

# SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS

Senior Division



## Living the *Christian Life*

TREASURES OF TRUTH (IV)

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# Foreword

“The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. . . I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid” (Zephaniah 1:14; 3:12, 13). With these realities in mind, Sabbath school students around the world will conclude the *Treasures of Truth* series this quarter with Part 4, “Living the Christian Life.”

How essential it is that we develop a Christlike character through the grace of God—a character able to stand the final test through complete consecration to the Master. John the Revelator describes: “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (Revelation 19:6–8).

Now is the time to cultivate His righteousness; now is the time for it to be manifested in us by reflecting the decision of John the Baptist:

“John separated himself from friends and from the luxuries of life. The simplicity of his dress, a garment woven of camel’s hair, was a standing rebuke to the extravagance and display of the Jewish priests, and of the people generally. His diet, purely vegetable, of locusts and wild honey, was a rebuke to the indulgence of appetite and the gluttony that everywhere prevailed. The prophet Malachi declares: ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.’ Here the prophet describes the character of the work. Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent. The great subject of reform is to be agitated, and the public mind is to be stirred. Temperance in all things is to be connected with the message, to turn the people of God from their idolatry, their gluttony, and their extravagance in dress and other things.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 62.

“There will be no excuse for those who choose to go in error when they might understand what is truth. In His sufferings and death Jesus has made atonement for all sins of ignorance, but there is no provision made for wilful blindness.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 25, 1893.

May the Lord help us treasure these moments to grasp the truth wholeheartedly!

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## First Sabbath Offering for the headquarters of the Southwestern Field, Medellín, Colombia

Colombia is one of the most populous countries in South America, with over 50 million people in an area of 440,831 square miles (approximately 1.14 million square kilometers.) Petroleum, textiles, electronics, and agricultural products are some of the main industries.



Ninety percent (90%) of the people profess Christianity, mostly Roman Catholicism—yet there is no longer any official state religion, and tolerance for others' faith is encouraged. The SDARM arrived here first in the city of Medellín and was established and registered in 1971. Since then, the Reform message has spread throughout the country and by 2006, the Colombian Union and three mission fields were formed. Today, the Southwestern Field has hundreds of members and more than 500 interested people studying the Word of God. It oversees a wide area of labor since it includes 11 departments of the national territory, covering 42% of the Colombian population. That is why we urgently need to have administrative headquarters to serve the work more efficiently. We thank God it has been possible to extend to new territories not previously evangelized, but we still have many more souls to reach.

In 2006, a property was acquired where the church of Medellín now meets and where the brothers have generously been granted space to install the administrative headquarters of this Field. The planning and managing aspect of the construction project is making progress. By faith we are appealing to all our dear brethren around the world to support us generously when the First Sabbath Offering is gathered, to have the necessary resources for the advancement of God's work in this place.

"The poor are God's heritage. Christ has given His life for them. He calls upon those whom He has appointed to act as His stewards, to give liberally of the means entrusted to them to relieve the poor and to support His work in the earth. The Lord is rich in resources. He has appointed men to act as His treasurers in this world. That which He has given them they are to use in His service."—*Welfare Ministry*, p. 272.

May God bless and multiply all the generous hearts that contribute to the development of His cause and may your donations be returned a hundredfold!

*Your brethren in Christ of the Southwestern Field in Colombia*

# The Church of God

**MEMORY TEXT:** “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:21).

“How earnestly should the professed followers of Christ seek to answer this prayer in their lives.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 17.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 323–325, 434–454.

## Sunday

October 1

### 1. PRAYER FOR UNITY

- a. What problem leading up to the crucifixion was manifested among the disciples—and what new principle did Jesus therefore introduce at the last Passover supper? Luke 22:24; John 13:34, 35; 17:21.

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- b. How can harmony be achieved? John 17:23; Isaiah 52:8; Colossians 1:23.

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- c. What is harmony—and has it ever been achieved? Acts 2:1; 1 Corinthians 1:10.

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“Many things which have reference to outward forms are not all defined in the Scriptures, but are left unsettled; and personal preferences have often been urged too strongly over these matters. When every item is not in accordance with the practice of some other of the body of believers, let not little variances swell into grievances and cause disunion. The methods and measures by which we reach certain ends are not always precisely the same. We are required to use reason and judgment as to how we shall move. Experience will show what is the fittest course to pursue under existing circumstances. Let not controversy arise over trifles. The spirit of love and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ will bind heart to heart, if each will open the windows of the heart heavenward and close them earthward.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1698.



## 2. THOSE THAT FOLLOW AFTER

- a. What problem was foretold in the new church? 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4.

- b. What is the best way to identify the true teachers? John 10:27–29.

“The Eastern shepherd does not drive his sheep. He depends not upon force or fear; but going before, he calls them. They know his voice, and obey the call. So does the Saviour-Shepherd with His sheep. . . .Through the prophet, Jesus declares, ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.’ He compels none to follow Him. ‘I drew them,’ He says, ‘with cords of a man, with bands of love.’ ”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 480.

“When errors arise and are taught as Bible truth, those who have a connection with Christ will not trust to what the minister says, but like the noble Bereans, they will search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. When they discover what is the word of the Lord, they will take their stand on the side of the truth. They will hear the voice of the True Shepherd saying, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’ Thus you will be educated to make the Bible the man of your counsel, and the voice of a stranger you will neither hear nor follow.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 86.

- c. What call is made to true believers in all places—and why do they choose to separate from those they have long loved? John 10:16; Revelation 18:4.

“Jesus thought upon the souls all over the earth who were misled by false shepherds. Those whom He longed to gather as the sheep of His pasture were scattered among wolves, and He said, ‘Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.’ John 10:16, R. V.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 483.

“In our day few of the professed followers of the Reformers are actuated by their spirit. Few are listening for the voice of God, and ready to accept truth in whatever guise it may be presented. Often those who follow in the steps of the Reformers are forced to turn away from the churches they love, in order to declare the plain teaching of the word of God. And many times those who are seeking for light are by the same teaching obliged to leave the church of their fathers, that they may render obedience.”—*Ibid.*, p. 232.

- d. Once separated, how do we survive and why do we need to be a part of the fold? Romans 12:4, 5; Ephesians 4:25; 2:19; 1 Corinthians 12:27.

### 3. PERFECTING THE SAINTS

- a. What does God give to help the church, and for what purpose? Ephesians 4:8, 11–14; 1 Corinthians 12:18.
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“In sending forth His ministers our Saviour gave gifts unto men, for through them He communicates to the world the words of eternal life. This is the means which God has ordained for the perfecting of the saints in knowledge and true holiness. The work of Christ’s servants is not merely to preach the truth; they are to watch for souls as they that must render account to God. They are to reprove, rebuke, exhort with long-suffering and doctrine.

“All who have been benefited by the labors of God’s servant should, according to their ability, unite with him in working for the salvation of souls. This is the work of all true believers, ministers and people. They should keep the grand object ever in view, each seeking to fill his proper position in the church, and all working together in order, harmony, and love.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 237, 238.

- b. What is the purpose of the various gifts in the church? Matthew 20:25–28.
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“God dispenses His gifts as it pleases Him. He bestows one gift upon one, and another gift upon another, but all for the good of the whole body. It is in God’s order that some shall be of service in one line of work, and others in other lines—all working under the selfsame Spirit. The recognition of this plan will be a safeguard against emulation, pride, envy, or contempt of one another. It will strengthen unity and mutual love.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 314, 315.

“Every child of God should have sanctified judgment to consider the cause as a whole and the relation of each part to every other part, that none may lack. The field is large, and there is a great work of reform to be carried forward, not in one or two lines, but in every line. The medical missionary work is a part of this work of reform, but it should never become the means of separating the workers in the ministry from their field of labor. The education of students in medical missionary lines is not complete unless they are trained to work in connection with the church and the ministry, and the usefulness of those who are preparing for the ministry would be greatly increased if they would become intelligent on the great and important subject of health. The influence of the Holy Spirit is needed that the work may be properly balanced and that it may move forward solidly in every line.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 291.

## 4. BUILDING THE BODY

- a. What character will the redeemed have and what is necessary in order to develop that character? 1 John 3:2, 3; John 17:3.

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“True sanctification comes through the working out of the principle of love. ‘God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.’ 1 John 4:16. The life of him in whose heart Christ abides, will reveal practical godliness. The character will be purified, elevated, ennobled, and glorified. Pure doctrine will blend with works of righteousness; heavenly precepts will mingle with holy practices.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 560.

“Christ is the complete system of truth.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 198.

“The early Christians were indeed a peculiar people. Their blameless deportment and unswerving faith were a continual reproof that disturbed the sinner’s peace. Though few in numbers, without wealth, position, or honorary titles, they were a terror to evildoers wherever their character and doctrines were known.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 46.

- b. How important is preserving pure doctrines in this church as an essential part of the formation of character? Jude 3.

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“The apostles and their colaborers in the early Christian church were constantly obliged to meet heresies, which were brought in by false teachers in the very bosom of the church. These teachers are represented not as coming openly, but creeping in unawares, with the gliding motion of a serpent. They followed their own pernicious ways, but were not satisfied without drawing away others with them. They had no connected chain of truth, but taught a disjointed medley of ideas, supported by a passage of Scripture here and another there. These disconnected scriptures were woven together into a tissue of falsehood that would strike the fancy, and would deceive those who had not, by searching the Scriptures for themselves, become established in the truth for that time.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 27, 1884.

“The errors that crept into the early church, and threatened its prosperity, have never been extinct. They are peculiarly active at the present time, constituting one of the perils of the last days. And God requires us to stand, as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the truth. With the love of the truth burning in our hearts, we shall ‘earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.’ ”—*Ibid.*, January 29, 1885.



## 5. THE BODY OF CHRIST

- a. What is the body of Christ? Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 4:15.

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“The Redeemer of the world does not sanction experience and exercise in religious matters independent of his organized and acknowledged church. Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. But in the history of the conversion of Saul, important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. He was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be ‘a chosen vessel’ unto Him; yet He did not personally impart to him the lessons of truth. He arrested his course and convicted him; but when asked by him, ‘What wilt thou have me to do?’ the Saviour placed him in connection with His church, and let them direct him what to do.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, p. 31.

- b. How many bodies does Christ have and why are there at times many more that are professing allegiance to Him? Ephesians 4:4; Isaiah 4:1.

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“Another obligation, too often lightly regarded . . . is the obligation of church relationship. . . .

“Connection with Christ . . . involves connection with His church.”  
—*Education*, p. 268.

- c. Why are we placed in church capacity? 1 Corinthians 12:19–26.

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“The church is organized for service; and in a life of service to Christ, connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands the faithful performance of church duties.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 268, 269.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What should be our earnest prayer and how is that achieved?
2. How can we know who is teaching the truth?
3. How do the gifts in the church help to perfect the character of members?
4. What part do doctrines have in the transformation of character?
5. Why is it important to be part of the body of Christ, His recognized church?

# After the Order of Melchisedec

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 6:19, 20).

“In the quarry of the Jewish and the Gentile world the apostles labored, bringing out stones to lay upon the foundation.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 596.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 411–416, 805, 806.

## Sunday

October 8

### 1. CHRIST’S PRIESTHOOD

- a. What makes the Melchisedec priesthood better than the Levitical? Hebrews 6:19, 20; 7:7, 11, 19, 22, 27.

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- b. How does that relate to the laws for the priesthood? Hebrews 7:12, 28.

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- c. What prophecy shows that this change was planned and how do we know this is speaking of Jesus alone? Psalm 110:1, 4; Acts 2:34–36; Hebrews 6:20.

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“The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 930.

“When Christ expired on the cross, crying with a loud voice, ‘It is finished,’ His work was completed. The way was laid open, the vail was rent in twain. Man could approach God without sacrificial offerings, without the service of earthly priests. Christ Himself was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Heaven was His home. He came to this world to reveal the Father. His work on the field of His humiliation and conflict was now done. He ascended up into the heavens.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 16, 1899.

## 2. THE FOUNDATION OF THE MELCHISEDEC MINISTRY

- a. What is the foundation of the Christian faith? Matthew 16:16–18; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 3:11.
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“The truth which Peter had confessed is the foundation of the believer’s faith. It is that which Christ Himself has declared to be eternal life. But the possession of this knowledge was no ground for self-glorification. Through no wisdom or goodness of his own had it been revealed to Peter. Never can humanity, of itself, attain to a knowledge of the divine.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 412.

- b. How do we know the foundation is not Peter? Matthew 16:21–23; Jeremiah 17:5.
- 

“Many claim that a position of trust in the church gives them authority to dictate what other men shall believe and what they shall do. This claim God does not sanction. The Saviour declares, ‘All ye are brethren.’ All are exposed to temptation, and are liable to error. Upon no finite being can we depend for guidance. The Rock of faith is the living presence of Christ in the church. Upon this the weakest may depend, and those who think themselves the strongest will prove to be the weakest, unless they make Christ their efficiency.”—*Ibid.*, p. 414.

