; Romans 8:15–17.

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“[1 John 3:1 quoted.] What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name ‘sons of God.’”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 15.

- b. In order for sin not to arise again, what doubt must the plan of salvation entirely remove from the mind of all intelligent beings in the whole universe? Nahum 1:9; Luke 24:25, 26; Ephesians 1:10.

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“It was God’s purpose to place things on an eternal basis of security, and in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government. He had claimed that these were superior to God’s principles. Time was given for the working of Satan’s principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 759.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What characterized the whole creation of God in the beginning?
2. Besides the changed conditions, what really happened when Adam and Eve disobeyed God?
3. What intervention of God was made necessary to mitigate the results of sin?
4. What does the plan of salvation fully reveal about the true nature of the Godhead?
5. What must the plan of salvation establish firmly in every mind to remove the possibility of doubt or to imagine some other alternative?

# The Work of Redemption

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

“Sin with its terrible curse corrupted the world and almost obliterated the image of God in man. But the wonderful, pitying love of God did not leave men in their hopeless, fallen condition to utterly perish. He gave His well-beloved Son for their salvation.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1878.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 22–26.

*Sunday*

January 6

## 1. TO SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS

- a. **What is the penalty for transgressing the law, and how only could the transgressor escape? Who took upon Himself our transgression? Genesis 2:17; Romans 7:10, 11; 1 Peter 2:24.**

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“To save the race from eternal death, the Son of God volunteered to bear the punishment of disobedience. Only by the humiliation of the Prince of heaven could the dishonor be removed, justice be satisfied, and man be restored to that which he had forfeited by disobedience.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 308.

- b. **What did the Son of God have to do first in order to make the plan of salvation a reality? Who also made the sacrifice in giving Christ? 1 Timothy 3:16; John 3:16.**

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“God gave His own dear Son—one equal with Himself—to bear the penalty of transgression, and thus He provided a way by which [the fallen race] might be restored to His favor and brought back to their Eden home. Christ undertook to redeem man and to rescue the world from the grasp of Satan. The great controversy begun in heaven was to be decided in the very world, on the very same field, that Satan claimed as his.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 69.

## 2. PERFECT OBEDIENCE—PREREQUISITE OF REDEMPTION

- a. **What kind of obedience made it possible for Christ to redeem us? Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 5:8, 9; Romans 5:12, 18.**
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“As representative of the fallen race, Christ passed over the same ground on which Adam stumbled and fell. By a life of perfect obedience to God’s law, Christ redeemed man from the penalty of Adam’s disgraceful fall. Man has violated God’s law. Only for those who return to their allegiance to God, only for those who obey the law that they have violated, will the blood of Christ avail. Christ will never become a party to sin. Bearing the penalty of the law, He gives the sinner another chance, a second trial. He opens a way whereby the sinner can be reinstated in God’s favor. Christ bears the penalty of man’s past transgressions, and by imparting to man His righteousness, makes it possible for man to keep God’s holy law.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1092.

“[Christ’s] whole life was a preface to His death on the cross. His character was a life of obedience to all God’s commandments, and was to be a sample for all men upon the earth. His life was the living of the law in humanity. That law Adam transgressed. But Christ, by His perfect obedience to the law redeemed Adam’s disgraceful failure and fall.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 382.

- b. **What has given Christ the right to take the captives out of the hands of the enemy? John 15:10 (last part); 1 Peter 2:24.**
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“What right had Christ to take the captives out of the enemy’s hands?—The right of having made a sacrifice that satisfies the principles of justice by which the kingdom of heaven is governed. He came to this earth as the Redeemer of the lost race, to conquer the wily foe, and, by His steadfast allegiance to right, to save all who accept Him as their Saviour. On the cross of Calvary He paid the redemption price of the race. And thus He gained the right to take the captives from the grasp of the great deceiver, who, by a lie, framed against the government of God, caused the fall of man, and thus forfeited all claim to be called a loyal subject of God’s glorious everlasting kingdom.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 309.

### 3. THE SON OF MAN DEVELOPED A PERFECT CHARACTER

- a. How did Christ set about preparing for the restoration of the image of God in men and women? Hebrews 10:5–7 (compare Psalm 40:6–8).
- 

“He who knew no sin was made sin for us. With this terrible weight of guilt upon Him because of our sins He withstood the fearful test upon appetite, and upon love of the world and of honor, and pride of display which leads to presumption. Christ endured these great leading temptations and overcame in behalf of man, working out for him a righteous character, because He knew man could not do this of himself.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 372.

“By transgression of this [moral] law man brought sin into the world, and with sin came death. Christ became the propitiation for man’s sin. He proffered His perfection of character in the place of man’s sinfulness. He took upon Himself the curse of disobedience.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1096.

- b. In what way did Christ glorify His Father, and why? John 17:3, 4 (first part); 14:7–11.
- 

“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.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

“Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, full of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. . . . When Philip came to Jesus with the request, ‘Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,’ the Saviour answered him: ‘Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?’ (John 14:8, 9). Christ declares Himself to be sent into the world as a representative of the Father. In His nobility of character, in His mercy and tender pity, in His love and goodness, He stands before us as the embodiment of divine perfection, the image of the invisible God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 738, 739.

#### 4. HARMONY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE LAW

- a. **What does Christ's death on the cross prove concerning the law? What is still the condition for our salvation? Isaiah 42:21; Matthew 5:17; 19:17.**
- 
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“But it was not merely to accomplish the redemption of man that Christ came to the earth to suffer and to die. He came to ‘magnify the law’ and to ‘make it honorable.’ Not alone that the inhabitants of this world might regard the law as it should be regarded; but it was to demonstrate to all the worlds of the universe that God’s law is unchangeable. Could its claims have been set aside, then the Son of God need not have yielded up His life to atone for its transgression. The death of Christ proves it immutable.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 503.

“By His life on earth [Christ] honored the law of God. By His death He established it. He gave His life as a sacrifice, not to destroy God’s law, not to create a lower standard, but that justice might be maintained, that the law might be shown to be immutable, that it might stand fast forever.”—*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 314.

- b. **In the work of redemption, what is used by Christ to convert men and women? Psalm 19:7; 1 Timothy 1:8–10; Romans 3:19, 20.**
- 
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“In order to see his guilt, the sinner must test his character by God’s great standard of righteousness. It is a mirror which shows the perfection of a righteous character and enables him to discern the defects in his own.

“The law reveals to man his sins, but it provides no remedy. While it promises life to the obedient, it declares that death is the portion of the transgressor. The gospel of Christ alone can free him from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. . . .

“Without the law, men have no just conception of the purity and holiness of God or of their own guilt and uncleanness. They have no true conviction of sin and feel no need of repentance. Not seeing their lost condition as violators of God’s law, they do not realize their need of the atoning blood of Christ. The hope of salvation is accepted without a radical change of heart or reformation of life. Thus superficial conversions abound, and multitudes are joined to the church who have never been united to Christ.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 467, 468.

## 5. SALVATION, THE ANTITHESIS OF WICKEDNESS

- a. What was given to Adam at the beginning and usurped by Satan after the Fall? How and when will this be restored on the basis of the life and sacrifice of Christ? Genesis 1:26; Luke 4:5,6; John 12:31.

---

“Not only man but the earth had by sin come under the power of the wicked one, and was to be restored by the plan of redemption. At his creation Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. ‘Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage’ (2 Peter 2:19). When man became Satan’s captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became ‘the god of this world’ (2 Corinthians 4:4). He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam. But Christ, by His sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, would not only redeem man, but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second. . . . That purpose will be fulfilled, when, renewed by the power of God, and freed from sin and sorrow, it shall become the eternal abode of the redeemed. ‘The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.’ ‘And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him’ (Psalm 37:29; Revelation 22:3).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 67.

- b. By virtue of His atoning sacrifice, what will Christ do with sin and everyone and everything having any connection with it? Malachi 4:1; Revelation 20:14, 15; Ezekiel 28:19 (last part).

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why was the incarnation of Christ vital to the plan of salvation?
2. After the incarnation, what was the next requirement of the One who was to redeem humanity from sin?
3. What did Jesus have to literally demonstrate to His disciples and to the people?
4. What does Christ do for human beings which enables them to manifest the character of Christ?
5. How will the position of Adam and of the usurper be reversed?



# The Law of God

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” (Psalm 119:18).

“As the sacrifice in behalf of man was complete, so the restoration of man from the defilement of sin must be thorough and complete. The law of God has been given to us, that we may have rules to govern our conduct.”—*Christian Education*, p. 112.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 465–468.

*Sunday*

January 13

## 1. THE LAW BEFORE THE FALL

- a. **What is the evidence that the law existed before the Fall? Exodus 16:4; 20:8 (first part).**

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“The law of God existed before the creation of man or else Adam could not have sinned.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 230.

“The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it.”—*Ibid.*, p. 220.

“In the beginning, man was created in the image of God. He was in perfect harmony with the nature and the law of God; the principles of righteousness were written upon his heart.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

- b. **What attitude is necessary for all created beings to continue in full harmony with God and with each other? Psalm 119:165.**

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“The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings, of everything, animate and inanimate, to the law of the Creator. God has ordained laws for the government, not only of living beings, but of all the operations of nature.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

## 2. THE CONSEQUENCES OF TRANSGRESSION

- a. What is said of the law? Why has obedience to it ever been the condition of eternal life? Romans 7:12; Luke 10:25–28.
- 

“The law of God is as sacred as God Himself. It is a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, the expression of divine love and wisdom.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

“The character of God is expressed in His law; and in order for you to be in harmony with God, the principles of His law must be the spring of your every action. Christ does not lessen the claims of the law. In unmistakable language He presents obedience to it as the condition of eternal life—the same condition that was required of Adam before his fall. The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden—harmony with God’s law, which is holy, just, and good.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 391.