- c. How important is pure doctrine in this foundation? 1 John 2:21; 2 John 1:10, 11; Proverbs 4:18.
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- d. What kind of church will be ready when Jesus comes and why? Ephesians 5:26, 27; 1 Timothy 3:15.
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“God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain ‘Thus saith the Lord’ in its support.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 595.

### 3. THE FOUNDATION . . . (CONTINUED)

- a. **What will a personal understanding of truth do for us and where can we find a concise understanding of it? John 8:32; Psalm 119:142.**
- 

“Our Lord designed that His church should reflect to the world the fullness and sufficiency that we find in Him. We are constantly receiving of God’s bounty, and by imparting of the same we are to represent to the world the love and beneficence of Christ. While all heaven is astir, dispatching messengers to every part of the earth to carry forward the work of redemption, the church of the living God are also to be collaborators with Christ. We are members of His mystical body. He is the head, controlling all the members of the body. Jesus Himself, in His infinite mercy, is working on human hearts, effecting spiritual transformations so amazing that angels look on with astonishment and joy. The same unselfish love that characterizes the Master is seen in the character and life of His true followers. Christ expects that men will become partakers of His divine nature while in this world, thus not only reflecting His glory to the praise of God, but illuminating the darkness of the world with the radiance of heaven. Thus will be fulfilled the words of Christ: ‘Ye are the light of the world.’ ”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 731.

- b. **Where does the Holy Spirit ultimately guide an individual and what else is it called in Scripture? John 16:13; Hebrews 12:23.**
- 

“Those who keep God’s commandments, those who live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, compose the church of the living God.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 949.

“Oh, how many hurt the heart of Christ because they want their own way, and their own will. Let the warfare be turned against these unenviable traits of character, and then they will not be against one another in the church of the living God. If there were only such elements existing in the church as characterized the life of Jesus Christ, there would be a firm union. The world is against the church to weaken and destroy it, but let the church of God press together, press together, press together. Let not Satan thrust himself between the members of the church. Do not give one stroke on the enemy’s side of the question. Put away egotism. Do not think that one or two men in the church are all the men who are conscientious in the church. You are far too narrow in your thoughts and in your actions.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 15, pp. 147, 148.

## 4. PARTAKERS IN THE FOUNDATION

- a. Who else forms a part of the Christian foundation and why are they there? Ephesians 2:19, 20; 4:11, 12.

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- b. Why do we need to be a part of this structure and how does fellowship help us? Ephesians 4:13–16.

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- c. How important is our relationship with the church and how do we know it is not speaking about individuals but members making a collective body? Matthew 16:18, 19; 18:17–20.

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“There is altogether too little respect paid to the opinion of members of the same church. It is the want of deference for the opinions of the church that causes so much trouble among brethren. The eyes of the church may be able to discern in its individual members that which the erring may not see. A few persons may be as blind as the one in error, but the majority of the church is a power which should control its individual members.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 107.

- d. What authority does the church have? John 20:21–23.

“ ‘Whosoever sins ye remit,’ said Christ, ‘they are remitted; . . . and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.’ Christ here gives no liberty for any man to pass judgment upon others. In the Sermon on the Mount He forbade this. It is the prerogative of God. But on the church in its organized capacity He places a responsibility for the individual members. Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore. ‘Reprove, rebuke, exhort,’ the Lord says, ‘with all long-suffering and doctrine.’ 2 Timothy 4:2. Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. ‘They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.’ Galatians 5:21. If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God’s word is pronounced upon them in heaven. In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in heaven. He who despises the authority of the church despises the authority of Christ Himself.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 805, 806.

## 5. THE NATION OF ISRAEL

- a. **How is this church the true nation of Israel?** Matthew 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9, 5.

“The Pharisees had declared themselves the children of Abraham. Jesus told them that this claim could be established only by doing the works of Abraham. The true children of Abraham would live, as he did, a life of obedience to God. They would not try to kill One who was speaking the truth that was given Him from God. In plotting against Christ, the rabbis were not doing the works of Abraham. A mere lineal descent from Abraham was of no value. Without a spiritual connection with him, which would be manifested in possessing the same spirit, and doing the same works, they were not his children.

“This principle bears with equal weight upon a question that has long agitated the Christian world—the question of apostolic succession. Descent from Abraham was proved, not by name and lineage, but by likeness of character. So the apostolic succession rests not upon the transmission of ecclesiastical authority, but upon spiritual relationship. A life actuated by the apostles’ spirit, the belief and teaching of the truth they taught, this is the true evidence of apostolic succession. This is what constitutes men the successors of the first teachers of the gospel.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 466, 467.

- b. **How do we become part of this nation?** Matthew 7:24–27; Acts 2:37–41, 47; Galatians 3:26–29.

“Joining the church is one thing, and connecting with Christ is quite another. Not all the names registered in the church books are registered in the Lamb’s book of life. Many, though apparently sincere believers, do not keep up a living connection with Christ. They have enlisted, they have entered their names on the register; but the inner work of grace is not wrought in the heart. As the result they are not happy, and they make hard work of serving God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 278.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why was there a need to change the priesthood?
2. What is the only foundation that we can trust?
3. How does knowing all the truth lead us to the church of the living God?
4. How does the church have a responsibility for its membership?
5. What comprises the true nation of Israel today?



# The Organization of the Melchisedec Priesthood

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).

“Evil does not result because of organization, but because of making organization everything, and vital godliness of little moment.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 253.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 188–200.

## Sunday

October 15

### 1. LEADING GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

- a. How should we treat one another regardless of gifts we may possess? Name some gifts mentioned first. Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12:28–30, 11.
- b. Explain some duties of ministers—and why their work is not limited to one church. John 21:15–17; 2 Corinthians 11:28; Titus 1:5; 1 Corinthians 4:17.

“The older ministers should be careful that they do not, by precept or example, give young men to understand that the work of laborers in the field consists in preaching. The education of which young ministers are in greatest need, is that which will enable them to work in the various departments of the cause, and relieve those who are wearing out from overwork. There are also laymen in the church who have ability that can be brought into service, and who should be made responsible for some part of the work. Let them feel that there are to be no idlers in the vineyard of the Lord.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 24, 1883.

- c. Who selects the workers and what do they become once chosen? 2 Corinthians 8:16–19, 23.

“Men whose lives are not holy and who are unqualified to teach the present truth enter the field without being acknowledged by the church or the brethren generally, and confusion and disunion are the result.”—*Early Writings*, p. 97.

## 2. ORDINATION

- a. What is the role of elders and how should we treat them? Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1–5; James 5:14; Hebrews 13:17, 18.

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- b. Describe the process of ordination and explain when it is appropriate. Acts 6:1–3, 6; 14:23; 1 Timothy 4:14; Titus 1:7–9.

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“When responsibilities are to be entrusted to an individual, the question is not asked whether he is eloquent or wealthy, but whether he is honest, faithful, and industrious; for whatever may be his accomplishments, without these qualifications he is utterly unfit for any position of trust.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 413.

“I saw that you had thought this one and that one were called to labor in the field, when you know nothing of the matter. You cannot read the heart. If you had drunk deep of the truth of the third angel’s message, you would not be so free to tell who were called of God, and who were not. The fact that one can pray and talk well is no evidence that God has called him. Everyone has an influence, and that influence should tell for God; but the question whether this one or that one should devote his time to labor for souls, is of the deepest importance, and none but God can decide who shall engage in the solemn work. There were good men in the apostles’ days, men who could pray with power and talk to the point; yet the apostles, who had power over unclean spirits and could heal the sick, dared not with merely their wisdom set one apart for the holy work of being mouthpiece for God. They waited unmistakable evidence of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. I saw that God had laid upon His chosen ministers the duty of deciding who was fit for the holy work; and in union with the church and the manifest tokens of the Holy Spirit, they were to decide who should go and who were unfit to go. I saw that if it should be left to a few individuals here and there to decide who was sufficient for this great work, confusion and distraction everywhere would be the fruit.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 208, 209.

“The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God’s people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 95.

### 3. OPEN SIN

- a. How are we to deal with sin in the church? Matthew 18:15–20; James 5:19, 20. Once a person is separated from church membership, what is the only way for re-entry? Acts 2:38.

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“You have excused yourself for speaking evil of your brother or sister or neighbor to others before going to him and taking the steps which God has absolutely commanded. You say: ‘Why, I did not speak to anyone until I was so burdened that I could not refrain.’ What burdened you? Was it not a plain neglect of your own duty, of a thus saith the Lord? You were under the guilt of sin because you did not go and tell the offender his fault between you and him alone. If you did not do this, if you disobeyed God, how could you be otherwise than burdened unless your heart was hardened while you were trampling the command of God underfoot, and in your heart hating your brother or neighbor? And what way have you found to unburden yourself? God reproves you for a sin of omission in not telling your brother his fault, and you excuse and comfort yourself by a sin of commission by telling your brother’s faults to another person! Is this the right way to purchase ease—by committing sin?”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 53.

“Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 128, 129.

- b. Do all sins need to follow Matthew 18? Explain. 1 Timothy 5:20.

“[The] husband [of a certain sister] seemed to feel unreconciled to my bringing out her faults before the church and stated that if Sister White had followed the directions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 he should not have felt hurt. . . .

“My husband then stated that he should understand that these words of our Lord had reference to cases of personal trespass, and could not be applied in the case of this sister. She had not trespassed against Sister White. But that which had been reprovved publicly was public wrongs which threatened the prosperity of the church and the cause.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 15.

## 4. SETTLING DOCTRINES

- a. **Does every church member decide on doctrinal questions? Acts 15:3–6.**

“The entire body of Christians were not called to vote upon the question. The apostles and elders—men of influence and judgment—framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches.”—*Sketches From the Life of Paul*, p. 70.

“Every member of the church has a voice in choosing officers of the church. The church chooses the officers of the state conferences. Delegates chosen by the state conferences choose the officers of the union conferences, and delegates chosen by the union conferences choose the officers of the General Conference. By this arrangement every conference, every institution, every church, and every individual, either directly or through representatives, has a voice in the election of the men who bear the chief responsibilities in the General Conference.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 236, 237.

- b. **Once an official decision is made, how are we to treat that decision and what effect does that have on the whole body? Acts 15:22–30; 16:4, 5.**
- c. **What if individual members or workers refuse such decisions? Matthew 15:14; Revelation 2:1, 2; Romans 16:17.**

“There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety.’ ”—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 293.

“God is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead. I saw that the angels of God would lead His people no faster than they could receive and act upon the important truths that are communicated to them. But some restless spirits do not more than half do up their work. As the angel leads them, they get in haste for something new, and rush on without divine guidance, and thus bring confusion and discord into the ranks.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 207.

## 5. GOD'S CARE

- a. How does God view His church? Deuteronomy 32:9, 10; Zechariah 2:8.

“When the Lord chose the Jewish nation, and bade them not to unite themselves with another people, it was that they might not be corrupted, that the light might be communicated to them to be given to the world. Did the Lord refuse to let His light shine upon other nations? No; but those idolatrous nations were raising up barriers, interposing obstructions, turning farther and farther away from the light; they were going deeper and deeper into the moral darkness, and becoming more and more blinded. One nation must be made the depository of sacred truth, so that there might be at least one channel through which the rays of light could shine forth to the world. So in this age God has committed to His people most sacred truth; He means that they shall have light to shed amid the darkness which surrounds them.”—*The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1012.

“If we place ourselves on the side of God, of Christ and the heavenly intelligences, the broad shield of Omnipotence is over us, the mighty God of Israel is our helper, and we need not fear. Those who touch the people of God, touch the apple of His eye.”—*Ibid.*, p. 903.

- b. What kind of church will be ready for Jesus? Titus 2:11–14; 1 John 3:2, 3.

“By [Christ’s] perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 312.

# Friday

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who gives the gifts to the church and who determines how they are used?
2. Name some key principles to keep in mind regarding ordination of workers.
3. Distinguish between the way personal vs. public sins are to be addressed.
4. Who is to settle doctrinal issues and how should we regard such decisions?
5. How is God’s care for His people on earth depicted and what character are they to have when Jesus comes again?

# Baptized Into Christ

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

“The ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper are two monumental pillars, one without and one within the church. Upon these ordinances Christ has inscribed the name of the true God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 91.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 91–99.

*Sunday*

October 22

## 1. THE ROAD TO PERFECTION

- a. What goes along with preaching the gospel? Mark 16:15, 16.

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“Christ came to receive baptism, not with confession of sins to repentance, for He was without the taint of sin. He marked the way for the sinner by His own example in taking the steps the sinner is required to take. He pointed out distinctly the way of salvation for the repenting, believing sinner.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, January 1, 1874.