“The gospel does not weaken the claims of the law; it exalts the law and makes it honorable. Under the New Testament, no less is required than was required under the Old Testament.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 373, 374.

- b. What is transgression of the law? What is the inevitable consequence of disobedience? 1 John 3:4; Romans 6:23 (first part).
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“The law demands perfect obedience. ‘Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all’ (James 2:10). Not one of those ten precepts can be broken without disloyalty to the God of heaven. The least deviation from its requirements, by neglect or willful transgression, is sin, and every sin exposes the sinner to the wrath of God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 218.

“Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.”—*Ibid.*, p. 235.

### 3. THE LAW AFTER THE FALL

- a. **What change of attitude came as a result of disobedience? What is evidenced by the fact that our first parents hid themselves from the presence of God? Romans 8:7, 8; Isaiah 59:2.**
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“Sin alienated [man] from his Maker. He no longer reflected the divine image. His heart was at war with the principles of God’s law. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be’ (Romans 8:7).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

- b. **How do we know that the law was not changed after the Fall? Where was it written later? Psalm 119:152; Deuteronomy 4:12, 13.**
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“After the Fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. ‘Concerning thy testimonies,’ says the psalmist, ‘I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever’ (Psalm 119:152).”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 220.

“After the transgression of Adam the principles of the law were not changed but were definitely arranged and expressed to meet man in his fallen condition.”—*Ibid.*, p. 230.

- c. **Under the new covenant, where is the law written? Hebrews 8:10; 10:16.**
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“It is the work of conversion and sanctification to reconcile men to God by bringing them into accord with the principles of His law.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 467.

“‘Thy law is the truth.’ By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good,’ a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him’ (John 15:10; 8:29). The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.”—*Ibid.*, p. 469.

#### 4. THE LAW AND GRACE ARE CONNECTED

- a. Upon what is the throne of God founded? What was a continual reminder of this in the most holy place of the sanctuary? Psalm 89:14; Exodus 25:17–14.
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“In the temple in heaven, the dwelling place of God, His throne is established in righteousness and judgment. In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested. The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner’s behalf. Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption. This union infinite wisdom alone could devise and infinite power accomplish; it is a union that fills all heaven with wonder and adoration. The cherubim of the earthly sanctuary, looking reverently down upon the mercy seat, represent the interest with which the heavenly host contemplate the work of redemption. This is the mystery of mercy into which angels desire to look—that God can be just while He justifies the repenting sinner and renews His intercourse with the fallen race; that Christ could stoop to raise unnumbered multitudes from the abyss of ruin and clothe them with the spotless garments of His own righteousness to unite with angels who have never fallen and to dwell forever in the presence of God.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 415.

- b. What two principles must ever be in harmony? How do we know that mercy does not do away with the law? Psalm 85:10.
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“The law and the gospel are in perfect harmony. Each upholds the other. In all its majesty the law confronts the conscience, causing the sinner to feel his need of Christ as the propitiation for sin. The gospel recognizes the power and immutability of the law. ‘I had not known sin, but by the law,’ Paul declares (Romans 7:7). The sense of sin, urged home by the law, drives the sinner to the Saviour.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 240, 241.

“The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In His life and character He not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man.” —*Ibid.*, p. 349.

## 5. GOD'S IDEAL FOR HUMANITY

- a. What is God's ideal for His children according to the plan of salvation? Matthew 5:48; Romans 8:4.
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"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect' (Matthew 5:48). This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311.

"The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. 'Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them' (Psalm 119:165)—cause them to stumble."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 235.

- b. In order to reach this ideal, with what must we live in harmony? Psalm 119:1, 142, 167; John 17:17; James 2:12.
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## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does the law of God maintain perfect harmony?
2. What may we know of the consequences of disobeying the law of God?
3. What may we know of the perpetuity of the law?
4. What lesson may be learned from the cover of the ark containing the tables of the law?
5. What enables the believers to become like Christ?

# The Human Nature of Christ

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

“The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man.”—*The Youth Instructor*, October 13, 1898.

**Suggested Readings:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 246–247;  
*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 117–121.

## Sunday

January 20

### 1. THE HUMAN LINEAGE OF CHRIST

- a. What form was necessary for Christ to take when He came to earth, and why? Romans 8:3; John 1:14.

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“Jesus became a man that He might mediate between man and God. He clothed His divinity with humanity, He associated with the human race, that with His long human arm He might encircle humanity, and with His divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this, that He might restore to man the original mind which he lost in Eden through Satan’s alluring temptation.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7-A, p. 487.

- b. According to the flesh, whose descendant was Christ? What did He inherit from His mother? Genesis 3:15; 22:18; Romans 1:3.

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“It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man’s nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.



## 2. THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST

- a. How is the human nature of the Son of God described by the prophet Isaiah? Isaiah 53:2–4.
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“In taking upon Himself man’s nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, ‘that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses’ (Matthew 8:17). He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1131.

- b. How does the apostle Paul describe the reality of the human nature that Christ inherited? Hebrews 2:14, 17 (first part).
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“Christ did not make believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 247.

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

“Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.”—*Ibid.*, p. 311.

“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. ‘The foxes have holes,’ He said, ‘and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head’ (Matthew 8:20).”— *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 253.

### 3. CHRIST COULD HAVE FALLEN

- a. **How do we know that Christ had to meet all the temptations which we have to face, and for what purpose? Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:15; 5:1, 2.**

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“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.”—*Education*, p. 78.

“The Son of God was assaulted at every step by the powers of darkness. After His baptism He was driven of the Spirit into the wilderness, and suffered temptation for forty days. Letters have been coming in to me, affirming that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations. If He did not have man’s nature, He could not be our example. If He was not a partaker of our nature, He could not have been tempted as man has been. If it were not possible for Him to yield to temptation, He could not be our helper. It was a solemn reality that Christ came to fight the battles as man, in man’s behalf.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 408.

- b. **What is further evidence of Christ’s human nature and of the possibility that He could have fallen under temptation? What was involved in the outcome? 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 5:7, 8.**

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“Unless there is a possibility of yielding, temptation is no temptation. Temptation is resisted when man is powerfully influenced to do a wrong action and, knowing that he can do it, resists, by faith, with a firm hold upon divine power. This was the ordeal through which Christ passed. He could not have been tempted in all points as man is tempted, had there been no possibility of His failing. . . .

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

“Remember that Christ risked all. For our redemption, heaven itself was imperiled. At the foot of the cross, remembering that for one sinner Christ would have laid down His life, you may estimate the value of a soul.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 196.

#### 4. THE SEVERITY OF CHRIST'S TEMPTATIONS

- a. **What made the temptation in the wilderness so severe for Christ?**  
Luke 4:2, 12, 13.
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“Our Saviour is a brother in our infirmities, ‘in all points tempted like as we are’ (Hebrews 4:15); but as the sinless one His nature recoiled from evil; He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 93, 94.

“Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust that transgression had brought, was torture to His spirit.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 111.

“Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam’s position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.”—*Ibid.*, p. 117.

“When we give to [Christ’s] human nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, we destroy the completeness of His humanity.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 929.

“Our Lord was tempted as man is tempted. He was capable of yielding to temptations, as are human beings. His finite nature was pure and spotless, but the divine nature that led Him to say to Philip, ‘He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father’ also, was not humanized; neither was humanity deified by the blending or union of the two natures; each retained its essential character and properties.

“But here we must not become in our ideas common and earthly, and in our perverted ideas we must not think that the liability of Christ to yield to Satan’s temptations degraded His humanity and He possessed the same sinful, corrupt propensities as man.

“The divine nature, combined with the human, made Him capable of yielding to Satan’s temptations. Here the test to Christ was far greater than that of Adam and Eve, for Christ took our nature, *fallen* but not corrupted, and would not be corrupted unless He received the words of Satan in the place of the words of God. To suppose He was not capable of yielding to temptation places Him where He cannot be a perfect example for man, and the force and the power of this part of Christ’s humiliation, which is the most eventful, is no instruction or help to human beings.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 16, pp. 182, 183.

## 5. CHRIST'S GROWTH AND TRIUMPH

- a. By what experiences common to human beings was Jesus prepared for victory, and with what result? Luke 2:40, 52; Hebrews 5:8, 9.

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“The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God. While He was a child, He thought and spoke as a child; but no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him. Yet He was not exempt from temptation. The inhabitants of Nazareth were proverbial for their wickedness. The low estimate in which they were generally held is shown by Nathanael’s question, ‘Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ (John 1:46). Jesus was placed where His character would be tested.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 71.

- b. What is the secret to victory over temptation? What does Christ promise to those who overcome as He overcame? 1 Peter 2:23; James 4:7; Revelation 3:21.

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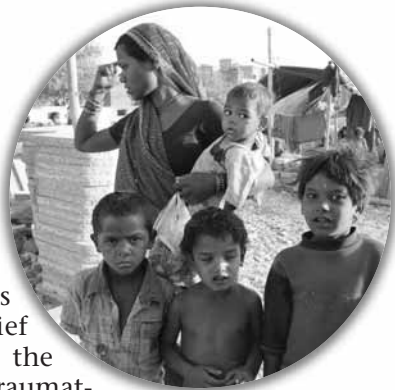
“[Christ] vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan had obtained the victory. The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour’s Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power. This is the privilege of all. In proportion to our faith will be our victory.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, April 25, 1901.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What heritage did Christ receive from the line of Adam?
2. What makes it clear that Jesus truly lived as a man while among men?
3. How do we know that Christ had to meet real temptations in the same way as any other human being?
4. When Christ had to personally meet temptation as a Son of Man, what fact made His temptations more severe than ours?
5. How was Christ prepared to overcome, and what may we learn from this?

## First Sabbath Offering for the World Disaster Relief

What is true religion? “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). The World Disaster Relief answers the call to help those in the greatest need—those who survive traumatic experiences caused by earthquake, hurricane, and other disasters. Can you help those truly in need?



“Whatever may be the sum of our talents, whether one, two, or five, not a farthing of our money is to be squandered upon vanity, pride, or selfishness. Every dollar of our accumulation is stamped with the image and superscription of God. As long as there are hungry ones in God’s world to be fed, naked ones to be clothed, souls perishing for the bread and water of salvation, every unnecessary indulgence, every overplus of capital, pleads for the poor and the naked.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 20, 1892.

The World Disaster Relief has the responsibility of coordinating this aid. And as a completely volunteer operation, with no employees and no overhead expenses, 100% of every dedication goes directly and totally into welfare ministry. All administrative expenses of the World Disaster Relief are met through regular church offerings. This allows the World Disaster Relief to dedicate every penny collected to those in the greatest need.

From food distribution in Sri Lanka to poverty relief in Southern India, the World Disaster Relief has been dispatched around the globe. This Sabbath you have a chance to also assist in welfare ministry. “The money that God has entrusted to men is to be used in blessing humanity, in relieving the necessities of the suffering and the needy. . . . In the wise providence of God there are constantly presented before them the very ones who need their help. They are to relieve the suffering, clothe the naked, and help many who are in hard and trying circumstances, who are wrestling with all their energies to keep themselves and their families from a pauper’s home” (*The Review and Herald*, January 4, 1898).

*The General Conference Welfare Department*

# The Divine Nature of Christ

**“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:32).**

“The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what a God could do, but what a man could do, through faith in God’s power to help in every emergency.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 48.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 3, pp. 134–142.

*Sunday*

January 27

## 1. THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD

- a. **What prophecy was made concerning the coming of the Son of God as a mediator? Hebrews 10:5; John 1:14.**

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“The Shekinah had departed from the sanctuary, but in the Child of Bethlehem was veiled the glory before which angels bow. This unconscious babe was the promised seed, to whom the first altar at the gate of Eden pointed. This was Shiloh, the peace giver. It was He who declared Himself to Moses as the I AM. It was He who in the pillar of cloud and of fire had been the guide of Israel. This was He whom seers had long foretold. He was the Desire of all nations, the Root and the Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star. The name of that helpless little babe inscribed in the roll of Israel, declaring Him our brother, was the hope of fallen humanity. The child for whom the redemption money had been paid was He who was to pay the ransom for the sins of the whole world. He was the true ‘high priest over the house of God,’ the head of ‘an unchangeable priesthood,’ the intercessor at ‘the right hand of the Majesty on high’ (Hebrews 10:21; 7:24; 1:3).”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 52–55.

- b. **How did Pilate present the Son of God to the multitude? In what was he correct, and in what was he in error? John 19:5, 15; 18:36.**
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## 2. CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD

- a. How does the Word of God explain the birth of Christ? Luke 1:30–32.
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“But although Christ’s divine glory was for a time veiled and eclipsed by His assuming humanity, yet He did not cease to be God when He became man. The human did not take the place of the divine, nor the divine of the human. This is the mystery of godliness. The two expressions ‘human’ and ‘divine’ were, in Christ, closely and inseparably one, and yet they had a distinct individuality. Though Christ humbled Himself to become man, the Godhead was still His own. His deity could not be lost while He stood faithful and true to His loyalty.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1129.

“Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”—*Ibid.*, p. 1113.

- b. As a man, what other nature did He also possess? When explaining the mystery of the incarnation, what danger must we avoid? Luke 1:34, 35.
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“Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. 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. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden. . . .

“[Luke 1:31–35 quoted.] These words do not refer to any human being, except to the Son of the infinite God. Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called ‘that holy thing.’”—*Ibid.*, p. 1128.

### 3. CHRIST, THE SOURCE OF LIFE

#### a. What was Christ since everlasting? John 1:4.

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“‘In Him was life; and the life was the light of men’ (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but eternal life, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual received. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Lifegiver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. ‘I lay it down of myself’ (John 10:18). He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as his personal Saviour.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1130.

#### b. Why did Jesus come to this earth, and what did He bring to those who accept Him? What is not possessed by those who do not believe in the Son of God? John 10:10 (last part), 28; 1 John 5:11, 12.

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“All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, ‘I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.’ . . . Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. ‘I am come,’ He says, ‘that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly’ (John 10:10).”—*Ibid.*, p. 1113.

“If we repent of our transgression and receive Christ as the Lifegiver, our personal Saviour, we become one with Him, and our will is brought into harmony with the divine will. We become partakers of the life of Christ, which is eternal. We derive immortality from God by receiving the life of Christ for in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This life is the mystical union and cooperation of the divine with the human.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897.

#### 4. CHRIST'S VICTORY OVER TEMPTATIONS

- a. What was the secret of Jesus' victory? John 4:34; 5:30.
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“Christ in the weakness of humanity was to meet the temptations of one possessing the powers of the higher nature that God had bestowed on the angelic family. But Christ's humanity was united with divinity, and in this strength He would bear all the temptations that Satan could bring against Him, and yet keep His soul untainted by sin. And this power to overcome He would give to every son and daughter of Adam who would accept by faith the righteous attributes of His character.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 223.

- b. How can human beings overcome temptation? Philippians 4:13. What is necessary at all times? John 15:4–6.
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“Christ came to give to the world an example of what perfect humanity might be when united with divinity.”—*Ibid.*, p. 260.

“The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God's promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, ‘It is written’ (Matthew 4:4). So God has given us His word wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we “might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:4).”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 181.

“The connection of the branch with the vine, [Christ] said, represents the relation you are to sustain to Me. The scion is engrafted into the living vine, and fiber by fiber, vein by vein, it grows into the vine stock. The life of the vine becomes the life of the branch. So the soul dead in trespasses and sins receives life through connection with Christ. By faith in Him as a personal Saviour the union is formed. . . . This union with Christ, once formed, must be maintained. . . . This is no casual touch, no off-and-on connection. The branch becomes a part of the living vine. The communication of life, strength, and fruitfulness from the root to the branches is unobstructed and constant. Separated from the vine, the branch cannot live. No more, said Jesus, can you live apart from Me. The life you have received from Me can be preserved only by continual communion. Without Me you cannot overcome one sin, or resist one temptation.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 675, 676.

## 5. THE MORTAL SON OF MAN AND THE IMMORTAL SON OF GOD

- a. In partaking of the same flesh and blood we all partake, what consequence did the Lord Jesus also take upon Himself? Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14.

“[The Lord Jesus Christ] humbled Himself, and took mortality upon Him. As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as a God, He was the fountain of life to the world.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1127.

- b. What was the divine nature of Christ like? Why was He willing and able to lay down His own life? 1 Timothy 3:15, 16; John 2:18–22; 17:5, 24.

“When the voice of the angel was heard saying, ‘Thy Father calls thee,’ He who had said, ‘I lay down my life, that I might take it again,’ ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up’ (John 10:17; 2:19), came forth from the grave to life that was in Himself. Deity did not die. Humanity died, but Christ now proclaims over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life’ (John 11:25). In His divinity Christ possessed the power to break the bonds of death. He declares that He had life in Himself to quicken whom He will.”—*Ibid.*, p. 1113.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what manner did the Son of God appear to His Jewish nation?
2. What must we always remember in connection with the incarnation of Christ?
3. What is the gift of Christ to those that believe on Him?
4. What was the key to the victory of the Son of Man over every temptation?
5. How and when did Christ display Himself clearly, a) as the Son of Man, b) as the Son of God?

# Christ—Our Hope, Our Justification, Our Righteousness

“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:30).

“We gain heaven not through our own merits, but through the merits of Jesus Christ. We cannot find salvation in our own individual selves; we are to look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and as we look, we live.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 9, 1896.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. I, pp. 385–388.

*Sunday*

*February 3*

## 1. PEOPLE CANNOT MAKE THEMSELVES WORTHY

- a. How did Christ illustrate the condition of a sinful person? What is not realized by the sinner? Luke 15:3, 4.

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“The sinner is represented as a lost sheep, and a lost sheep never returns to the fold unless he is sought after and brought back to the fold by the shepherd. No man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification. The Lord Jesus is constantly seeking to impress the sinner’s mind and attract him to behold Himself, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. We cannot take a step toward spiritual life save as Jesus draws and strengthens the soul, and leads us to experience that repentance which needeth not to be repented of.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. I, pp. 390, 391.

- b. What parable illustrates the fact that sinners cannot help themselves in the least to pay off their debt? Luke 7:41, 42.

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“Let no one take the limited, narrow position that any of the works of man can help in the least possible way to liquidate the debt of his transgression. This is a fatal deception.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1071.

## 2. THE MERIT OF CHRIST IS OUR ONLY HOPE

- a. How alone can the sinner find hope? What is necessary for him or her to do? Ephesians 1:6, 7; 1 Corinthians 1:30.
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“Grace is unmerited favor, and the believer is justified without any merit of his own, without any claim to offer to God. He is justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who stands in the courts of heaven as the sinner’s substitute and surety.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 398.

“The sinner cannot depend upon his own good works as a means of justification. He must come to the point where he will renounce all his sin, and embrace one degree of light after another as it shines upon his pathway. He simply grasps by faith the free and ample provision made in the blood of Christ. He believes the promises of God, which through Christ are made unto him sanctification and righteousness and redemption.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1071.

- b. What is manifested by some who think that they rely upon God entirely? How does true faith manifest itself? Matthew 11:28–30; John 15:5 (last part).
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“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. . . . God will accept everyone that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour.” —*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 353, 354.