“[Witnessing the beheading of a man for being rebaptized] led [Meno Simons] to study the Bible in regard to infant baptism. He could find no evidence for it in the Scriptures, but saw that repentance and faith are everywhere required as the condition of receiving baptism.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 238, 239.

- b. Where does baptism fit in the road to perfection—and what is needed all along this path? Matthew 5:48; Hebrews 6:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 6:1–3.

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“Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 91.



## 2. KNOWLEDGE

- a. **How does the process of crucifying self begin? Romans 7:4–12; Psalm 19:7; James 1:22–25.**

“Our love to Christ will be in proportion to the depth of our conviction of sin, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. But as we see ourselves, let us look away to Jesus, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity. By faith take hold of the merits of Christ, and the soul-cleansing blood will be applied. . . . The gospel of Christ does not give men license to break the law, for it was through transgression that the floodgates of woe were opened upon our world.”  
—*Faith and Works*, p. 96.

- b. **Why is it necessary to understand the law to its fullest extent and what are we to realize about it? John 1:12, 13; 3:3–5; Romans 7:13; 6:16.**

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

- c. **How effective is mere mental assent to the law and how does it affect the soul? Matthew 23:2, 3; 5:20; Romans 7:24.**

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“The greatest deception of the human mind in Christ’s day was that a mere assent to the truth constitutes righteousness. In all human experience a theoretical knowledge of the truth has been proved to be insufficient for the saving of the soul. It does not bring forth the fruits of righteousness. A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 309.

“The standard should be elevated, and the preaching should be of the most spiritual character, that the people may be led to see the reason of their weakness and unhappiness. Many are unhappy because they are unholy. Purity of heart, innocence of mind, only can be blessed of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 53.

### 3. CRUCIFYING THE OLD MAN

- a. **Is there a way to be crucified separate from the Calvary experience? Romans 6:5–8; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:3.**

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“Many parents have never yet been converted, therefore their old self-indulgent habits have been brought with them into the church. They were not dead to self when they observed the ordinance of baptism. They were buried alive, and they have remained full of murmuring, full of faultfinding, hating the messages that come to them through the Lord’s servants, because of the wickedness of their hearts. They are at enmity with God, and their children breathe in the same atmosphere.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 21, p. 35.

“There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, ‘I believe,’ but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 91, 92.

- b. **Why is death to self the beginning of life, how often is it needed, and how do we maintain it? John 12:24; 1 Corinthians 15:31; Colossians 2:6.**

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“Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Because professed Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 131.

“All who would bring forth fruit as workers together with Christ must first fall into the ground and die. The life must be cast into the furrow of the world’s need. Self-love, self-interest, must perish. But the law of self-sacrifice is the law of self-preservation.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 86.

## 4. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

- a. **How does dying to self and putting on Christ translate into victory?** 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 14:30; Romans 6:1, 2; 13:14.

“We must put on Christ; we must be Christlike in every word and action. Thus we shall be partakers of the divine nature.”—*Sermons and Talks*, vol. 2, p. 197.

- b. **How does full immersion symbolize the Christian’s experience?** Romans 6:4.

“Soon after our return from the camp meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 19.

- c. **Is there more to Christianity than dying?** Galatians 3:27; 2 Corinthians 5:17.

“The seed buried in the ground produces fruit. . . . So in human life, to give is to live. The life that will be preserved is the life that is freely given in service to God and man. Those who for Christ’s sake sacrifice their life in this world, will keep it unto life eternal.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 86, 87.

“All who receive the gospel message into the heart will long to proclaim it. The heaven-born love of Christ must find expression. Those who have put on Christ will relate their experience, tracing step by step the leadings of the Holy Spirit—their hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, the results of their searching of the Scriptures, their prayers, their soul agony, and the words of Christ to them, ‘Thy sins be forgiven thee.’ It is unnatural for any to keep these things secret, and those who are filled with the love of Christ will not do so. In proportion as the Lord has made them the depositaries of sacred truth will be their desire that others shall receive the same blessing. And as they make known the rich treasures of God’s grace, more and still more of the grace of Christ will be imparted to them. They will have the heart of a little child in its simplicity and unreserved obedience. Their souls will pant after holiness, and more and more of the treasures of truth and grace will be revealed to them to be given to the world.”—*Ibid.*, p. 125.

“The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ expressed in character is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 37.

## 5. EVALUATION

- a. How do we know that there is more than intellectual knowledge to baptismal preparation? Matthew 28:19, 20; 3:7, 8; 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

“Those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, ‘love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.’ Galatians 5:22, 23. They will no longer fashion themselves according to the former lusts, but by the faith of the Son of God they will follow in His steps, reflect His character, and purify themselves even as He is pure. The things they once hated they now love, and the things they once loved they hate. The proud and self-assertive become meek and lowly in heart. The vain and supercilious become serious and unobtrusive. The drunken become sober, and the profligate pure. The vain customs and fashions of the world are laid aside. . . .

“There is no evidence of genuine repentance unless it works reformation. If he restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, confess his sins, and love God and his fellow men, the sinner may be sure that he has passed from death unto life.”—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 58, 59.

- b. Why is self-examination an integral part of the life of the redeemed and what should we do at the conclusion of each examination? 2 Corinthians 13:5; 6:2.

“We are to compare our characters with the infallible standard of God’s law. In order to do this, we must search the Scriptures, measuring our attainments by the word of God. Through the grace of Christ, the highest attainments in character are possible; for every soul who comes under the molding influence of the Spirit of God, may be transformed in mind and heart.”—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 214.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is baptism a part of the Christian experience?
2. Why is the knowledge of the truth so important in conversion and what is needed besides theoretical knowledge?
3. How is it that death is the beginning of life?
4. Why is baptism by immersion a proper symbol of the Christian life?
5. Explain the daily need for self-evaluation.

## First Sabbath Offering for *Sabbath Bible Lessons* for Missions

Can you imagine attending a Sabbath school where nobody in the class has a Sabbath school lesson? Although today there are various ways to access the lessons—electronic devices, the internet and so forth—some of these options are not available in many mission fields nor to many Sabbath school students in several countries.



The years of the global pandemic caused enormous difficulties related to the circulation of the *Sabbath Bible Lessons* in many countries due to the cost to produce the lessons as well as the transportation of materials across borders. For instance, there are places where the postal service has been completely suspended for a long time, so some Pacific islands have not been able to receive the lessons for more than two years.

Also, in many countries on the African continent, the borders were closed so there seemed no way to send the lessons to most of them. God has been merciful to our brethren and opened the windows when doors were closed. All the postal services were suspended, but there were international express services such as DHL and similar specialized carriers operating. While the cost of shipping has increased tremendously, we are grateful to be able to send the lessons to most of the brethren in African countries.

We are very thankful to the Lord that many borders began to open last year. Now is our chance to help the missions so they can have their *Sabbath Bible Lessons* again.

“Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 236.

As we all study the same lessons together, this aim is better achieved.

Please consider this cause and give generously so everyone in the mission field can have access to the *Sabbath Bible Lessons* and we can study together to grow spiritually and be ready for the Lord’s soon return.

May God richly bless you and your gift just as the widow and her two mites given for the Lord’s cause!

*The General Conference Publishing Department*

# More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

**MEMORY TEXT:** “And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath” (Luke 12:42–44).

“Besides all these systematic and regular donations there were special objects calling for freewill offerings, such as the tabernacle built in the wilderness and the temple erected at Jerusalem. These drafts were made by God upon the people for their own good, as well as to sustain His service.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 468.

**Suggested Reading:** *Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 65–68.

*Sunday*

*October 29*

## 1. LABORING UNDER A CURSE

- a. What happened to the Jews while building the temple? Haggai 1:2–11.
- b. How does God consider the withholding of tithes and offerings, what are the results—and why does that end up as a curse? Exodus 20:15; Malachi 3:8, 9; Deuteronomy 8:18; Proverbs 10:22.

“Those who are selfishly withholding their means need not be surprised if God’s hand scatters their possessions. That which should have been devoted to the advancement of His work and cause, but which has been withheld, may in various ways be taken away. God will come near to them in judgments. Many losses will be sustained. God can scatter the means He has lent to His stewards, if they refuse to use it to His glory. Some may have none of these losses to remind them of their remissness in duty, but their cases may be the more hopeless.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1183.

- c. What is necessary to bring about a change? Haggai 1:7; Malachi 3:7.



## 2. THE ELIJAH MESSAGE

### a. Why do we need to study the life of Elijah? Malachi 4:5, 6.

“Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 62.

### b. How is giving a vital part of a life-giving message? 1 Kings 17:13–16.

“No greater test of faith than this could have been required. The widow had hitherto treated all strangers with kindness and liberality. Now, regardless of the suffering that might result to herself and child, and trusting in the God of Israel to supply her every need, she met this supreme test of hospitality by doing ‘according to the saying of Elijah. . . .’

“The widow of Zarephath shared her morsel with Elijah, and in return her life and that of her son were preserved.”—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 130, 131.

### c. Why does God give possessions to people—including the poor? Mark 10:21, 22; Luke 21:1–4.

“God gives to them in order that they may impart to others.”—*The Signs of the Times*, October 31, 1900.

“The Lord sometimes tests His people with prosperity in temporal things. But He intends that they shall make a right use of His gifts. Their property, their time, their strength, and their opportunities are all of God. For all these blessings they must account to the Giver. While want and destitution are seen among our brethren, and we withhold relief from them when our own necessities are supplied, we neglect a plain duty revealed in the word of God. He gives to us liberally that we may give to others. It is beneficence that overcomes selfishness and ennobles and purifies the soul. Some abuse the talents given them of God; they close their eyes that they may not see the necessities of His cause and turn away their ears that they may not hear His voice showing them their duty to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Some who profess to be children of God seem anxious to invest their means in the world lest it shall return to the Giver in gifts and offerings. They forget their divine mission, and if they continue to follow the dictates of their selfish hearts, and expend precious time and means to gratify their pride, God will send reverses, and they will feel pinching want because of their ingratitude. He will entrust His talents to more faithful stewards, who will acknowledge His claims upon them.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 619, 620.

### 3. REVERSING THE CURSE

#### a. Is there a way to reverse a curse? Malachi 3:10–12.

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“Some had not dealt honestly with their neighbors, and they confessed these sins and have since made restitution. During the following week some of those who had not been dealing justly with God, and consequently had been separating themselves from Him, began to restore that which they had withheld. One brother had not paid tithes for two years. He gave his note to the secretary of the conference for the tithe he had withheld and the interest on it, amounting to \$571.50. I thank the Lord that he had the courage to do this. Another gave his note for \$300. Another man who had backslidden from God so far that but little hope was cherished that he would ever turn his feet into the path of righteousness again, gave his note for \$1,000.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 643.

#### b. What is the result if the tithes are not going where they should? Nehemiah 13:10.

“Had God’s plan been followed, means would now be flowing into His treasury; and funds to enable ministers to enter new fields, and workers to unite with ministers in lifting up the standard of truth in the dark places of the earth, would be abundant.” —*Ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 386.

“Some have been dissatisfied and have said: ‘I will not longer pay my tithe; for I have no confidence in the way things are managed at the heart of the work.’ But will you rob God because you think the management of the work is not right? Make your complaint, plainly and openly, in the right spirit, to the proper ones. Send in your petitions for things to be adjusted and set in order; but do not withdraw from the work of God, and prove unfaithful, because others are not doing right.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 249.

#### c. What is the storehouse and who was in charge of it? Nehemiah 13:10–13.

“The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself. It is to be brought into His treasury to be used to sustain the gospel laborers in their work. For a long time the Lord has been robbed because there are those who do not realize that the tithe is God’s reserved portion.”—*Ibid.*

“A great mistake is made when the tithe is drawn from the object for which it is to be used—the support of the ministers. There should be today in the field one hundred well qualified laborers where now there is but one.”—*Ibid.*, p. 248.

#### 4. OWNERSHIP

- a. How do we see the principle of giving in recognition of God's ownership in the history of the garden of Eden? Genesis 2:15–17; Leviticus 27:30.

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“The Lord created every tree in Eden pleasant to the eyes and good for food, and He bade Adam and Eve freely enjoy His bounties. But He made one exception. Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This tree God reserved as a constant reminder of His ownership of all. Thus He gave them opportunity to demonstrate their faith and trust in Him by their perfect obedience to His requirements.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 386.

- b. For whom was the tithe set aside—and why? Deuteronomy 18:1, 2; Numbers 18:20–24.

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“The tithe is the Lord's, and those who meddle with it will be punished with the loss of their heavenly treasure, unless they repent. Let the work no longer be hedged up because the tithe has been diverted into various channels other than the one to which the Lord has said it should go. Provision is to be made for these other lines of work. They are to be sustained, but not from the tithe. God has not changed; the tithe is still to be used for the support of the ministry. The opening of new fields requires more ministerial efficiency than we now have, and there must be means in the treasury.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 227, 228.