### 3. A LESSON FROM CAIN

- a. **What was the difference between the offering of Cain and that of Abel? Why did the Lord accept Abel's sacrifice and reject the offering brought by Cain? Genesis 4:3–5.**
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“Cain came before God with murmuring and infidelity in his heart in regard to the promised sacrifice and the necessity of the sacrificial offerings. His gift expressed no penitence for sin. He felt, as many now feel, that it would be an acknowledgment of weakness to follow the exact plan marked out by God, of trusting his salvation wholly to the atonement of the promised Saviour. He chose the course of self-dependence. He would come in his own merits. He would not bring the lamb, and mingle its blood with his offering, but would present *his* fruits, the products of *his* labor. He presented his offering as a favor done to God, through which he expected to secure the divine approval. Cain obeyed in building an altar, obeyed in bringing a sacrifice; but he rendered only a partial obedience. The essential part, the recognition of the need of a Redeemer, was left out.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 72.

- b. **Whose efforts are compared with the sacrifice of Cain? When does a soul advance from victory to victory? Luke 18:11–13.**
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“He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. Man cannot be saved without obedience, but his works should not be of himself; Christ should work in him to will and to do of His good pleasure. If a man could save himself by his own works, he might have something in himself in which to rejoice. The effort that man makes in his own strength to obtain salvation is represented by the offering of Cain. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin; but that which is wrought through faith is acceptable to God. When we seek to gain heaven through the merits of Christ, the soul makes progress. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we may go on from strength to strength, from victory to victory; for through Christ the grace of God has worked out our complete salvation.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 364.

**4. RESTORATION AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH CHRIST****a. What provision has been made in our behalf? Colossians 1:21, 22.**

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“We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. Christ satisfied the demands of the law in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 363.

**b. What encouraging declaration was made for complete forgiveness of sin? 1 John 1:9.**

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“While we cannot claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul. Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in His blood, all may be made perfect in Christ Jesus. Thank God that we are not dealing with impossibilities. We may claim sanctification. We may enjoy the favor of God. We are not to be anxious about what Christ and God think of us, but about what God thinks of Christ, our Substitute.”—*Ibid.*, bk. 2, pp. 32, 33.

“Christ died to save a selfish world from the sure consequences of selfishness. He has opened His heart in love and pity and sympathy for the whole world. He invites fallen beings to come to Him and receive full and free forgiveness. His character stands before the heavenly universe free from every taint of selfishness. He has made a complete sacrifice to bring to men and women that benevolence which dwells in His own heart. He has sent His Holy Spirit to impress the mind and heart, to lead men to love their fellow men as Christ has loved them.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 7, 1902.



## 5. RECONCILIATION WITH GOD

- a. **How alone can we be reconciled with God? 2 Corinthians 5:18–21.**
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“The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor ever can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. Christ made an end of sin, bearing its heavy curse in His own body on the tree, and He hath taken away the curse from all those who believe in Him as a personal Saviour. He makes an end of the controlling power of sin in the heart, and the life and character of the believer testify to the genuine character of the grace of Christ.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 395.

- b. **Why is Christ able to reconcile us with the Father? What is to flow from the heart of God to the heart of the sinner through Christ? Romans 5:6–9; Hebrews 2:17, 18.**
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“Reconciliation means that every barrier between the soul and God is removed, and that the sinner realizes what the pardoning love of God means. By reason of the sacrifice made by Christ for fallen men, God can justly pardon the transgressor who accepts the merits of Christ. Christ was the channel through which the mercy, love, and righteousness might flow from the heart of God to the heart of the sinner. ‘He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness’ (1 John 1:9).”—*Ibid.*, p. 396.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the condition of a sinner without Christ?
2. What is done by true faith?
3. What does the Bible teach concerning those who wish to worship the Lord in the way they think is best?
4. How alone may men and women be truly made righteous?
5. What blessings follow a full reconciliation with God?

# Justification Saves From the Curse of Sin

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Romans 3:23–25).

“A way of salvation is provided; for the spotless Lamb of God is revealed as the One who taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus stands in the sinner’s place and takes the guilt of the transgressor upon Himself. Looking upon the sinner’s Substitute and Surety, the Lord Jehovah can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, November 29, 1894.

**Suggested Reading:** *Faith and Works*, pp. 103–108.

## Sunday

February 10

### 1. MERCY COMES TO THE RESCUE

- a. What would have immediately happened to our first parents if mercy was not one of the fundamentals of the throne of God? Genesis 2:16, 17.

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“Why was not the death penalty at once enforced in [Adam’s] case?—Because a ransom was found. God’s only begotten Son volunteered to take the sin of man upon Himself, and to make an atonement for the fallen race.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 23, 1901.

- b. What role was played by both mercy and justice following the Fall? Jonah 4:2; Luke 6:35 (last part).

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“The long-suffering of God is wonderful. Long does justice wait while mercy pleads with the sinner.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 177.

## 2. A SECOND TRIAL

- a. **Instead of the immediate execution of the death sentence upon the guilty pair, what hope did God give them? How did Abraham and John the Baptist express confidence in the divine Substitute? Genesis 3:15; 22:8; John 1:29.**
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“When [Adam and Eve] transgressed the law of God and fell from their state of happy innocence and became sinners, the future of the fallen race was not relieved by a single ray of hope. God pitied them, and Christ devised the plan for their salvation by Himself bearing the guilt. When the curse was pronounced upon the earth and upon man, in connection with the curse was a promise that through Christ there was hope and pardon for the transgression of God’s law.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1084.

- b. **By taking upon Himself the punishment for sin and by justifying the sinner, what has Christ done for him or her? Job 33:24.**
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“Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but the death penalty must be executed. God, in the gift of His only-begotten Son, met both these requirements. By dying in man’s stead, Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 1099.

“Bearing the penalty of the law, [Christ] gives the sinner another chance, a second trial. He opens a way whereby the sinner can be reinstated in God’s favor.”—*Ibid.*, p. 1092.

“[Romans 3:24–26 quoted.] Here the truth is laid out in plain lines. This mercy and goodness is wholly undeserved. The grace of Christ is freely to justify the sinner without merit or claim on his part. Justification is a full, complete pardon of sin. The moment a sinner accepts Christ by faith, that moment he is pardoned. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to him, and he is no more to doubt God’s forgiving grace.”—*The Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1898.

“Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition, that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 908.

### 3. JUSTIFICATION IN THE LIVES OF THE PATRIARCHS

- a. How was the possibility of justification revealed to our forefathers? How were they to show faith in the plan of God to provide a Substitute? Genesis 3:15, 21; 4:4.
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“Although gloom and darkness hung, like the pall of death, over the future, yet in the promise of the Redeemer, the Star of hope lighted up the dark future. The gospel was first preached to Adam by Christ. Adam and Eve felt sincere sorrow and repentance for their guilt. They believed the precious promise of God and were saved from utter ruin.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1084.

“Christ, in counsel with His Father, instituted the system of sacrificial offerings; that death, instead of being immediately visited upon the transgressor, should be transferred to a victim which should prefigure the great and perfect offering of the Son of God.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 230.

- b. What important lessons concerning the requirement of justice and mercy as the basis of the plan of redemption were given Adam and his descendants? Why was the shedding of blood essential? Hebrews 9:22.
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“Heavenly angels more fully opened to our first parents the plan that had been devised for their salvation. Adam and his companion were assured that notwithstanding their great sin, they were not to be abandoned to the control of Satan. The Son of God had offered to atone, with His own life, for their transgression. A period of probation would be granted them, and through repentance and faith in Christ they might again become the children of God.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 66.

“Many have expressed wonder that God demanded so many slain victims in the sacrificial offerings of the Jewish people, but it was to rivet in their minds the great truth that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. A lesson was embodied in every sacrifice, impressed in every ceremony, solemnly preached by the priest in his holy office and inculcated by God himself—that through the blood of Christ alone is there forgiveness of sins. How little we as a people feel the force of this great truth! How seldom, by living, acting faith, do we bring into our lives this great truth, that there is forgiveness for the least sin, forgiveness for the greatest sin!”—*The Review and Herald*, September 21, 1886.

#### 4. JUSTIFICATION DEMONSTRATED IN THE JEWISH PEOPLE

- a. What practical lesson did the Lord give the Jewish people so they could understand that justification entails the transfer of condemnation from the sinner to Himself? Leviticus 4:4–6, 13–17.
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“Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle and, placing his hand upon the victim’s head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. The animal was then slain. ‘Without shedding of blood,’ says the apostle, there is no remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22). ‘The life of the flesh is in the blood’ (Leviticus 17:11). The broken law of God demanded the life of the transgressor. The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 418.

- b. How clearly is the truth of justification demonstrated by the yearly Day of Atonement? Though sin was figuratively transferred to the sanctuary by the daily sacrifice, how long was the sinner still under the condemnation of the law? Leviticus 16:7–10, 15, 16, 20–22.
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“Important truths concerning the atonement were taught the people [of Israel] by this yearly service. In the sin offerings presented during the year, a substitute had been accepted in the sinner’s stead; but the blood of the victim had not made full atonement for the sin. It had only provided a means by which the sin was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood, the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed the guilt of his transgression, and expressed his faith in Him who was to take away the sin of the world; but he was not entirely released from the condemnation of the law.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 355, 356.

“The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement.”—*Ibid.*, p. 357.

**5. THE RESULT OF REJECTING JUSTIFICATION**

- a. What two tendencies were soon developed in the history of humanity? What is the influence of each class? Genesis 4:3–5; 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16.
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“The children of Adam present the earliest example of the two different courses pursued by men with regard to the claims of God. Abel saw Christ figured in the sacrificial offerings. Cain was an unbeliever in regard to the necessity of sacrifices; he refused to discern that Christ was typified by the slain lamb; the blood of beasts appeared to him without virtue. The gospel was preached to Cain as well as to his brother; but it was to him a savor of death unto death, because he would not recognize, in the blood of the sacrificial lamb, Jesus Christ the only provision made for man’s salvation.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 231.

- b. What will be the experience and fate of those who reject the opportunity offered to them? 2 Thessalonians 2:10–12.
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“Sin is the transgression of the law, and the arm that is now mighty to save will be strong to punish when the transgressor passes the bounds that limit divine forbearance. He who refuses to seek for life, who will not search the Scriptures to see what is truth, lest he should be condemned in his practices, will be left to blindness of mind and to the deceptions of Satan. To the same degree that the penitent and obedient are shielded by God’s love, the impenitent and disobedient will be left to the result of their own ignorance and hardness of heart, because they receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved.”—*Ibid.*, p. 313.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. In what was the only hope of Adam and Eve when they disobeyed?
2. What had to be provided to satisfy justice and yet reveal the mercy of God?
3. What provision enabled people to be pardoned or justified?
4. What was a continual object lesson of justification to the Jews?
5. What experience is made by those who are not justified?

# Justification by Faith Without Works

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

“The light given me of God places this important subject [of salvation] above any question in my mind. Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 20.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 389–398.

*Sunday*

February 17

## 1. THE CONDITIONS OF JUSTIFICATION

a. On what condition only can the sinner be justified? Acts 16:31.

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“When God pardons the sinner, remits the punishment he deserves, and treats him as though he had not sinned, He receives him into divine favor, and justifies him through the merits of Christ’s righteousness. The sinner can be justified only through faith in the atonement made through God’s dear Son, who became a sacrifice for the sins of the guilty world. No one can be justified by any works of his own. He can be delivered from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation of the law, from the penalty of transgression, only by virtue of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. Faith is the only condition upon which justification can be obtained, and faith includes not only belief but trust.”—*That I May Know Him*, p. 110.

b. Faith is the condition upon which God forgives and justifies the sinner. How does it operate? Matthew 15:22–28; Mark 9:20–24.

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“Faith is the condition upon which God has seen fit to promise pardon to sinners; not that there is any virtue in faith whereby salvation is merited, but because faith can lay hold of the merits of Christ, the remedy provided for sin. Faith can present Christ’s perfect obedience instead of the sinner’s transgression and defection.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 366, 367.

## 2. AN EXAMPLE OF JUSTIFICATION—ABRAHAM

- a. How was righteousness imputed to Abraham? What merit do works have in procuring justification? Genesis 15:1, 5, 6.

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“Let the subject be made distinct and plain that it is not possible to effect anything in our standing before God or in the gift of God to us through creature merit. Should faith and works purchase the gift of salvation for anyone, then the Creator is under obligation to the creature. Here is an opportunity for falsehood to be accepted as truth. If any man can merit salvation by anything he may do, then he is in the same position as the Catholic to do penance for his sins. Salvation, then, is partly of debt, that may be earned as wages. If man cannot, by any of his good works, merit salvation, then it must be wholly of grace, received by man as a sinner because he receives and believes in Jesus. It is wholly a free gift. Justification by faith is placed beyond controversy. And all this controversy is ended, as soon as the matter is settled that the merits of fallen man in his good works can never procure eternal life for him. The light given me of God places this important subject above any question in my mind. Justification is wholly of grace and not procured by any works that fallen man can do.”—*Faith and Works*, pp. 19, 20.

- b. Based on the experience of Abraham, how is righteousness imputed to the sinner? Romans 4:1–8.

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“Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner’s account. Christ’s righteousness is accepted in place of man’s failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as He loves His Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, ‘Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life’ (Titus 3:5–7).”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 367.



### 3. THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD

- a. **What happened on the way when the Lord was going to Jairus' home? Mark 5:22–27.**
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“As [the Great Physician] was passing, [a poor woman diseased with an issue of blood] reached forward and succeeded in barely touching the border of His garment. But in that moment she knew that she was healed. In that one touch was concentrated the faith of her life, and instantly her pain and feebleness gave place to the vigor of perfect health. . . .

“The Saviour could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual contact of the careless throng. Such trust should not be passed without comment. He would speak to the humble woman words of comfort that would be to her a wellspring of joy—words that would be a blessing to His followers to the close of time. . . .

“He gave no opportunity for superstition to claim healing virtue for the mere act of touching His garments. It was not through the outward contact with Him, but through the faith which took hold on His divine power, that the cure was wrought.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 343–347.

- b. **What made the difference between the casual touches of the common people within the multitude and the touch of the sick woman on His garment? Mark 5:28–34.**
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“The wondering crowd that pressed close about Jesus realized no accession of vital power from the contact. But when the poor, suffering woman, who for twelve years had been an invalid, in her great need put forth her hand and touched the hem of His garment, she felt the healing virtue. Hers was the touch of faith, and Christ recognized that touch. He knew that virtue had gone out from Him. . . . The faith which avails to bring us in vital contact with Christ expresses on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. This faith works by love and purifies the soul. It works in the life of the follower of Christ true obedience to God’s commandments; for love to God and love to man will be the result of vital connection with Christ.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 334.

#### 4. THE HEALING OF A CHRONIC PARALYTIC

- a. What kind of response did the paralytic make to the command of the Lord? What can we learn from his example? John 5:1–9.

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“From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ The sick man might have said, ‘Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word.’ But, no, he believed Christ’s word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he *willed* to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 50.

- b. What example of the paralytic restored to health should be followed by us? Mark 11:24.

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

“Do not wait to *feel* that you are made whole, but say, ‘I believe it; it *is* so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.’. . .

“[Mark 11:24 quoted.] There is a condition to this promise—that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we *have* received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. ‘There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit’ (Romans 8:1).”—*Ibid.*, p. 51.

## 5. EXERCISING FAITH

- a. In order to receive faith, where must we look? For what purpose is it given? Hebrews 12:2; John 6:29.
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“While the sinner cannot save himself, he still has something to do to secure salvation. ‘Him that cometh to Me,’ says Christ, ‘I will in no wise cast out’ (John 6:37). But we must *come* to Him; and when we repent of our sins, we must believe that He accepts and pardons us. Faith is the gift of God, but the power to exercise it is ours. Faith is the hand by which the soul takes hold upon the divine offers of grace and mercy.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 431.

- b. How does Paul explain faith? What further explanation is given by the Spirit of Prophecy? Hebrews 11:1–3.
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“Faith is not the ground of our salvation, but it is the great blessing—the eye that sees, the ear that hears, the feet that run, the hand that grasps. It is the means, not the end. If Christ gave His life to save sinners, why shall I not take that blessing? My faith grasps it, and thus my faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Thus resting and believing, I have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1073.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is necessary to be justified?
2. How may it be shown that justification is not obtained by works?
3. What lesson may we learn from the experience of the woman among the people crowding around Jesus?
4. What enabled the sick man to receive the blessing and will also enable us to receive blessings?
5. How may we receive and benefit from faith?

## First Sabbath Offering for Saint Petersburg, Russia

Saint Petersburg is Russia's second largest city. It is a cultural and “northern” capital of Russia, and one of the major tourist centers. Northern Venetia is one of the symbolical titles of Saint Petersburg. Inland waters cover approximately 10% of the city's territory. The population of the city is 5 million inhabitants. In Saint Petersburg there are 268 confessions and religious organizations, mainly Christian, but the Russian Orthodox Church predominates. The message of Reformation was brought to Saint Petersburg in the 1960s. Many different brethren were visiting this place and preaching the gospel venturing their lives because of the strict conditions then existing in the former USSR.



Recently a young Bible worker was sent to Saint Petersburg, who was afterwards ordained as an elder. Nowadays there is a small church in this big city. But for further development of the work in this northern region, we need some premises for worshipping and meeting with the people. The renting of the apartment for the worker and for worshipping is very expensive. That's why we need our own premises for worshipping and missionary programs. We have gathered a certain amount, and we are looking for the appropriate piece of land for the construction of the chapel. But what we have at hand is insufficient for this project.

“A great work is committed to those who present the truth in Europe. . . . There are Holland, Austria, Romania, Turkey, Greece, and Russia, the home of millions upon millions, whose souls are as precious in the sight of God as our own, who know nothing of the special truths for this time.”—*Evangelism*, p. 408.

We sincerely appeal to all the believers all over the world for generous donations for this project in Saint Petersburg.

We thank you for your great generosity. The Lord will surely bless you abundantly.

*Your brothers and sisters from Russia*

# Faith That Justifies

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God” (James 2:21–23).

“The faith that justifies always produces first true repentance, and then good works, which are the fruit of that faith.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 52.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 377–382.

*Sunday*

*February 24*

## 1. A DANGEROUS IDEA EXPOSED

- a. What imbalanced view in the presentation of faith and works did the Servant of the Lord seek to correct?

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“I was attending a meeting, and a large congregation were present. In my dream you were presenting the subject of faith and the imputed righteousness of Christ by faith. You repeated several times that works amounted to nothing, that there were no conditions. The matter was presented in that light that I knew minds would be confused and would not receive the correct impression in reference to faith and works, and I decided to write to you. You state this matter too strongly. There are conditions to our receiving justification and sanctification, and the righteousness of Christ. I know your meaning, but you leave a wrong impression upon many minds. While good works will not save even one soul, yet it is impossible for even one soul to be saved without good works.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 377.

- b. What light may we receive from the Scripture regarding the conditions for eternal life? Matthew 19:16, 17, 20, 21.
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## 2. THE INEFFICACY OF A CASUAL FAITH

- a. How does Paul explain that the casual faith of God's professed followers is insufficient? Romans 10:2, 3. What kind of faith do they need? Romans 10:10.
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"The faith that is unto salvation is not a casual faith, it is not the mere consent of the intellect, it is belief rooted in the heart, that embraces Christ as a personal Saviour, assured that He can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. To believe that He will save others but will not save you is not genuine faith."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 391.