“[God] places His treasures in the hands of men, but requires that one tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for His work. He requires this portion to be placed in His treasury. It is to be rendered to Him as His own; it is sacred and is to be used for sacred purposes, for the support of those who carry the message of salvation to all parts of the world. He reserves this portion, that means may ever be flowing into His treasure house and that the light of truth may be carried to those who are nigh and those who are afar off. By faithfully obeying this requirement we acknowledge that all belongs to God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 386.

“A very plain, definite message has been given to me for our people. I am bidden to tell them that they are making a mistake in applying the tithe to various objects which, though good in themselves, are not the object to which the Lord has said that the tithe should be applied. Those who make this use of the tithe are departing from the Lord's arrangement. God will judge for these things.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 248.

## 5. MINISTRY

- a. Who was to be with the Levites in gathering the funds? Nehemiah 10:38.
- b. What were the Levites required to do with the tithes in order to support the priests? Numbers 18:26–28.

“ [God] places His treasures in the hands of men, but requires that one tenth shall be faithfully laid aside for His work. . . .

“And has not the Lord a right to demand this of us? Did He not give His only-begotten Son because He loved us and desired to save us from death? And shall not our gratitude offerings flow into His treasury to be drawn therefrom to advance His kingdom in the earth? Since God is the owner of all our goods, shall not gratitude to Him prompt us to make freewill offerings and thank offerings, thus acknowledging His ownership of soul, body, spirit, and property? Had God’s plan been followed, means would now be flowing into His treasury; and funds to enable ministers to enter new fields, and workers to unite with ministers in lifting up the standard of truth in the dark places of the earth, would be abundant.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 386.

- c. How does this principle apply to the Christian era and what will be the result if we are faithful in giving? 1 Corinthians 9:11–14; 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7.

“The contributions required of the Hebrews for religious and charitable purposes amounted to fully one fourth of their income. So heavy a tax upon the resources of the people might be expected to reduce them to poverty; but, on the contrary, the faithful observance of these regulations was one of the conditions of their prosperity.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 527.

# Friday

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does the withholding of tithes and offerings cause in our personal lives?
2. What can we learn in the life of Elijah regarding the importance of giving?
3. How can a curse be reversed?
4. For whom was the tithe specifically reserved?
5. Were the tithes and offerings designed only for the local worship services?

# Fig Leaves or Lamb's Wool?

**MEMORY TEXT:** “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22).

“The good works of God’s people have a more powerful influence than words.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 443.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 52–62.

## Sunday

November 5

### 1. LIVING WITH HUMANITY

- a. Describe the relationship God seeks with humanity both now and through eternity. Exodus 25:8; Revelation 21:1–3.

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- b. Because He wants a personal relationship, is it possible to be in friendship with those opposed to His principles—and where are the specific differences? Matthew 6:24; James 4:4; 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.

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“Christ’s followers are required to come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean, and they have the promise of being the sons and daughters of the Most High, members of the royal family. But if the conditions are not complied with on their part, they will not, cannot, realize the fulfillment of the promise.”— *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 441.

- c. Explain our duty toward people of the world. John 17:15, 16; Matthew 5:16.

“The Lord would have His people in the world, but not of the world. They should seek to bring the truth before the men in high places, and give them a fair chance to receive and weigh evidence. There are many who are unenlightened and uninformed, and as individuals we have a serious, solemn, wise work to do. We are to have travail of soul for those who are in high places, and go to them with the gracious invitation to come to the marriage feast. Very much more might have been done than has been done for those in high places.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 198.

## 2. A GARMENT OF LIGHT

- a. **Why do we examine the beginning of the world to see God's ideal and the kind of clothing our first parents wore? Genesis 1:27, 31; Psalm 104:1, 2.**

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"Before the entrance of sin, Adam and Eve in Eden were surrounded with a clear and beautiful light, the light of God. This light illuminated everything which they approached. There was nothing to obscure their perception of the character or the works of God. But when they yielded to the tempter, the light departed from them. In losing the garments of holiness, they lost the light that had illuminated nature. No longer could they read it aright."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 461, 462.

"Before his fall Adam was free from the results of the curse. When he was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He was created perfect in thought and in action. But he yielded to sin, and fell from his high and holy estate."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, p. 141.

- b. **What change happened as soon as sin entered and what does it symbolize? Genesis 2:25; 3:7 (first part); Revelation 3:17.**

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"The covering of light about [our first parents] soon disappeared, and under a sense of guilt, and loss of their divine covering, a shivering seized them, and they tried to cover their exposed forms."—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 40.

"After the transgression of Adam and Eve they were naked, for the garment of light and security had departed from them."—*Last Day Events*, p. 249.

"In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will 'grow up' (Malachi 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear in 'the beauty of the Lord our God,' in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood."—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 644, 645.



### 3. SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

- a. How did Adam and Eve present themselves in their self-righteousness before God, as expressed in their clothing? Genesis 3:7-11.

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"After his transgression Adam at first imagined himself entering upon a higher state of existence. But soon the thought of his sin filled him with terror. The air, which had hitherto been of a mild and uniform temperature, seemed to chill the guilty pair. The love and peace which had been theirs was gone, and in its place they felt a sense of sin, a dread of the future, a nakedness of soul. The robe of light which had enshrouded them, now disappeared, and to supply its place they endeavored to fashion for themselves a covering; for they could not, while unclothed, meet the eye of God and holy angels."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 57.

"A person's character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils."—*Education*, p. 248.

- b. Why is it better to come to God even in a sinful condition rather than not at all? Isaiah 1:18.

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"Come, my brother, come just as you are, sinful and polluted. Lay your burden of guilt on Jesus, and by faith claim His merits. Come now, while mercy lingers; come with confession, come with contrition of soul, and God will abundantly pardon. Do not dare to slight another opportunity. Listen to the voice of mercy that now pleads with you to arise from the dead that Christ may give you light. Every moment now seems to connect itself directly with the destinies of the unseen world. Then let not your pride and unbelief lead you to still further reject offered mercy. If you do you will be left to lament at the last: 'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.' "—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 353.

"The long night of watching, of toil and hardship, is nearly past. Christ is soon to come. Get ready. The angels of God are seeking to attract you from yourself and from earthly things. Let them not labor in vain. Faith, living faith, is what you need; faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Remember Calvary and the awful, the infinite sacrifice there made for man. Jesus now invites you to come to Him just as you are and make Him your strength and everlasting Friend."—*Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 251.

#### 4. A SYMBOL OF SALVATION

- a. Besides our dress, how should our appearance distinguish between men and women? Revelation 12:9.

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- b. Explain the first sermon on the plan of redemption and why blood was shed. Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 9:22; John 1:29; Romans 5:15, 16.
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“In the statement, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed,’ God pledged Himself to introduce into the hearts of human beings a new principle—a hatred of sin, of deception, of pretense, of everything that bears the marks of Satan’s guile.”—*Special Testimonies, Series B*, No. 2, p. 6.

“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, R.V. 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. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, ‘that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

- c. What does the new clothing symbolize and how does our clothing show what is happening in the heart? Genesis 3:21.
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“The very ones that profess to be washed by the blood of Jesus, spilled for them, can dress up and decorate their poor, mortal bodies, and dare profess to be followers of the holy, self-denying, humble Pattern. Oh, that all could see this as God sees it and showed it to me! It seemed too much for me to bear, to feel the anguish of soul that I felt as I beheld it. Said the angel: ‘God’s people are *peculiar*; such He is purifying unto Himself.’ I saw that the outside appearance is an index to the heart. When the exterior is hung with ribbons, collars, and needless things, it plainly shows that the love for all this is in the heart; unless such persons are cleansed from their corruption, they can never see God, for only the pure in heart will see Him.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 135.

## 5. IDENTIFICATION

- a. Even when people of the world were typically dressing more modestly than now, why did God have a special dress for His people? Numbers 15:37–41.

“God expressly commanded a very simple arrangement of dress for the children of Israel for the purpose of distinguishing them from the idolatrous nations around them. As they looked upon their peculiarity of dress, they were to remember that they were God’s commandment keeping people, and that He had wrought in a miraculous manner to bring them from Egyptian bondage to serve Him, to be a holy people unto Him. They were not to serve their own desires, or to imitate the idolatrous nations around them, but to remain a distinct, separate people, that all who looked upon them might say: These are they whom God brought out of the land of Egypt, who keep the law of Ten Commandments. An Israelite was known to be such as soon as seen, for God through simple means distinguished him as His.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 524.

- b. What should we realize about reformation in dress? 2 Corinthians 3:2.

“Much unhappy feeling was created by those who were constantly urging the reform dress upon their sisters. With extremists, this reform seemed to constitute the sum and substance of their religion. It was the theme of conversation and the burden of their hearts; and their minds were thus diverted from God and the truth. They failed to cherish the spirit of Christ and manifested a great lack of true courtesy. Instead of prizing the dress for its real advantages, they seemed to be proud of its singularity. Perhaps no question has ever come up among us which has caused such development of character as has the dress reform.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 636.

“Pride and extravagance in dress are sins to which woman is especially prone; hence these injunctions relate directly to her.”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 94.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What kind of relationship does God want to have with humanity?
2. Why did the garment of light disappear?
3. Should we come to God even if we feel we are not ready? Why or why not?
4. How does conversion affect the way we dress?
5. How does our clothing show who we are?

# The Ribbon of Blue

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

“In dress, as in all things else, it is our privilege to honor our Creator. He desires our clothing to be not only neat and healthful, but appropriate and becoming.”—*Education*, p. 248.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, pp. 628–648.

*Sunday*

*November 12*

## 1. MODESTY

- a. How and why is modesty described as a Christian duty? 1 Timothy 2:9, 10.

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“There is a decided contradiction between the love of outward adorning and the grace of meekness, the quiet spirit. It is only when we seek in all things to conform to the will of God that peace and joy will reign in the soul.

“The love of dress endangers the morals and makes woman the opposite of the Christian lady characterized by modesty and sobriety. Showy, extravagant dress too often encourages lust in the heart of the wearer and awakens base passions in the heart of the beholder. God sees that the ruin of the character is frequently preceded by the indulgence of pride and vanity in dress.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 645.

- b. How does emphasis on the outward adorning deprive the inward, spiritual? 1 Peter 3:3–5.

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“Many of our sisters are persons of good ability, and if their talents were used to the glory of God they would be successful in winning many souls to Christ. Will they not be responsible for the souls they might have saved had not extravagance in dress and the cares of this world so crippled and dwarfed their God-given powers that they felt no burden of the work? Satan invented the fashions in order to keep the minds of women so engrossed with the subject of dress that they could think of but little else.”—*Ibid.*, p. 629.

## 2. HEALTH AND CLEANLINESS

- a. How is God's concern for our health and well-being to affect the way we dress—particularly in colder weather? 3 John 2; Proverbs 31:21 (marginal reading for “scarlet” = double garments); Isaiah 3:16, 17.
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“The body must be kept in a healthy condition in order that the soul may be in health. The condition of the body affects the condition of the soul. . . . Faithful adherence to right principles in eating, drinking, and dressing is a duty that God has laid upon human beings.”—*Evangelism*, p. 261.

“If the feet are clothed with good-sized, thick-soled, warm boots or shoes, for comfort rather than for fashion, the blood will be induced to circulate freely in the limbs and feet, as well as in other portions of the body.”—*The Health Reformer*, April 1, 1871.

- b. How important is cleanliness in our bodies as well as in the way we dress? Exodus 19:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.
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“A great amount of suffering might be saved if all would labor to prevent disease, by strictly obeying the laws of health. Strict habits of cleanliness should be observed. Many, while well, will not take the trouble to keep in a healthy condition. They neglect personal cleanliness, and are not careful to keep their clothing pure. . . . The impurities of the body, if not allowed to escape, are taken back into the blood and forced upon the internal organs. Nature, to relieve herself of poisonous impurities, makes an effort to free the system. This effort produces fevers and what is termed disease. But even then, if those who are afflicted would assist nature in her efforts by the use of pure, soft water, much suffering would be prevented. But many, instead of doing this, and seeking to remove the poisonous matter from the system, take a more deadly poison into the system, to remove a poison already there.”—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 61, 62.

- c. How does following Jezebel's example deprive a person from their natural beauty and affect the health? 2 Kings 9:30; Ecclesiastes 3:11.
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“Many are ignorantly injuring their health and endangering their lives by using cosmetics. . . . When they become heated, . . . the poison is absorbed by the pores of the skin, and is thrown into the blood. Many lives have been sacrificed by this means alone.”—*Healthful Living*, p. 189.

### 3. RESPECTING GOD'S NATURAL ORDER IN CLOTHING

- a. How does God view individuals wearing the clothing characteristic of the opposite gender? Deuteronomy 22:5.
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"God designed that there should be a plain distinction between the dress of men and women, and has considered the matter of sufficient importance to give explicit directions in regard to it; for the same dress worn by both sexes would cause confusion and great increase of crime."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 460.