"Imputation of the righteousness of Christ comes through justifying faith and is the justification for which Paul so earnestly contends."—*Ibid.*, p. 397.

- b. What shows whether we have only a casual faith or a justifying faith? James 2:18.
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"But while [the believer] is justified because of the merit of Christ, he is not free to work unrighteousness. Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest of precious fruit. Where faith is, good works appear. The sick are visited, the poor are cared for, the fatherless and the widows are not neglected, the naked are clothed, the destitute are fed. Christ went about doing good, and when men are united with Him, they love the children of God, and meekness and truth guide their footsteps. The expression of the countenance reveals their experience, and men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and learned of Him."—*Ibid.*, p. 398.

"There are many who have a legal, casual faith. They have nominally accepted Christ as the Saviour of the world, but they have no evidence in their hearts that He is their personal Saviour, that He has forgiven their sins, that they have a living connection with God, the source of all light. You cannot teach others of Jesus and His righteousness, you cannot portray His matchless love, and the fullness of His grace, you cannot picture Him as the Christian's all in all, as the comforter and guide of man, unless your own heart is filled with His love. You will not be able to present God as a God of compassion and love unless you can say, 'I have tasted and know that the Lord is good.'"—*The Signs of the Times*, September 2, 1889.

### 3. THE FAITH THAT JUSTIFIES

- a. **When is a sinner justified by faith? Under what condition should the soul be kept? Acts 16:30, 31.**
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“You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 49.

“As the penitent sinner, contrite before God, discerns Christ’s atonement in his behalf, and accepts this atonement as his only hope in this life and the future life, his sins are pardoned. This is justification by faith. Every believing soul is to conform his will entirely to God’s will, and keep in a state of repentance and contrition, exercising faith in the atoning merits of the Redeemer and advancing from strength to strength, from glory to glory.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1070.

- b. **How does the apostle Paul describe the faith that makes justification possible? Galatians 5:6.**
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“Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347.

- c. **What will this faith do for its possessor? Matthew 21:21.**
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“When the soul lays hold upon Christ as the only hope of salvation, then genuine faith is manifested. This faith leads its possessor to place all the affections of the soul upon Christ; his understanding is under the control of the Holy Spirit, and his character is molded after the divine likeness. His faith is not a dead faith, but a faith that works by love, and leads him to behold the beauty of Christ, and to become assimilated to the divine character.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 391, 392.

#### 4. AN EXAMPLE OF A FAITH THAT JUSTIFIES

- a. **What proves that Abraham possessed not only a casual faith but a justifying faith? James 2:21–23.**
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“The apostle James saw that dangers would arise in presenting the subject of justification by faith, and he labored to show that genuine faith cannot exist without corresponding works. The experience of Abraham is presented. ‘Seest thou,’ he says, ‘how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?’ Thus genuine faith does a genuine work in the believer. Faith and obedience bring a solid, valuable experience.

“There is a belief that is not a saving faith. The Word declares that the devils believe and tremble. The so-called faith that does not work by love and purify the soul will not justify any man. . . . Abraham believed God. How do we know that he believed? His works testified to the character of his faith, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 936.

- b. **What clear instruction did Jesus often repeat, even to those whose life revealed they have been justified by faith? John 5:14.**
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“The faith which avails to bring us in vital contact with Christ expresses on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. This faith works by love and purifies the soul. It works in the life of the follower of Christ true obedience to God’s commandments; for love to God and love to man will be the result of vital connection with Christ.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 334.

“As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.”—*Ibid.*, p. 397.



## 5. ILLUSTRATIONS OF TRUE FAITH

- a. What was the merchant ready to sacrifice in order to obtain the true pearl? What is represented by the true pearl? Matthew 13:45, 46.
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“The righteousness of Christ, as a pure, white pearl, has no defect, no stain. No work of man can improve the great and precious gift of God. It is without a flaw. In Christ are ‘hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ (Colossians 2:3).”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 115.

- b. Why is it that many do not find this great pearl, the righteousness of Christ? Revelation 3:17.
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“There are some who seem to be always seeking for the heavenly pearl. But they do not make an entire surrender of their wrong habits. They do not die to self that Christ may live in them. Therefore they do not find the precious pearl. They have not overcome unholy ambition and their love for worldly attractions. They do not take up the cross and follow Christ in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. Almost Christians, yet not fully Christians, they seem near the kingdom of heaven, but they cannot enter there. Almost but not wholly saved, means to be not almost but wholly lost.”—*Ibid.*, p. 118.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. While we are not saved by our works, what will be seen in the life of one who is justified by faith?
2. What shows the difference between a real faith and a nominal faith?
3. What will genuine faith do for its possessor?
4. What important relationship exists between faith and works?
5. What is a great danger for those who seem to be Christians?

# Humanity's Glory Laid in the Dust

**“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).**

“Man is wholly dependent on the grace of Christ. He has no power to move one step in the direction of Christ unless the Spirit of God draws him.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 12, 1894.

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, pp.17–22.

*Sunday*

*March 3*

## 1. THE WORK OF GOD

- a. **What can justification by faith do in us and for us? Romans 3:24, 25; Ephesians 2:8.**
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“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. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 111.

- b. **How did the Lord Jesus reveal Himself to John the apostle? What does this signify in reference to the work of salvation? Revelation 21:6.**
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“Unless the Holy Spirit works upon the human heart, at every step we shall stumble and fall. Man’s efforts alone are nothing but worthlessness; but cooperation with Christ means a victory. Of ourselves we have no power to repent of sin. Unless we accept divine aid we cannot take the first step toward the Saviour. He says, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end’ (Revelation 21:6) in the salvation of every soul.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 381.

## 2. INVITATION, REPENTANCE, FORGIVENESS

- a. **What is the first step in the salvation of a soul? When a soul accepts the invitation, why does he or she come to Christ? John 12:32; 14:6.**
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“Calling and justification are not one and the same thing. Calling is the drawing of the sinner to Christ, and it is a work wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the heart, convicting of sin, and inviting to repentance.

“Many are confused as to what constitutes the first steps in the work of salvation. Repentance is thought to be a work the sinner must do for himself in order that he may come to Christ. They think that the sinner must procure for himself a fitness in order to obtain the blessing of God’s grace. But while it is true that repentance must precede forgiveness, for it is only the broken and contrite heart that is acceptable to God, yet the sinner cannot bring himself to repentance, or prepare himself to come to Christ. Except the sinner repent, he cannot be forgiven; but the question to be decided is as to whether repentance is the work of the sinner or the gift of Christ. Must the sinner wait until he is filled with remorse for his sin before he can come to Christ? The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 390.

- b. **Wherein is the real origin of the work of repentance in the sinner? 2 Timothy 1:9; Acts 5:31.**
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“Repentance is as much the gift of Christ as is forgiveness, and it cannot be found in the heart where Jesus has not been at work. We can no more repent without the Spirit of Christ to awaken the conscience than we can be pardoned without Christ.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1056.

“It is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are convicted of sin and feel our need of pardon. None but the contrite are forgiven; but it is the grace of God that makes the heart penitent.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 353.

“Repentance is no less the gift of God than are pardon and justification, and it cannot be experienced except as it is given to the soul by Christ. If we are drawn to Christ, it is through His power and virtue. The grace of contrition comes through Him, and from Him comes justification.”—*Ibid.*, p. 391.

### 3. FAITH: THE OUTWORKING OF THE MERCY OF GOD

#### a. What is the definition of faith? What is its source? Hebrews 11:1.

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

“Faith earns nothing for us; it is the gift of God, which we may receive and cherish by making Christ our personal Saviour. We may refuse the gift, and talk doubts, and become unhappy by cherishing unbelief. But this will grow into an impassable barrier, shutting us away from the Spirit of God and closing our hearts to His light and His love.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, pp. 1080, 1081.

#### b. What is the condition of the sinner without the mercy of God? Galatians 5:19–21.

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“Without the grace of Christ, the sinner is in a hopeless condition; nothing can be done for him; but through divine grace, supernatural power is imparted to the man, and works in mind and heart and character. It is through the impartation of the grace of Christ that sin is discerned in its hateful nature, and finally driven from the soul temple. It is through grace that we are brought into fellowship with Christ, to be associated with Him in the work of salvation.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 366.

“Do you feel that because you are a sinner you cannot hope to receive blessing from God? Remember that Christ came into the world to save sinners. We have nothing to recommend us to God; the plea that we may urge now and ever is our utterly helpless condition, which makes His redeeming power a necessity. Renouncing all self-dependence, we may look to the cross of Calvary and say: ‘In my hand no price I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling.’”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 65.

#### 4. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. **What heart condition is evidence that the Lord is at work by His Holy Spirit to save the sinner? Matthew 5:6.**
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“Have you a sense of want in your soul? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Then this is an evidence that Christ has wrought upon your heart, and created this sense of need, in order that He may be sought after to do those things for you through the endowment of His Holy Spirit which it is impossible for you to do for yourself. The Lord specifies no conditions except that you hunger for His mercy, desiring His counsel, and long for His love. ‘Ask!’ The asking makes it manifest that you realize your necessity, and if you ask in faith, you will receive.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 332.

- b. **From whence is man delivered, and where is he led? Colossians 1:12, 13; 1 Peter 2:9.**
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“The Lord would have His people sound in the faith—not ignorant of the great salvation so abundantly provided for them. They are not to look forward, thinking that at some future time a great work is to be done for them; for the work is now complete. The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor ever can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. Christ made an end of sin, bearing its heavy curse in His own body on the tree, and He hath taken away the curse from all those who believe in Him as a personal Saviour. He makes an end of the controlling power of sin in the heart, and the life and character of the believer testify to the genuine character of the grace of Christ.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 394, 395.