"In my article on dress in *How to Live* I tried to present a healthful, convenient, economical, yet modest and becoming style of dress for Christian women to wear, if they should choose so to do."—*Ibid.*, p. 462.

"In wide contrast with this modest dress is the so-called American costume, resembling very nearly the dress worn by men. It consists of a vest, pants, and a dress resembling a coat and reaching about halfway from the hip to the knee. This dress I have opposed, from what has been shown me as in harmony with the word of God; while the other I have recommended as modest, comfortable, convenient, and healthful."—*Ibid.*, p. 465.

"God's order has been reversed, and His special directions disregarded, by those who adopt the American costume. I was referred to Deuteronomy 22:5. . . . God would not have His people adopt the so-called reform dress. It is immodest apparel, wholly unfitted for the modest, humble followers of Christ."—*Ibid.*, p. 421.

- b. How does wearing clothing that is characteristic of the opposite gender affect the character and reputation of those involved?
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"Those who feel called out to join the movement in favor of woman's rights and the so-called dress reform [that adopts the American costume] might as well sever all connection with the third angel's message. The spirit which attends the one cannot be in harmony with the other. The Scriptures are plain upon the relations and rights of men and women. . . . With the so-called dress reform [that adopts the American costume] there goes a spirit of levity and boldness just in keeping with the dress. Modesty and reserve seem to depart from many as they adopt that style of dress. I was shown that God would have us take a course consistent and explainable. Let the sisters adopt the American costume and they would destroy their own influence and that of their husbands. They would become a byword and a derision."—*Ibid.*, pp. 421, 422.

## 4. APPEARANCE AND WORSHIP

- a. Besides our dress, how should our appearance distinguish between men and women? 1 Corinthians 11:14, 15.

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“There is an increasing tendency to have women in their dress and appearance as near like the other sex as possible, and to fashion their dress very much like that of men, but God pronounces it abomination. ‘In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.’ 1 Timothy 2:9.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 421.

“A person’s character is judged by his style of dress. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of simple and appropriate attire. Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils.”—*Education*, p. 248.

- b. How do we know that there is to be a difference in the way we come before God in worship on His holy day than at any other time? Isaiah 6:1, 2.

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“Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God’s house. While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 355.

“God purposed to make the occasion of speaking His law a scene of awful grandeur, in keeping with its exalted character. The people were to be impressed that everything connected with the service of God must be regarded with the greatest reverence. The Lord said to Moses, ‘Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.’ During these intervening days all were to occupy the time in solemn preparation to appear before God. Their person and their clothing must be freed from impurity. And as Moses should point out their sins, they were to devote themselves to humiliation, fasting, and prayer, that their hearts might be cleansed from iniquity.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 303, 304.



## 5. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- a. What must we realize about worldliness—and why is it such an attraction? James 4:4.

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“ ‘Like all the nations.’ The Israelites did not realize that to be in this respect unlike other nations was a special privilege and blessing. God had separated the Israelites from every other people, to make them His own peculiar treasure. But they, disregarding this high honor, eagerly desired to imitate the example of the heathen! And still the longing to conform to worldly practices and customs exists among the professed people of God. As they depart from the Lord they become ambitious for the gains and honors of the world. Christians are constantly seeking to imitate the practices of those who worship the god of this world. Many urge that by uniting with worldlings and conforming to their customs they might exert a stronger influence over the ungodly. But all who pursue this course thereby separate from the Source of their strength. Becoming the friends of the world, they are the enemies of God. For the sake of earthly distinction they sacrifice the unspeakable honor to which God has called them, of showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 607.

- b. For what place is the Christian preparing? 1 Corinthians 2:9.

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“Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and the living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home—that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 545.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why are we to be concerned with modesty?
2. Why is cleanliness so important and how do cosmetics affect that?
3. What is an abomination before God and what does that mean?
4. How are we to come before God when we are worshiping Him?
5. Why are we constantly affected by worldliness?

# Wedded to Christ

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10).

“Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 333.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 367–370.

## Sunday

November 19

### 1. THE LAW

a. How is the law on marriage defined? Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:1–3.

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b. What is the difference between genuine ignorance of God’s will vs. scoffing at revealed light from Heaven? Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:3–6, 11, 14.

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“‘If light come, and that light is set aside or rejected, then comes condemnation and the frown of God; but before the light comes, there is no sin, for there is no light for them to reject.’”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 116.

“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.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 313.

c. Why is willful ignorance so dangerous? John 15:22; 5:40.

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“Those who deliberately place themselves where they will not have an opportunity of hearing the truth, will be reckoned among those who have heard the truth, and persistently resisted its evidences.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1145.

“Those who have an opportunity to hear the truth, and yet take no pains to hear or understand it, thinking that if they do not hear, they will not be accountable, will be judged guilty before God the same as if they had heard and rejected.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 25, 1893.

## 2. PERSONALIZATION

- a. In a literal marriage, why is the woman to remain in a marriage even with an unbelieving husband (or vice versa, and as long as it is not a dangerously abusive relationship)? 1 Corinthians 7:13, 14; 1 Peter 3:1.

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"If the wife is an unbeliever and an opposer, the husband cannot, in view of the law of God, put her away on this ground alone. In order to be in harmony with the law of Jehovah, he must abide with her unless she chooses of herself to depart. He may suffer opposition and be oppressed and annoyed in many ways; he will find his comfort and his strength and support from God, who is able to give grace for every emergency. He should be a man of pure mind, of truly decided, firm principles, and God will give him wisdom in regard to the course which he should pursue. Impulse will not control his reason, but reason will hold the lines of control in her firm hand, that lust shall be held under bit and bridle."—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 344, 345.

- b. How does the apostle Paul move from a literal to a spiritual representation—and whom does the wife symbolize? Romans 7:4, 5; 2 Corinthians 11:2.

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"They [church members] must not put on their citizen's dress, but the wedding garment. They have been married to Christ, and the robe of His righteousness is to clothe them. The church is the bride of Christ, and her members are to yoke up with their Leader. God warns us not to defile our garments."—*The Gospel Herald*, May 28, 1902.

"Our affections are to flow in but one direction, in order that our obligations as servants of Christ be not violated. The badge of the world will never designate us as the children of God, loyal subjects of His kingdom. When Jesus came, He found sins, worldliness, and dissension in the church; but it was His work to reverse this order of things. He would have His church in the world, but not of it. He said, 'Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.' The church was to be a divine inclosure in the world. It was to be as a vineyard planted by the divine Husbandman, and brought under cultivation by Him. It was to be as a nursery planted with trees of righteousness, and although surrounded by evil trees of the world, which brought forth fruit unto death, yet all within the inclosure was designed to be the planting of the Lord, bearing fruit unto righteousness. The followers of Christ were to reveal the power of the transforming grace of Christ to change the corrupt hearts of men."—*The Review and Herald*, December 19, 1893.

### 3. LIFE WITH THE FIRST HUSBAND

- a. Using the spiritual symbols of Romans chapter 7, describe life under the first marriage, and why is sin so hard to overcome? Romans 6:12–16; 7:5, 14, 15; Jeremiah 17:9.

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“The old man is not dead in you. You have a form of godliness, but not the cleansing power of God. You can and do talk and write smoothly, and as far as your words go, they may possibly be correct; but the true language of the heart is not spoken.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 323.

“In order for you to do good you must live a new life that is in harmony with God. Your perverse nature has not been transformed. You are not at peace with God or with yourself. You are in bondage to the great adversary of souls, in subjection to the old man of sin. You are not a free man in Christ. There is needed a spiritual change in you before God can work with you.”—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, pp. 170, 171.

- b. Again using the spiritual symbols, what will we receive if we continue in our first marriage, and how are we freed from that relationship? Romans 6:23 (first part); 6:6, 7, 11, 12, 18; John 8:31, 32.

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“If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. ‘No man can serve two masters’ (Matthew 6:24). If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. Here is where Christ’s help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 516.

“You now have to learn the great lessons of self-control which ought to have been mastered in earlier days. God brought you where your surroundings would be changed and where you could be disciplined by His Holy Spirit, that you might acquire moral power and self-control to make you a conqueror. It will require the strongest effort, the most persevering and unfaltering determination, and the strongest energy to control self.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 92.

“You should begin to seek God where you are. You must be born again. There must be a renovation, a new life created within you, that you may not serve sin, or the lusts of the flesh. Your children must be converted. You have a solemn work to do.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 22, 1889.

## 4. FREEDOM

### a. What is the truth? Psalm 119:142; John 14:6.

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“When a soul has been brought to Christ through this personal labor, leave the surrendered, humbled heart for God to work with; let God urge upon him just such service as He sees fit. God has promised that His grace shall be sufficient for everyone who will come unto Him. Those who surrender to Jesus, who open the door of the heart and invite Him in, will be in safekeeping. He says, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ John 14:6. Possessing Jesus, they will possess truth. They will be complete in Him.”—*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 50.

“Christ is the complete system of truth. He says, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ All true believers center in Christ, their character is irradiated by Christ; all meet in Christ, and circulate about Christ. Truth comes from Heaven to purify and cleanse the human agent from every moral defilement. It leads to benevolent action, to kind, tender, thoughtful love toward the needy, the distressed, the suffering. This is practical obedience to the words of Christ.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 3, pp. 198, 199.

### b. How do we become free in knowing the truth and what is the core of our message to the world? John 12:32; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Galatians 6:14.

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“The mystery of the cross explains all other mysteries. In the light that streams from Calvary the attributes of God which had filled us with fear and awe appear beautiful and attractive. Mercy, tenderness, and parental love are seen to blend with holiness, justice, and power. While we behold the majesty of His throne, high and lifted up, we see His character in its gracious manifestations, and comprehend, as never before, the significance of that endearing title, ‘Our Father.’

“It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of His Son. The compensation for this sacrifice is the joy of peopling the earth with ransomed beings, holy, happy, and immortal.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 652.

“As the sinner, drawn by the power of Christ, approaches the uplifted cross, and prostrates himself before it, there is a new creation. A new heart is given him. He becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 163.

“Whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, ‘the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star.’ ”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 118.

## 5. OLD HABITS

- a. After the old man is dead, does that mean we never sin again? What goal is necessary for us to reach? 1 John 2:1; Matthew 5:48.

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“Christ as high priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin, and thus if any man sin, he has an advocate with the Father.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 343.

- b. How can the influence of a relationship affect us either negatively or positively? 2 Corinthians 3:18; John 1:1, 14.

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“Every association we form, however limited, exerts some influence upon us. The extent to which we yield to that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy, the constancy of the intercourse, and our love and veneration for the one with whom we associate. Thus by acquaintance and association with Christ we may become like Him, the one faultless Example.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 222, 223.

- c. How do we keep from falling? 1 Corinthians 15:31; Galatians 2:20.

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“By looking constantly to Jesus with the eye of faith, we shall be strengthened. God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Saviour. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural, earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a Comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 391.

# Friday

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Contrast actual ignorance God winks at vs. refusal to know and understand.
2. Why does the first husband have such a strong hold on the human nature?
3. Explain the contrast between a literal unbelieving husband vs. the spiritual first husband.
4. How is the truth simply a manifestation of Jesus Christ?
5. How do our habits affect us even in a new relationship with our Saviour?

## First Sabbath Offering for the Chapel Renovation in Belém, SP, Brazil

The city of São Paulo is a municipality in the Brazilian state of the same name. It is the 4th most populous city in the world. São Paulo was founded in 1554 by Jesuit priests and today, 58% of its inhabitants are Catholic, 22% are Protestants and the remaining profess other religions. It was to this city that the first reformers arrived in



Brazil and soon spread to other regions of the country. Since São Paulo is the largest city in Brazil, many remained here preaching the gospel, gaining souls for Christ and building houses of worship to our great God; and, in this spirit, began to build the church of Belém (or as we affectionately refer to it, “Belenzinho”).

This church is located near the center of the city, with a vast field for missionary work in the neighborhood. It has long prospered, and over the years many changes have occurred. Today it continues its spiritual life, working with children and the elderly of the surrounding area and, by the grace of God, has succeeded in this prosperous and blessed work. Being one of the first temples of worship of our brethren here in Brazil, the church of Belém has been resilient to keep itself functioning, despite the difficulties imposed on it. Inaugurated on October 15, 1943, this house of worship has always held worship services, just as it continues today.

However, suffering due to advanced age, the building structure in Belém is no longer as strong as the faith of the believers who gather here to worship. Thus, even with a beautiful and long history, the former meeting place of the Brazilian Union needs the urgent financial help of our brethren around the world to carry out a broad reform of this house of worship so that all honor and glory to the supreme God may be offered in a building that lives up to the importance of such acts. We thank all the donors for their kind collaboration—and may God bless our brothers and sisters who will help us keep up this beacon of light that has illuminated for many years the footsteps of those who seek Jesus, leaving the stormy paths of sin.

*Your brethren from the “Belenzinho” Church*



# Jesus Died My Death

**MEMORY TEXT:** “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3).

“When man, beguiled by Satan, disobeyed the divine law, God could not, even to save the lost race, change that law. God is love; His law is an expression of His character. To change His law would be to deny Himself; it would overthrow those principles with which are bound up the well-being of the whole universe.”—*Bible Training School*, February 1, 1908.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 371–380.

*Sunday*

*November 26*

## 1. THE LAW

- a. According to the law of marriage, what frees a woman from her first husband? Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:39.

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- b. Is it legal for anyone to kill the first husband? Exodus 20:13; John 8:44.

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- c. In order to save the sinner, why does the legality of the law need to be maintained in the plan of redemption? Psalm 85:10; Daniel 9:7.

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“The Son of God in becoming man’s substitute, and bearing the curse which should fall upon man, pledged Himself in behalf of the race, to maintain the honor of the law of God. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may save the sinner, and completely vindicate the claims of the law. His mission was to convince men of sin—which is the transgression of the law, and through the merits of His blood, and by His mediation He was to bring them back to obedience. Through the sacrifice of Christ, the law could be maintained, and the sinner could be pardoned—not only freed from the power of sin, but renewed ‘after the image of Him that created him.’ Colossians 3:10.”—*Bible Training School*, February 1, 1908.

## 2. THE LEGALITY OF SALVATION

- a. Since mercy is also needed and the law cannot provide for that, what was necessary to bring redemption? Romans 8:3, 4.

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“Without the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour, fallen man could never meet the claims of the law.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 18, 1890.

“We have never intimated, either in sermons preached by our ministers, or in the thousands of pages of our printed matter scattered all over the world, that there is any power in the law to save the sinner. On the contrary, it has been repeated again and again by our speakers and writers that the law has no power to redeem the transgressor from the consequences of his sin.”—*Ibid.*, July 18, 1878.

“When the sinner is convicted by the light of the law, then he has a work to do: Repentance toward God because of transgression of His law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner’s substitute and surety. Then pardon and free salvation may be his. But Jesus Christ will never save any one who has a knowledge of the law of God, yet lives in transgression of it.”—*Ibid.*, March 7, 1878.

- b. As we were in bondage to sin, what did Jesus become in order to be my Saviour? 2 Corinthians 5:21.

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“In order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 268.

“The iniquity of men was laid upon Christ; He was counted a transgressor that He might redeem them from the curse of the law. . . . The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour, in this hour of supreme anguish, pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. Every pang endured by the Son of God upon the cross, the blood drops that flowed from His head, His hands, and feet, the convulsions of agony which racked His frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled His soul at the hiding of His Father’s face from Him, speak to man, saying, It is for love of thee that the Son of God consents to have these heinous crimes laid upon Him; for thee He spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise and immortal life. . . . He, the sin-bearer, endures judicial punishment for iniquity, and becomes sin itself for man.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, pp. 162, 163.

### 3. SINFUL HUMAN NATURE

- a. Describe the human nature Jesus took upon Himself. Hebrews 2:14–18; 7:26; 2 Timothy 2:8.

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“Think of Christ’s humiliation. He took upon Himself fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin. He took our sorrows, bearing our grief and shame. He endured all the temptations wherewith man is beset. He united humanity with divinity: a divine spirit dwelt in a temple of flesh.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 4, p. 1147.

“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.

“Had He not been fully human, Christ could not have been our substitute. He could not have worked out in humanity that perfection of character which it is the privilege of all to reach. He was the light and the life of the world. He came to this earth to work in behalf of men, that they might no longer be under the control of Satanic agencies. But while bearing human nature, He was dependent upon the Omnipotent for His life. In His humanity, He laid hold of the divinity of God; and this every member of the human family has the privilege of doing. Christ did nothing that human nature may not do if it partakes of the divine nature.”—*The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897.

- b. Why did Jesus need to take on our human nature? Hebrews 2:10; 7:26.

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“Christ was a real man, and He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. And He was God in the flesh.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 904.

“At an infinite cost, and by a process mysterious to angels as well as to men, Christ assumed humanity. Hiding His divinity, laying aside His glory, He was born a babe in Bethlehem. In human flesh He lived the law of God, that He might condemn sin in the flesh, and witness to heavenly intelligences that the law was ordained to life, to insure the happiness, peace, and eternal good of all who obey.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, July 20, 1899.

## 4. PERFECTION

- a. Describe the life of Jesus while on earth. **Philippians 2:5–8; Luke 2:51, 52.**

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“The Lord’s standard of righteousness remains as firm as His eternal throne. It is His holy law, and because not one precept of this law could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition, the Father consented to give His only begotten Son to die. To abolish the law?—No; but to save the sinner. The cross of Calvary is the unanswerable argument as to the perpetuity of the law of Jehovah. When the great Teacher gave His sermon on the mount, showing the immutability of the law of God, He was expounding the law that He Himself gave.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 21, 1893.

“As the sacrifice in our behalf was complete, so our restoration from the defilement of sin is to be complete. There is no act of wickedness that the law will excuse; there is no unrighteousness that will escape its condemnation. The life of Christ was a perfect fulfillment of every precept of the law. He said; ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ John 15:10. His life is our standard of obedience and service.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 312.

“The enmity put between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman was supernatural. With Christ the enmity was in one sense natural; in another sense it was supernatural, as humanity and divinity were combined. And never was the enmity developed to such a marked degree as when Christ became an inhabitant of this earth. Never before had there been a being upon the earth who hated sin with so perfect a hatred as did Christ. He had seen its deceiving, infatuating power upon the holy angels, and all His powers were enlisted against it.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 254.

- b. Describe the level of Christ’s perfection. **Hebrews 4:14–16; 1 Peter 2:21–24.**

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“None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ’s character. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through cooperation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God’s assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 531.

## 5. TRANSFORMATION

- a. What happens when we accept Christ's death in our sinful human nature for us? 2 Corinthians 5:17.

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"It was not merely the gnawing pangs of hunger which made His sufferings inexpressibly severe, but it was the guilt of the sins of the world which pressed so heavily upon [Christ]. He who knew no sin was made sin for us."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 372.

"Man needs a power out of and above himself to restore him to the likeness of God; but because he needs divine aid, it does not make human activity unessential. Faith on the part of man is required; for faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith lays hold upon the virtue of Christ. The Lord does not design that human power should be paralyzed; but by cooperating with God, the power of man may be efficient for good. God does not design that our will should be destroyed; for it is through this very attribute that we are to accomplish the work He would have us to do both at home and abroad."—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, pp. 375, 376.

- b. What happens to the human heart in this change? Ezekiel 36:26, 27.

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"The ransom paid by Christ is sufficient for the salvation of all men; but it will avail for only those who become new creatures in Christ Jesus, loyal subjects of God's everlasting kingdom. His suffering will not shield from punishment the unrepenting, disloyal sinner. Man must cooperate with divine power, and put forth his human effort to subdue sin, and to stand complete in Christ. Christ's work was to restore man to his original state, to heal him, through divine power. Man's part is to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ, and cooperate with the divine agencies in forming a righteous character."—*North Pacific Union Gleaner*, February 17, 1909.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is it so important to maintain the validity of the law of God?
2. Why did Jesus have to become sin (the first husband) in order to bring salvation to mankind?
3. Describe the human nature of Christ.
4. What kind of life did Jesus live in sinful human nature?
5. How is the sinful human heart transformed?

# Restoring Marriage

**MEMORY TEXT:** “And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in” (Isaiah 58:12).

“There were two institutions founded in Eden that were not lost in the fall—the Sabbath and the marriage relation. . . . He who by precept or example lessens the obligation of these sacred institutions is the enemy of both God and man, and is using his influence and his God-given talents to bring in a state of confusion and moral corruption.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 28, 1884.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 150–153, 214–225.

*Sunday*

*December 3*

## 1. THE FAMILY UNIT

- a. What is Satan trying to do to the God-ordained family unit? 1 Peter 5:8.

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“As we approach the close of time, as the people of God stand upon the borders of the heavenly Canaan, Satan will, as of old, redouble his efforts to prevent them from entering the goodly land. He lays his snares for every soul. It is not the ignorant and uncultured merely that need to be guarded; he will prepare his temptations for those in the highest positions, in the most holy office; if he can lead them to pollute their souls, he can through them destroy many. And he employs the same agents now as he employed three thousand years ago. By worldly friendships, by the charms of beauty, by pleasure seeking, mirth, feasting, or the wine cup, he tempts to the violation of the seventh commandment.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 457, 458.

- b. How are God’s messengers trying to avert judgments brought about by the destruction of the family unit? Malachi 4:5, 6.

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“It was the prevalence of this very sin, fornication, among ancient Israel, which brought upon them the signal manifestation of God’s displeasure.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 451.

## 2. THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST

- a. **Who was John the Baptist (in connection with the work prophesied by Malachi) and how does that represent the final remnant? Matthew 11:7, 14.**

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“Those who are to prepare the way for the second coming of Christ are represented by faithful Elijah, as John came in the spirit of Elijah to prepare the way for Christ’s first advent.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 62.

“The age in which we live calls for reformatory action.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 488.

- b. **Why was John martyred and what does this show today? Matthew 14:3–5.**

“Herod was affected as he listened to the powerful, pointed testimonies of John, and with deep interest he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. John was acquainted with the fact that he was about to marry his brother’s wife, while her husband was yet living, and faithfully told Herod that this was not lawful.”—*Early Writings*, p. 154.

“Herod was inclined to act upon the advice of John, and stated to Herodias that he could not marry her in defiance of the law of God. But this determined woman would not be thwarted in her designs. Intense hatred was awakened in her heart toward John. Herod was weak in principle, vacillating in mind, and Herodias had no great difficulty in re-establishing herself in his favor, and holding her influence over him. Herod yielded to the pleasures of sin, rather than submit to the restrictions of the law of God.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, p. 70.

“Many of those who profess to believe the truth would say, if they expressed their real sentiments, What need is there of speaking so plainly? . . . Why need he have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother’s wife? He lost his life by speaking so plainly. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the anger of Herodias?”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 149.

“John the Baptist met sin with open rebuke in men of humble occupation and in men of high degree. He declared the truth to kings and nobles, whether they would hear or reject it. He spoke personally and pointedly. He reproved the Pharisees of the Sanhedrim because their religion consisted in forms and not in righteousness of pure, willing obedience. . . . He spoke to Herod in regard to his marriage with Herodias, saying, It is not lawful for thee to have her. He spoke to him of a future retribution, when God would judge every man according to his works.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 149, 150.



### 3. REFORMATION

- a. **What is the work of God's people in the last days and how is this exemplified by the words of Jesus? Jeremiah 6:16; Matthew 11:28–30.**

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"Meekness is a precious, Christian attribute. The meekness and lowliness of Christ are only learned by wearing Christ's yoke. . . . That yoke signifies entire submission."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 236.

- b. **How do we hasten the coming of Jesus? 2 Peter 3:12; Acts 3:19–21.**

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"Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69.

"In the time of the end every divine institution is to be restored."—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 678.

- c. **In this context, which divine institution was created at the same time as the Sabbath? Genesis 1:26–28; 2:2, 3.**

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"The Sabbath and the marriage institution were ordained of God in Eden to be preserved sacred and holy. Both of these institutions of divine appointment have been disregarded and set at naught by men and women, whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil."—*The Review and Herald*, March 8, 1870.

"God ordained that man and woman should be united in holy wedlock, to raise up families that, crowned with honour, would be symbols of the family in heaven. And at the beginning of His public ministry Christ gave His decided sanction to the institution that had been sanctioned in Eden. Thus He declared to all that He will not refuse His presence on marriage occasions, and that marriage, when joined with purity and holiness, truth and righteousness, is one of the greatest blessings ever given to the human family. Priests and popes have made laws forbidding people to marry, and secluding them in monasteries. These laws and restrictions were devised by Satan to place men and women in unnatural positions. Thus Satan has tempted human beings to disregard the law of marriage as a thing unholy, but at the same time he has opened the door for the indulgence of human passion. Thus have come into existence some of the greatest evils which curse our world—adultery, fornication, and the murder of innocent children born out of wedlock."—*The Bible Echo*, August 28, 1899.

## 4. THE FIRST DIVINE INSTITUTION

- a. What is the difference between the way humans were created vs. the animals? Genesis 1:24, 25; 2:7, 18, 21, 22.

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“After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God says to His Son, ‘Let us make man in our image.’ As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of noble height, and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as men now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white, nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble—perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 24, 25.

- b. How was the first marriage introduced? What provision was made for divorce in Eden—and did Jesus work on restoration? Genesis 2:23, 24.