“God loves His believing people, and He has placed their feet in a safe and sure path. He has caused them to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This He has done, not because of their goodness and worthiness, but because of the free promptings of His grace, because He is rich in mercy, because of the great love wherewith He loves them. He has delivered them from the power of darkness and has translated them into the kingdom of His dear Son. He is very desirous that they shall perfect characters which will enable them to stand before Him, purified and made white.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 28, 1901.

## 5. THE WORK COMPLETED

- a. **In order to be heirs of heaven, what is the standard which we must reach? How may this be done? Luke 10:27.**

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“In order to be candidates for heaven we must meet the requirement of the law: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself’ (Luke 10:27). We can do this only as we grasp by faith the righteousness of Christ. By beholding Jesus we receive a living, expanding principle in the heart, and the Holy Spirit carries on the work, and the believer advances from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from character to character. He conforms to the image of Christ, until in spiritual growth he attains unto the measure of the full stature in Christ Jesus.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 395.

- b. **How will the saving work be finished in the believer? Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:30.**

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“To those that ask Him, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit; for it is necessary that every believer should be delivered from pollution, as well as from the curse and condemnation of the law. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us. Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ.”—*Ibid.*

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What shows that the work of justification and salvation is entirely dependent upon Christ?
2. Differentiate the steps in salvation.
3. What great change does the mercy of God work in the repentant sinner?
4. What part is played by the Holy Spirit?
5. What is the completion of the work of salvation?

# Working Together With God

“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12, 13).

“In the work of salvation, God requires the cooperation of man. The Christian must put forth strenuous exertions, and God will unite divine grace with his human effort.”—*The Review and Herald*, October 30, 1888.

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, pp. 23–36.

*Sunday*

*March 10*

## 1. THE SINNER'S PART IN THE WORK OF SALVATION

- a. In the work of salvation, what does God expect of the soul? For how long? Luke 13:24.

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“Let no man present the idea that man has little or nothing to do in the great work of overcoming. . . . From first to last man is to be a laborer together with God.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 381.

- b. What is one's part in working out his or her salvation? What should be evident in this? Philippians 2:12, 13.

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“As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.”—*Ibid.*, p. 397.

## 2. YIELDING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

- a. What is the sinner's first step in his or her conversion? John 6:37.
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"Christ came to manifest the love of God to the world, to draw the hearts of all men to Himself. He said, 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me' (John 12:32). The first step toward salvation is to respond to the drawing of the love of Christ."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 323.

- b. What wonderful invitation should lead to the first step toward salvation? Revelation 22:17.
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"The same divine mind that is working upon the things of nature is speaking to the hearts of men and creating an inexpressible craving for something they have not. The things of the world cannot satisfy their longing. The Spirit of God is pleading with them to seek for those things that alone can give peace and rest—the grace of Christ, the joy of holiness. Through influences seen and unseen, our Saviour is constantly at work to attract the minds of men from the unsatisfying pleasures of sin to the infinite blessings that may be theirs in Him. To all these souls, who are vainly seeking to drink from the broken cisterns of this world, the divine message is addressed, 'Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Revelation 22:17)."—*Steps to Christ*, p. 28.

"The cry of Christ to the thirsty soul is still going forth, and it appeals to us with even greater power than it did to those who heard it in the temple on that last day of the feast. The fountain is open for all. The weary and exhausted are offered the refreshing draught of eternal life."—*The Signs of the Times*, September 23, 1897.

"He who seeks to quench his thirst at the fountains of this world will drink only to thirst again. Everywhere men are unsatisfied. They long for something to supply the need of the soul. Only One can meet that want. The need of the world, 'the Desire of all nations,' is Christ. The divine grace which He alone can impart is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 187.



### 3. THE SINNER WORKING TOGETHER WITH GOD

- a. **What is the experience of the sincere soul when the Lord grants the gift of repentance? 1 John 1:9; Psalm 51:17.**

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“But in repenting of sin we need not go into a cell, as did Luther, imposing penances upon ourselves to expiate our iniquity, thinking by so doing to gain the favor of God. The question is asked: ‘Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ (Micah 6:7, 8). The psalmist says, ‘A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise’ (Psalm 51:17). John writes, ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins’ (1 John 1:9). The only reason that we have not remission of sin is that we have not acknowledged to Him whom we have wounded by our transgressions, whom we have pierced by our sins, that we are at fault, and in need of mercy. The confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul will find its way to the heart of infinite pity; for the Lord is nigh unto him that is of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 326.

“In order to obtain the righteousness of Christ, it is necessary for the sinner to know what that repentance is which works a radical change of mind and spirit and action.”—*Ibid.*, p. 393.

- b. **If we exercise our faith correctly, how will it work within us? Galatians 5:6.**

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“When you respond to the drawing of Christ, and join yourself to Him, you manifest saving faith. To talk of religious things in a casual way, to pray for spiritual blessings without real soul hunger and living faith, avails little. . . . The faith which avails to bring us in vital contact with Christ expresses on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. This faith works by love and purifies the soul. It works in the life of the follower of Christ true obedience to God’s commandments; for love to God and love to man will be the result of vital connection with Christ.” —*Ibid.*, p. 334.

#### 4. YIELDING ONE'S WILL TO THE WILL OF GOD

- a. What kind of work is the Holy Spirit willing to do in the heart? How can He finish it? John 3:3, 5.
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“Through faith the Holy Spirit works in the heart to create holiness therein; but this cannot be done unless the human agent will work with Christ. We can be fitted for heaven only through the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart; for we must have Christ’s righteousness as our credentials if we would find access to the Father. In order that we may have the righteousness of Christ, we need daily to be transformed by the influence of the Spirit, to be a partaker of the divine nature. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to elevate the taste, to sanctify the heart, to ennoble the whole man.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, p. 374.

- b. In order to renew sanctity, and fit us for heaven, what does the Lord require? What should we love, and what should we hate? Proverbs 23:26.
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“We are to surrender our hearts to God, that He may renew and sanctify us, and fit us for His heavenly court. We are not to wait for some special time, but today we are to give ourselves to Him, refusing to be the servants of sin. Do you imagine you can leave off sin a little at a time? Oh, leave the accursed thing at once! Hate the things that Christ hates, love the things that Christ loves. Has He not by His death and suffering made provision for your cleansing from sin?”—*Ibid.*, p. 327.

“No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and unfor-saken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 555, 556.

“[Jeremiah 29:13 quoted.] The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. . . . The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 43.

## 5. OBEDIENCE—MAKING EFFORT

- a. What condition is our title to heaven? What right do those who disregard the law of God forfeit? Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16; Matthew 5:48.

“[God] demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. Christ is our hope and our refuge. His righteousness is imputed only to the obedient. Let us accept it through faith, that the Father shall find in us no sin. But those who have trampled on the holy law will have no right to claim that righteousness.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1072.

- b. What is required of the converted soul, and what help may he or she expect? With whom does he or she work in harmony? Philippians 2:12 (last part).

“Effort and labor are required on the part of the receiver of God’s grace; for it is the fruit that makes manifest what is the character of the tree. Although the good works of man are of no more value without faith in Jesus than was the offering of Cain, yet covered with the merit of Christ, they testify [to] the worthiness of the doer to inherit eternal life.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 381, 382.

“[T]he sinner must put forth an effort in harmony with the work done for him, and with unwearied entreaty he must supplicate the throne of grace, that the renovating power of God may come into his soul. Christ pardons none but the penitent, but whom He pardons He first makes penitent.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 393, 394.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What answer may be given to those who say it is only necessary to believe?
2. What brings the sinner to repentance?
3. What part is played by the exercise of faith when the soul is being brought to conversion?
4. What part is played by each of the two parties working together?
5. What enables true believers to be overcomers?

# Sanctification

**“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:14–16).**

“The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous work. Day by day God labors for man’s sanctification, and man is to cooperate with Him by putting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1906.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 557–567.

## Sunday

March 17

### 1. GOD’S PEOPLE MUST BE HOLY

- a. **What characteristic of God pervades heaven that must be in all who would enter His presence? 1 Peter 1:14–16.**

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“The righteousness of God is absolute. This righteousness characterizes all His works, all His laws. As God is, so must His people be. The life of Christ is to be revealed in the lives of His followers. In all His public and private acts, in every word and deed, practical godliness was seen, and this godliness is to be seen in the lives of His disciples.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 198.

“[God] cannot endure the presence of sin. It is the thing that His soul hates. . . . Holiness is the foundation of God’s throne; sin is the opposite of holiness; sin crucified the Son of God. If men could see how hateful sin is, they would not tolerate it, nor educate themselves in it. They would reform in life and character. Secret faults would be overcome. If you are to be saints in heaven, you must first be saints upon the earth.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 145.

- b. **What has been the purpose of God for humanity from the beginning? What do the Scriptures tell of the will of God for us? Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3.**

## 2. IMPUTED AND IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. **What shows that sanctification is not the work of a moment but a progressive work? What steps are enumerated in order to reach this goal? Hebrews 6:1; Philippians 3:13, 14; 2 Peter 1:5–10.**

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“The Scriptures plainly show that the work of sanctification is progressive. When in conversion the sinner finds peace with God through the blood of the atonement, the Christian life has but just begun. Now he is to ‘go unto perfection;’ to grow up ‘unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’ Says the apostle Paul: ‘This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 3:13, 14). And Peter sets before us the steps by which Bible sanctification is to be attained: ‘Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance’ (2 Peter 1:5, 6).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 470.

“The way in which we are to work out our own salvation is plainly specified in the first chapter of Second Peter. Constantly we are to add grace to grace, and as we do this, God will work for us upon the plan of multiplication.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 15, 1906.