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“Jesus came to our world to rectify mistakes and to restore the moral image of God in man. Wrong sentiments in regard to marriage had found a place in the minds of the teachers of Israel. They were making of none effect the sacred institution of marriage. Man was becoming so hardhearted that he would for the most trivial excuse separate from his wife, or, if he chose, he would separate her from the children and send her away. This was considered a great disgrace and was often accompanied by the most acute suffering on the part of the discarded one.

“Christ came to correct these evils, and His first miracle was wrought on the occasion of the marriage. Thus He announced to the world that marriage when kept pure and undefiled is a sacred institution.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 341.

“The Sabbath and marriage were instituted in Eden, when man was upright and innocent before God. They were established when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. But men broke the rules which God gave respecting these institutions, and brought upon themselves condemnation and woe.”—*The Signs of the Times*, October 15, 1896.

## 5. THE PERPETUITY OF THE LAW

- a. What view did Jesus have on the subject of divorce, and remarriage after divorce? Mark 10:2–12.
- b. How long was the law designed to last? Luke 16:13–17.

“The sun shining in the heavens, the solid earth upon which you dwell, are God’s witnesses that His law is changeless and eternal. Though they may pass away, the divine precepts shall endure. . . . The system of types that pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God was to be abolished at His death; but the precepts of the Decalogue are as immutable as the throne of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 308.

“It is ever the purpose of Satan to make void the law of God and to pervert the true meaning of the plan of salvation. Therefore he has originated the falsehood that the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross was for the purpose of freeing men from the obligation of keeping the commandments of God. He has foisted upon the world the deception that God has abolished His constitution, thrown away His moral standard, and made void His holy and perfect law. Had He done this, at what terrible expense would it have been to Heaven! Instead of proclaiming the abolition of the law, Calvary’s cross proclaims in thunder tones its immutable and eternal character. Could the law have been abolished, and the government of heaven and earth and the unnumbered worlds of God maintained, Christ need not have died.”—*Faith and Works*, p. 118.

- c. What example did Jesus give to confirm the perpetuity of the law—and how does that affect the one not leading in the marriage breakup? Luke 16:18.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What should we be doing in light of the fact that the marriage institution is under attack in the last days?
2. What was the main reason that John the Baptist was the first Christian martyr and what lesson is that for us today?
3. Why are marriage and the Sabbath linked in the last-day reformation?
4. How important is restoration in marriage?
5. What example do we have that the law cannot be changed?

# Till Death Do Us Part

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6).

“Every marriage engagement should be carefully considered, for marriage is a step taken for life. Both the man and the woman should carefully consider whether they can cleave to each other through the vicissitudes of life as long as they both shall live.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 340.

**Suggested Reading:** *Messages to Young People*, pp. 435–451.

*Sunday*

*December 10*

## 1. BECOMING ONE FLESH

a. How did the Pharisees try to trick Jesus on the subject of divorce and remarriage? Matthew 19:1–3.

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b. What standard of morality did Jesus use to clarify His position? Matthew 19:4.

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“The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, ‘They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads’ (Revelation 22:4), the burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme—man’s uplifting—the power of God, ‘which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ”—*Lift Him Up*, p. 56.

c. How did Jesus show that when a couple is married, the union is for life? Matthew 19:5, 6.

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## 2. A COVENANT WITH GOD

- a. **What is God's view on divorce, showing that the complete family unit is an important part of God's plan? Malachi 2:16.**

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"The divine love emanating from Christ never destroys human love, but includes human love, refined and purified. By it human love is elevated and ennobled. Human love can never bear its precious fruit until it is united with the divine nature and trained to grow heavenward. Jesus wants to see happy marriages, happy firesides. The warmth of true friendship and the love that binds the hearts of husband and wife are a foretaste of heaven."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 202.

- b. **How does the legal promise at marriage to be a family unit affect a person even after divorce and whom does that promise include besides the couple? Malachi 2:13–15; Proverbs 2:16, 17.**

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"The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind. And it is a blessing wherever the marriage covenant is entered into intelligently, in the fear of God, and with due consideration for its responsibilities."—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 356, 357.

- c. **How did the Jews suddenly claim to believe the prophets? Matthew 19:7.**

"The Pharisees had asserted that Christ's teaching was opposed to the law which God had given through Moses; but His direction to the cleansed leper to present an offering according to the law disproved this charge. It was sufficient testimony for all who were willing to be convinced."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 265.

"[The] pretended reverence [of a group of Pharisees and scribes] veiled a deep-laid plot for [Christ's] ruin. They had seized upon this opportunity to secure His condemnation, thinking that whatever decision He might make, they would find occasion to accuse Him."—*Ibid.*, p. 460.

"God is either teaching His church, reproving their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. In arraying yourself against the servants of God you are doing a work either for God or for the devil. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' What stamp does your work bear? It will pay to look critically at the result of your course."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 230.

### 3. PERMISSION

- a. What did Moses actually write about divorce and remarriage—and how do we know that this uncleanness is not referring to fornication prior to marriage nor to adultery? Deuteronomy 24:1–4; 22:20, 21; Leviticus 20:10.

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- b. In the permission granted, the wife cannot remarry the first husband for any reason after she was married to another man. How does the word “defiled” show that it was still regarded as a sin? Leviticus 18:20.

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- c. Why was this kind of permission given by God to the Israelites when it was not His will? Ezekiel 20:24, 25; 14:1–5; Matthew 19:8.

“Since the rejection of the first message, a sad change has taken place in the churches. As truth is spurned, error is received and cherished. Love for God, and faith in His word, have grown cold. The churches have grieved the Spirit of the Lord, and it has been in a great measure withdrawn. The words of the prophet Ezekiel are fearfully applicable: ‘Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face. Should I be inquired of at all by them?’ ‘I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols.’ [Ezekiel 14:3, 4.] Men may not bow down to idols of wood and stone, but all who love the things of the world and take pleasure in unrighteousness have set up idols in their hearts. The majority of professed Christians are serving other gods besides the Lord. Pride and luxury are cherished, idols are set up in the sanctuary, and her holy places are polluted.

“Anciently the Lord declared to His servants concerning Israel: ‘The leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed.’ [Isaiah 9:16.] ‘The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?’ [Jeremiah 5:31.]”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 237, 238.

“If we love the things of the world and have pleasure in unrighteousness or fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness we have put the stumbling block of our iniquity before our face and have set up idols in our heart. And unless by determined effort we put them away we shall never be acknowledged as the sons and daughters of God.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 164.

#### 4. REMARRIAGE IS ADULTERY

- a. How does Jesus show that when a person divorces for reasons other than unfaithfulness to the marriage vow, the person divorcing is actually responsible for the adultery that may follow? Matthew 5:31, 32.
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- b. How is the same conclusion shown in the above discussion with the Pharisees when we focus on the last part of the verse? Matthew 19:9 (last part).
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- c. How do we know that Jesus was not introducing a permission to divorce and remarry when the spouse is still alive and how do we need to look at the evidences? 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11.
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“The word of the Lord, spoken through His servants, is received by many with questionings and fears. And many will defer their obedience to the warning and reproofs given, waiting till every shadow of uncertainty is removed from their minds. The unbelief that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to the evidence that God is pleased to give. He requires of His people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not upon perfect knowledge. Those followers of Christ who accept the light that God sends them must obey the voice of God speaking to them when there are many other voices crying out against it. It requires discernment to distinguish the voice of God.

“Those who will not act when the Lord calls upon them, but who wait for more certain evidence and more favorable opportunities, will walk in darkness, for the light will be withdrawn. The evidence given one day, if rejected, may never be repeated.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 258.

“In regard to divorce, I am not prepared to say. She has had all the light that I can give her, and it is useless to keep this matter constantly before her when she is perfectly decided to follow her own judgment. You asked me if I thought, if your wife left you, that you should marry again. I would say [that] if one understanding all the circumstances should choose to marry you, if you had not been married, I see no objections. But I am not fully prepared to give any judgment, whether in a Bible point of view you could marry again. [The individual addressed was a eunuch.] My mind is so fully occupied that it is not possible for me to consider this vexed question of marriage and divorces. I wish I could help you, but that, I fear, is not possible.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 13, p. 296.



## 5. A LIFELONG BOND

- a. To those that know the law, how long does a couple remain married and why is the marriage vow so firm? Romans 7:1–3; Deuteronomy 23:21, 22.

“In the youthful mind, marriage is clothed with romance, and it is difficult to divest it of this feature, with which imagination covers it, and to impress the mind with a sense of the weighty responsibilities involved in the marriage vow. This vow links the destinies of the two individuals with bonds which nought but the hand of death should sever.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 507.

- b. How does the reaction of the disciples solidify the idea that marriage is for life—and why do we need to take such a position today? Matthew 19:10–12.
- c. What is needed to keep the family together? Romans 5:20.

“The grace of Christ, and this alone, can make this institution what God designed it should be—an agent for the blessing and uplifting of humanity. And thus the families of earth, in their unity and peace and love, may represent the family of heaven.

“Now, as in Christ’s day, the condition of society presents a sad comment upon heaven’s ideal of this sacred relation. Yet even for those who have found bitterness and disappointment where they had hoped for companionship and joy, the gospel of Christ offers a solace. The patience and gentleness which His Spirit can impart will sweeten the bitter lot. The heart in which Christ dwells will be so filled, so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to attract sympathy and attention to itself. And through the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do. Through the revelation of His grace, hearts that were once indifferent or estranged may be united in bonds that are firmer and more enduring than those of earth—the golden bonds of a love that will bear the test of trial.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 65.

# Friday

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is the marriage vow a covenant for life?
2. Why does God hate divorce?
3. Why does God give some permissions after He explicitly has stated His law?
4. Why is remarriage while both parties are still alive considered adultery?
5. Why and how do we need to keep families together?

# The Joy of the Lord

**MEMORY TEXT:** “Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. . . . Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit” (Psalm 51:8, 12).

“God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain. In all that He does, He has the well-being of His children in view.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 46.

**Suggested Reading:** *Steps to Christ*, pp. 115–126.

*Sunday*

*December 17*

## 1. OBEYING WITH JOY

- a. What type of obedience does God accept, and why? Deuteronomy 28:45–47.

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“True religion brings man into harmony with the laws of God, physical, mental, and moral. It teaches self-control, serenity, temperance. Religion ennobles the mind, refines the taste, and sanctifies the judgment. It makes the soul a partaker of the purity of heaven. Faith in God’s love and overruling providence lightens the burdens of anxiety and care. It fills the heart with joy and contentment in the highest or the lowliest lot. Religion tends directly to promote health, to lengthen life, and to heighten our enjoyment of all its blessings. It opens to the soul a never-failing fountain of happiness.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 600.

“Would that all who have not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them than they are seeking for themselves. Man is doing the greatest injury and injustice to his own soul when he thinks and acts contrary to the will of God. No real joy can be found in the path forbidden by Him who knows what is best and who plans for the good of His creatures. The path of transgression is the path of misery and destruction.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 46.

“God longs to pour upon men and women the rich current of His love. He longs to see them delighting to do His will, using every jot of their entrusted powers in His service, teaching all who come within the sphere of their influence that the way to be treated as righteous for Christ’s sake is to obey the law.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 81.

## 2. NATURAL RESULTS

- a. How is obedience linked to joy? John 14:15; 15:10, 11; Proverbs 21:15.

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“In the path of obedience and duty there is contentment and even joy.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 98.

“The principle of worldlings is to get all they can of the perishable things of this life. Selfish love of gain is the ruling principle in their lives. But the purest joy is not found in riches nor where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns and where self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle. There are thousands who are passing their lives in indulgence and whose hearts are filled with repining. They are victims of selfishness and discontent in the vain effort to satisfy their minds with indulgence. But unhappiness is stamped upon their very countenances, and behind them is a desert, because their course is not fruitful in good works.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 382.

“Real happiness is found only in being good and doing good. The purest, highest enjoyment comes to those who faithfully fulfill their appointed duties. No honest work is degrading. It is ignoble sloth which leads human beings to look down on the simple, everyday duties of life. The refusal to perform these duties causes a mental and moral deficiency which will one day be keenly felt. At some time in the life of the slothful his deformity will stand out clearly defined. Over his life-record is written the words, A consumer, but not a producer.”—*Messages to Young People*, pp. 210, 211.

“Have there not been some bright spots in your experience? Have you not had some precious seasons when your heart throbbed with joy in response to the Spirit of God? When you look back into the chapters of your life experience do you not find some pleasant pages? Are not God’s promises, like the fragrant flowers, growing beside your path on every hand? Will you not let their beauty and sweetness fill your heart with joy?”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 117.

- b. Explain the Christian’s attitude. Romans 12:8 (last part); Nehemiah 8:10.

“It is often said that Jesus wept, but that He was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, for He opened His heart to all the woes of men. But though His life was self-denying and shadowed with pain and care, His spirit was not crushed. His countenance did not wear an expression of grief and repining, but ever one of peaceful serenity. His heart was a wellspring of life, and wherever He went He carried rest and peace, joy and gladness.”—*Ibid.*, p. 120.

### 3. WORKING WITH JOY

- a. What did God provide in the perfection of Eden to make our first parents happy? Genesis 2:8, 15.
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“To the dwellers in Eden was committed the care of the garden, ‘to dress it and to keep it.’ Their occupation was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. God appointed labor as a blessing to man, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body, and to develop his faculties. In mental and physical activity Adam found one of the highest pleasures of his holy existence. And when, as a result of his disobedience, he was driven from his beautiful home, and forced to struggle with a stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor, although widely different from his pleasant occupation in the garden, was a safeguard against temptation and a source of happiness. Those who regard work as a curse, attended though it be with weariness and pain, are cherishing an error. The rich often look down with contempt upon the working classes, but this is wholly at variance with God’s purpose in creating man. . . . Our Creator, who understands what is for man’s happiness, appointed Adam his work. The true joy of life is found only by the working men and women. The angels are diligent workers; they are the ministers of God to the children of men. The Creator has prepared no place for the stagnating practice of indolence.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 50.

- b. What did Jesus come to do in this world and what reaction did that work have on Him? Luke 19:10; 15:5–7.
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“In a little while we are to meet our Lord; and what account shall we have to give Him of the use we have made of our time, our talents of influence, and our possessions? Our joy should be in the work of saving souls.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 481.

“Those who give their lives to Christlike ministry know the meaning of true happiness. Their interests and their prayers reach far beyond self. They themselves are growing as they try to help others. They become familiar with the largest plans, the most stirring enterprises, and how can they but grow when they place themselves in the divine channel of light and blessing? Such ones receive wisdom from heaven. They become more and more identified with Christ in all His plans. There is no opportunity for spiritual stagnation. Selfish ambition and self-seeking are rebuked by constant contact with the absorbing interests, the elevated aspirations, which belong to high and holy activities.”—*Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 42.

#### 4. SUFFERING WITH JOY

- a. **What can we expect in this world as a result of our Christian walk, how should that make us feel—and why?** 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

“To be tried and tested is a part of our moral discipline. Here we may learn the most valuable lessons, and obtain the most precious graces, if we will draw near to God, and endure all in His strength.”—*Life Sketches*, pp. 265, 266.

“The bright and cheerful side of our religion will be represented by all who are daily consecrated to God. We should not dishonor God by the mournful relation of trials that appear grievous. All trials that are received as educators will produce joy. The whole religious life will be uplifting, elevating, ennobling, fragrant with good words and works.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 365, 366.

- b. **How should we react when we suffer for something we do not deserve to suffer for, and what sustains us in this warfare?** 1 Peter 2:20; Hebrews 12:2.
- c. **What should we remember in our darkest moments—and why?** John 16:20; Romans 8:28; Deuteronomy 33:25; Psalm 126:5.

“We cannot afford to let our spirits chafe over any real or supposed wrong done to ourselves. Self is the enemy we most need to fear. . . .

“We should not allow our feelings to be easily wounded. We are to live, not to guard our feelings or our reputation, but to save souls. As we become interested in the salvation of souls we cease to mind the little differences that so often arise in our association with one another.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 485.

“As those who stand in the forefront of the battle see that the special warfare of Satan is directed against them, they will realize their need of strength from God, and they will labor in His strength. The victories that they gain will not exalt them, but will cause them to lean more securely upon the Mighty One. Deep and fervent gratitude to God will spring up in their hearts, and they will be joyful in the tribulation that comes to them while pressed by the enemy.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 266.

“You may be perplexed in business; your prospects may grow darker and darker, and you may be threatened with loss; but do not become discouraged; cast your care upon God, and remain calm and cheerful. Pray for wisdom to manage your affairs with discretion, and thus prevent loss and disaster. Do all you can on your part to bring about favorable results. Jesus has promised His aid, but not apart from our effort. When, relying upon our Helper, you have done all you can, accept the result cheerfully.”—*Steps to Christ*, p. 122.

## 5. GIVING WITH JOY

- a. What is a simple principle of investment? Matthew 13:8, 44; Luke 6:38.

“A continual imparting of God’s gifts wherever the cause of God or the needs of humanity demand our aid, does not tend to poverty. . . . The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God’s gifts. By imparting they increase their blessings.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 345.

- b. How important is the act of giving? Malachi 3:8–11; 2 Corinthians 8:1–3.

“The willingness to sacrifice on the part of the Macedonian believers came as a result of wholehearted consecration. . . . They rejoiced in the privilege of denying themselves even of necessary things in order to supply the needs of others. When the apostle would have restrained them, they importuned him to accept their offering. In their simplicity and integrity, and in their love for the brethren, they gladly denied self, and thus abounded in the fruit of benevolence.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 343, 344.

“The plan of redemption was entirely voluntary on the part of our Redeemer, and it is the purpose of Christ that all our benevolence should be freewill offerings.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 413.

- c. What kind of gifts are acceptable to God? 2 Corinthians 9:7.

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“[God] is not pleased to have His treasury replenished with forced supplies. The loyal hearts of His people, rejoicing in the saving truth for this time, will, through love and gratitude to Him for this precious light, be earnest and anxious to aid with their means in sending the truth to others.”—*Ibid.*

“The Christian will be filled with joy in proportion as he is a faithful steward of his Lord’s goods.”—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 136.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why is happy obedience a part of Christianity?
2. How do we find real happiness?
3. What role does useful employment have in satisfaction and happiness?
4. Upon what condition only do trials bring joy?
5. Why is it important to have a giving attitude?

# Developing a Pure Conscience

**MEMORY TEXT:** “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:14).

“Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God’s promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 600.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Great Controversy*, pp. 197–210.

*Sunday*

*December 24*

## 1. THE BASIS OF FAITH

a. What is the basis of the Christian’s faith? 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

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

“In the golden censer of truth, as presented in Christ’s teachings, we have that which will convict and convert souls. Present, in the simplicity of Christ, the truths that He came to this world to proclaim, and the power of your message will make itself felt. Do not present theories or tests that Christ has never mentioned and that have no foundation in the Bible. We have grand, solemn truths to present. ‘It is written’ is the test that must be brought home to every soul.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, p. 300.

b. What is necessary in connection with diligent Bible study? Matthew 26:41; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

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## 2. COMMITMENT

- a. **What is necessary in order to have a genuine Christian experience? James 4:7 (first part); Luke 9:23.**

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“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.

“Battles are to be fought every day. A great warfare is going on over every soul, between the prince of darkness and the Prince of life.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 19, 1892.

“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. . . . But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not cooperate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 324.

- b. **To what extent is this commitment to be maintained? Revelation 2:10.**

“Said . . . [one] of the princes [at the Diet of Spires in Germany in 1529] as he took the pen: ‘If the honor of my Lord Jesus Christ requires it, I am ready . . . to leave my goods and life behind.’ ‘I would rather renounce my subjects and my states, rather quit the country of my fathers staff in hand,’ he continued, ‘than receive any other doctrine than that which is contained in this Confession’. . . . Such was the faith and daring of those men of God.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 207.

“Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. The prevalence of a sinful desire shows the delusion of the soul. Every indulgence of that desire strengthens the soul’s aversion to God. The pains of duty and the pleasures of sin are the cords with which Satan binds men in his snares. Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 53.



### 3. RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY

a. How are we to treat governmental authority and why? Hebrews 13:17; Romans 13:1–7; Daniel 2:20, 21.

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b. What are all who have ruling authority to do with that responsibility? 1 Corinthians 11:1.

“David’s power had been given him by God, but to be exercised only in harmony with the divine law. When he commanded that which was contrary to God’s law, it became sin to obey. ‘The powers that be are ordained of God’ (Romans 13:1), but we are not to obey them contrary to God’s law. The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, sets forth the principle by which we should be governed. He says, ‘Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.’ 1 Corinthians 11:1.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 719.

c. Does that authority extend to a person’s conscience—that is, their relationship with God? Acts 5:28, 29; 23:1; 24:16.

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“[When testifying at Worms, Martin Luther] the Reformer answered: ‘Since your most serene majesty and your high mightinesses require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the word of God, *I cannot and I will not retract*, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen.’ ”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 160.

“‘In matters of conscience the majority has no power’. . . . To protect liberty of conscience is the duty of the state, and this is the limit of its authority in matters of religion. Every secular government that attempts to regulate or enforce religious observances by civil authority is sacrificing the very principle for which the evangelical Christian so nobly struggled.”—*Ibid.*, p. 201.

“Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate, and the authority of the word of God above the visible church.”—*Ibid.*, p. 204.

“Conscience is the voice of God, heard amid the conflict of human passions; when it is resisted, the Spirit of God is grieved.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 120.

# 4. THE CONSCIENCE

## a. Can we always trust our conscience? Titus 1:15; 2 Timothy 4:1, 2.

“One says, ‘My conscience does not condemn me in not keeping the commandments of God.’ But in the Word of God we read that there are good and bad consciences, and the fact that your conscience does not condemn you in not keeping the law of God does not prove that you are uncondemned in His sight.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, p. 323.

“My brother, your soul must be quickened and your faith enlarged. You have so long excused yourself in your disobedience on one plea or another that your conscience has been lulled to rest and ceases to remind you of your errors. You have so long followed your own convenience in regard to keeping the Sabbath that your mind has been rendered unimpressible as to your course of disobedience; yet you are none the less responsible, for you have brought yourself into this condition. Begin at once to obey the divine commandments, and trust in God. Provoke not His wrath, lest He visit you with terrible punishment. Return to Him before it is too late, and find pardon for your transgressions. He is rich and abundant in mercies; He will give you His peace and approbation if you come to Him in humble faith.”—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 254.

## b. What did God miraculously insert in order to help our conscience? Genesis 3:15; John 1:9.

“When Adam and Eve were placed in the garden of Eden, they were innocent and sinless, in perfect harmony with God. Enmity had no natural existence in their hearts. But when they transgressed, their nature was no longer sinless. They became evil; for they had placed themselves on the side of the fallen foe, doing the very things that God specified they should not do. Had there been no interference on the part of God, man would have formed a firm alliance with Satan against heaven. . . .

Satan knew that although he had succeeded in making human beings sin, although he had led them to believe his lie, and to question God, although he had succeeded in depraving human nature, some arrangement had been made whereby the beings who had fallen would be placed on vantage ground, their nature renewed in godliness. . . .

“In the statement, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed,’ God pledged Himself to introduce into the hearts of human beings a new principle—a hatred of sin, of deception, of pretense, of everything that bears the marks of Satan’s guile.”—*Special Testimonies, Series B*, No. 2, p. 6.

## 5. THE CONSCIENCE TO BE EDUCATED

- a. Is it possible to have a good conscience? 1 Timothy 1:18, 19; 3:9.

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“With your Bibles open before you consult sanctified reason and a good conscience. Your heart must be moved, your soul touched, your reason and intellect awakened, by the Spirit of God; the holy principles laid down in His word will give light to the soul. I tell you, my brethren, our true source of wisdom and virtue and power is in the cross of Calvary. Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith. He says, ‘Without Me ye can do nothing.’ Jesus is the only sure guarantee for intellectual success and advancement.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 99.

- b. How does one obtain a pure conscience? Hebrews 9:14.

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“Take your conscience to the Word of God and see if your life and character are in accordance with the standard of righteousness which God has there revealed. You can then determine whether or not you have an intelligent faith and what manner of conscience is yours. The conscience of man cannot be trusted unless it is under the influence of divine grace. Satan takes advantage of an unenlightened conscience, and thereby leads men into all manner of delusions, because they have not made the Word of God their counselor. Many have invented a gospel of their own in the same manner as they have substituted a law of their own for God’s law.

“It is not enough for a man to think himself safe in following the dictates of his conscience. . . . The question to be settled is, Is the conscience in harmony with the Word of God? If not, it cannot safely be followed, for it will deceive. The conscience must be enlightened by God. Time must be given to a study of the Scriptures and to prayer. Thus the mind will be established, strengthened, and settled.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 1, pp. 323, 324.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do we establish the Christian faith in our lives?
2. Why is submission the crux of Christianity?
3. What are the limits to governmental and religious authority?
4. What is necessary in order to guide our conscience?
5. How do we develop a good conscience?

# First Sabbath Offerings



**OCTOBER 7**

for the headquarters of the  
Southwestern Field,  
Medellín, Colombia  
(see p. 4.)

**NOVEMBER 4**

for Sabbath Bible Lessons  
for Missions  
(see p. 25.)



**DECEMBER 2**

for the Chapel Renovation in  
Belém, SP, Brazil  
(see p. 46.)