- b. **What is done for us by the death of Christ, and what will be the daily experience of those in whom Christ dwells? Romans 5:10.**

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“The righteousness by which we are justified is imputed; the righteousness by which we are sanctified is imparted. The first is our title to heaven, the second is our fitness for heaven.”—*Ibid.*, June 4, 1895.

“Justification means the saving of a soul from perdition, that he may obtain sanctification, and through sanctification, the life of heaven. Justification means that the conscience, purged from dead works, is placed where it can receive the blessings of sanctification.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 908.

“[Many] do not realize that the foundation of all their faith and hope should only be the perfection of Jesus our surety. The only genuine saving faith is that which lays hold upon the imputed righteousness of Christ. He is the only source of virtue, of spiritual power and life. . . . The fruit of this faith will be love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness and goodness, and the object of [church members who have this faith] will be to glorify God day by day.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 5, p. 9.

### 3. THE WORK OF SANCTIFICATION

- a. While we have Christ's righteousness imputed to us, how thoroughly is the work of sanctification to be carried out, and for what purpose? 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
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"Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfillment of the covenant God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, His Son, and His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then cooperate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your behalf."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 908.

"Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for Christ works within us, and His righteousness is upon us. Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 395.

- b. How is this work accomplished? What part does the sinner have in it? Titus 3:5.
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"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324.

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

#### 4. BIBLE SANCTIFICATION

- a. **What is Bible sanctification? What does it imply? 1 Thessalonians 3:13.**
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“By the word and the Spirit of God are opened to men the great principles of righteousness embodied in His law. And since the law of God is ‘holy, and just, and good’ (Romans 7:12), a transcript of the divine perfection, it follows that a character formed by obedience to that law will be holy. Christ is a perfect example of such a character. He says: ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ ‘I do always those things that please Him’ (John 15:10; 8:29). The followers of Christ are to become like Him—by the grace of God to form characters in harmony with the principles of His holy law. This is Bible sanctification.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 469.

“The sanctification set forth in the Scriptures embraces the entire being—spirit, soul, and body.”—*Ibid.*, p. 473.

- b. **What will be the experience of the truly converted believer? What has such a believer done when he or she responds to the call for repentance? 1 Corinthians 15:57; Romans 6:1–4, 12, 13.**
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“The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, but he will maintain a constant warfare against it. Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims: ‘Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1 Corinthians 15:57).”—*Ibid.*, pp. 469, 470.

“No repentance is genuine that does not work reformation. The righteousness of Christ is not a cloak to cover unconfessed and forsaken sin; it is a principle of life that transforms the character and controls the conduct. Holiness is wholeness for God; it is the entire surrender of heart and life to the indwelling of the principles of heaven.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 555, 556.

“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*, vol. 2, p. 505.

## 5. THE PROOF OF SANCTIFICATION

- a. What is the experience of the heart in which the work of sanctification is accomplished? What will be a special joy to such ones? Psalm 119:14–16.

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“All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

- b. What is the evidence of this sanctification? Micah 6:8. How does the repentant sinner know the way? 1 John 2:3–6; 2 Peter 2:21, 22.

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“To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God, this is an unfailling evidence of true sanctification of heart and life.”—*Signs of the Times*, September 19, 1900.

“Righteousness within is testified to by righteousness without. He who is righteous within is not hard-hearted and unsympathetic, but day by day he grows into the image of Christ, going on from strength to strength. He who is being sanctified by the truth will be self-controlled and will follow in the footsteps of Christ until grace is lost in glory.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 4, 1895.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be holy?
2. Differentiate between imputed and imparted righteousness.
3. How is the work of sanctification accomplished?
4. What results from true sanctification?
5. What is evident that the soul is sanctified?



# Clothed With the Righteousness of Christ

“And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless” (Matthew 22:11, 12).

“You are to clothe yourselves now with the garment that has been woven in the loom of heaven, even with the glorious righteousness of Christ, that you may be prepared to stand at His appearing and be found worthy of a place at His right hand.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 28, 1892.

**Suggested Reading:** *Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 307–319.

*Sunday*

March 24

## 1. CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS ATTRIBUTED

- a. **When is a soul ready to be clothed with the garment of the righteousness of Christ? Zechariah 3:1–4.**

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“When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 111.

“[Joshua] the high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan's accusations. He does not claim that Israel are free from fault. In his filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer and in faith claiming the promises of God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 468, 469.

- b. **What are the prerequisites for sanctification? Acts 3:19.**

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“It is Christ's cleansing blood that takes away our sins, when we come to Him with contrition of soul seeking His pardon. He imputes His righteousness, He takes the guilt upon Himself.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 935.

## 2. THE PRICE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. What must we do in order to buy Christ's righteousness? What parable indicates that professing Christ and following Him does not necessarily mean that the soul is clothed with the garment of Christ's righteousness? Matthew 13:45, 46; 22:1–14.
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"The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 310.

"In the lives of many of those whose names are on the church books there has been no genuine change. The truth has been kept in the outer court. There has been no genuine conversion, no positive work of grace done in the heart. Their desire to do God's will is based upon their own inclination, not upon the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit. Their conduct is not brought into harmony with the law of God. They profess to accept Christ as their Saviour, but they do not believe that He will give them power to overcome their sins. They have not a personal acquaintance with a living Saviour, and their characters reveal many blemishes."—*The Review and Herald*, July 7, 1904.

- b. How only may we buy righteousness? Revelation 3:18.
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"The white raiment is purity of character, the righteousness of Christ imparted to the sinner. This is indeed a garment of heavenly texture, that can be bought only of Christ for a life of willing obedience."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 88.

"The righteousness of Christ, as a pure white pearl, has no defect, no stain, no guilt. This righteousness may be ours. Salvation, with its blood-bought, inestimable treasures, is the pearl of great price. It may be searched for and found. But all who really find it will sell all they have to buy it. They give evidence that they are one with Christ, as He is one with the Father. In the parable the merchantman is represented as selling all that he had to gain possession of one pearl of great price. This is a beautiful representation of those who appreciate the truth so highly that they give up all they have to come into possession of it. They lay hold by faith of the salvation provided for them at the sacrifice of the only-begotten Son of God."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 399.

### 3. THE GARMENTS OF INNOCENCE

- a. **What garments did our first parents have in Eden? What happened when their spiritual condition changed, and what did they find out? Genesis 3:10.**
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“The white robe of innocence was worn by our first parents when they were placed by God in holy Eden. They lived in perfect conformity to the will of God. All the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, the light of God, enshrouded the holy pair. This robe of light was a symbol of their spiritual garments of heavenly innocence. Had they remained true to God it would ever have continued to enshroud them. But when sin entered, they severed their connection with God, and the light that had encircled them departed. Naked and ashamed, they tried to supply the place of the heavenly garments by sewing together fig leaves for a covering.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 310, 311.

- b. **What does the garment of white raiment represent now? What is the spiritual condition and character of those clothed with the garments of Christ’s righteousness? Revelation 19:8.**
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“By the wedding garment in the parable [of the marriage feast] is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ’s true followers will possess.”—*Ibid.*, p. 310.

“The truth is to be planted in the heart. It is to control the mind and regulate the affections. The whole character must be stamped with the divine utterances. Every jot and tittle of the word of God is to be brought into the daily practice.

“He who becomes a partaker of the divine nature will be in harmony with God’s great standard of righteousness, His holy law. This is the rule by which God measures the actions of men. This will be the test of character in the judgment.”—*Ibid.*, p. 314.

“But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, before justification can take place; and in order for man to retain justification, there must be continual obedience, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 366.

#### 4. TO RECEIVE CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. According to Christ's illustration of the vine, when is His righteousness imputed to us? What is required for true unity with Christ? John 15:4, 5.
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"There is a wide difference between a pretended union and a real connection with Christ by faith. A profession of the truth places men in the church, but this does not prove that they have a vital connection with the living Vine. . . . When this intimacy of connection and communion is formed, our sins are laid upon Christ; His righteousness is imputed to us."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 228, 229.

"A union with Christ by living faith is enduring; every other union must perish. . . . 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 they try to attach themselves to Christ without first detaching themselves from these cherished idols."—*Ibid.*, p. 231.

- b. What is the evidence that we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ? Psalm 119:104; 1 Corinthians 13:6.
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"When we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, we shall have no relish for sin; for Christ will be working with us. We may make mistakes, but we will hate the sin that caused the sufferings of the Son of God."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 360.

- c. When facing the temptations of Satan, what is the security for a soul who is clothed with the garment of Christ's righteousness? 1 Peter 1:5.
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"In the religion of Christ there is a regenerating influence that transforms the entire being, lifting man above every debasing, groveling vice, and raising the thoughts and desires toward God and heaven. Linked to the Infinite One, man is made partaker of the divine nature. Upon him the shafts of evil have no effect; for he is clothed with the panoply of Christ's righteousness."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 51, 52.

5. LIVING INWARDLY WITH CHRIST

- a. How did Paul explain to the Galatians the intimate unity we need with Christ? Galatians 2:20.

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“When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 312.

- b. What blessings will the sanctified ones enjoy even here in this world? Isaiah 58:8.

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“To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion and familiar friend. They have lived in close contact, in constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts.”—*Ibid.*, p. 421.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What must first be done by the believer before he or she can be clothed with the white raiment?
2. What are we told of the price to purchase righteousness?
3. What is the full significance of the white raiment?
4. What is it that makes the righteousness of Christ a security to the believer?
5. What is the result of living with Christ in the heart?

# First Sabbath Offerings



**JANUARY 5**  
for the Convention Center  
in Belém, Brazil  
(See p. 4.)

**FEBRUARY 2**  
for the World Disaster Relief  
(See p. 25.)



**MARCH 2**  
for Saint Petersburg, Russia  
(See p. 46.)