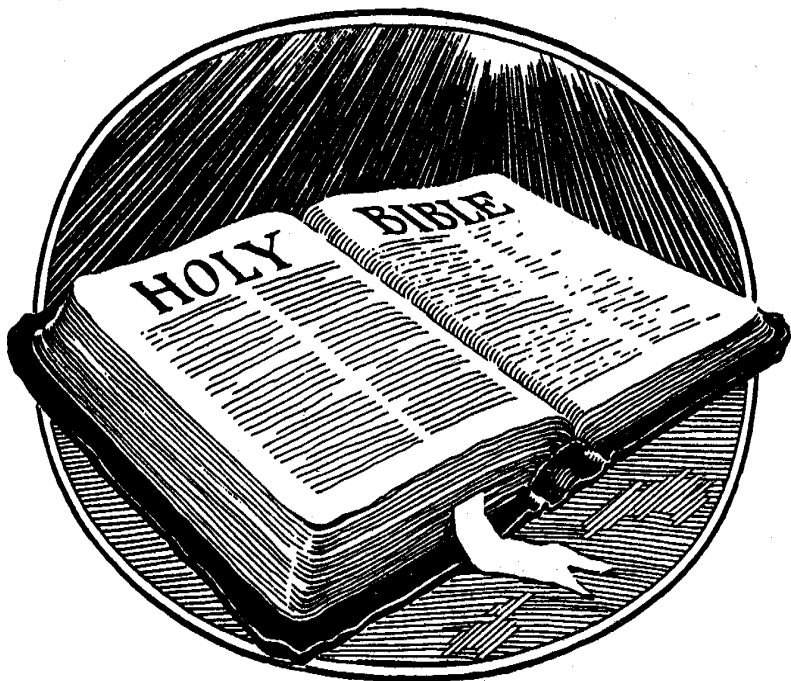


THE GOD of the Bible



Lesson Study Guides for April 1– June 29

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CONTENTS

1. The importance of a correct concept of God	1
2. The identity of God	8
3. Discovering God	15
4. The sovereignty of God	22
5. Experiencing God	29
6. The attributes of God	36
7. The character of God	43
8. The government of God	50
9. The fatherhood of God	57
10. God in The Sanctuary	64
11. The doctrine of God in The Last Days	71
12. The gifts of God	78
13. The revelation of God	85

These lessons focus on the subject of the God of the Bible. A proper understanding of this subject is fundamental to a genuine Christian experience, and we feel that there is a great need of information on this topic in light of the fact that there is so much confusion presently floating about regarding the subject.

These studies are not intended to be a comprehensive examination of the biblical doctrine of God. Many large volumes would not be sufficient to do justice to such a subject. However, there are many persons who are presently involved in an earnest search to find a deeper and more perfect understanding of God as He has revealed Himself, with the desire to serve Him more faithfully and to be in more complete harmony with His will. Some of these persons have been involved in this search for several years, some have just begun to study and to search. We believe that both classes can be blessed by the use of these lessons and we trust that in the providence of God they may be a means of helping us all to make a more perfect preparation for the crisis of the last days, and to live with our God for all eternity.

We are aware that there are probably several glitches and things which could have been done better, but we ask you to bear with our mistakes and we trust that the good will outweigh the bad.

Blessings,

David Clayton

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CORRECT CONCEPT OF GOD

All religions are an effort of mankind to find God. Each religion will either elevate, or degrade those who embrace it in proportion to its concept of God. As religion comes closer to the truth concerning the true God it will be found that its followers become more pure in character, more noble and upright in behaviour.

This is the basic reason why all false religion is hateful to God. It places men in a position where it is im*possible for them to develop pure and holy characters or to enjoy true happiness. This fact becomes evident as we examine the various religions existing in the world today.

Many claim that it does not matter what our concept of God is, as long as we believe in some kind of God. This is very dangerous thinking. It is impossible to know God, unless we have a correct concept of who He is.

“To know God as He is--this is the science of all goodness and truth and righteousness.” – *The Upward Look*, p.347

LESSON STUDY RECORD

<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday
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PART 1: OUR THEOLOGY MUST BE CORRECT

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. Jer 9:23,24

The history of mankind will show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man's spiritual history will demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God. Worship is pure or corrupt as the worshipper entertains high or low thoughts of God. For this reason the most important question before the Christian is the question of God Himself. Who is He, and what kind of Person is He?

"It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature, that by beholding, we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence." –*The Great Controversy, p.555*

What fault did God find with the Jews' concept of Him during the time of the prophet Asaph? Psalm 50:21

Among the sins to which the human heart is prone, hardly any other is more hateful to God than idolatry. The idolatrous heart assumes that God is other than He is, and substitutes for the true God one made after its own likeness. This god will resemble the image of the one who created it and will be evil or good, cruel or kind, according to the moral state of the mind from which it emerges. A god begotten in the shadows of a fallen heart will quite naturally be no true likeness of the true God.

What is the root reason why men eventually end up worshipping a false and degrading concept of God? Rom 1:21–23

When men refuse to acknowledge and reverence God as He reveals Himself to them, the end result is that they create a God in their own image.

"From the beginning it has been Satan's studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of Him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself,—as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving,...

By sin the minds of our first parents were darkened, their natures were degraded, and their conceptions of God were molded by their own narrowness and selfishness." – *Testimonies for The Church vol.5, p. 738*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The most significant fact about any man is what he in his heart conceives God to be like.

Part 2: THAT OUR FAITH MAY BE CORRECT

To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? (Isa 40:18)

“There is comfort and peace in the truth, but no real peace or comfort can be found in falsehood. It is through false theories and traditions that Satan gains his power over the mind. By directing men to false standards, he misshapes the character. Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the heart. Thus He exposes error, and expels it from the soul. It is by the Spirit of truth, working through the word of God, that Christ subdues His chosen people to Himself.” – *Desire of Ages*, p. 671

How may we obtain a right concept of God? Hosea 6:3

“The Lord bids you to come up higher, to reach a holier standard. You must have an experience much deeper than you have yet even thought of having. Many who are already members of God’s great family know little of what it means to behold His glory, and to be changed from glory to glory. Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ’s excellence, and your souls thrill with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour’s love. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart’s best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings. You have seen by the first rays of the early dawn of His glory. As you follow on to know the Lord, you will know that His going forth is prepared as the morning.” -- *Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 318

How did Jesus emphasize the importance of having correct knowledge? John 17:3

“In His prayer to the Father, Christ gave to the world a lesson which should be graven on mind and soul. “This is life eternal,” He said, “that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” John 17:3. This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe.

This is the knowledge which is obtained by searching the word of God. And this treasure may be found by every soul who will give all to obtain it.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 114

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Nothing but a true knowledge of God will enable us to have a right relationship with Him.

Part 3: THAT OUR WORSHIP MAY BE CORRECT

(John 4:23-24) But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. (24) God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

"...God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being, for man was made in His image. As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son. Jesus, the outshining of the Father's glory, "and the express image of His person" (Hebrews 1:3), was on earth found in fashion as a man. As a personal Savior He came to the world. As a personal Savior He ascended on high. As a personal Savior He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers "One like the Son of man." Daniel 7:13.

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship him in spirit and in truth." *Education, p. 131*

How does God feel about the worship of false gods? Isa. 42:8

The day has come when there are lords many and gods many, and Satan has purposed to interpose himself between God and the human soul, so that men shall not give homage to God in keeping his law. Satan has wrapped about him garments of angelic brightness, ... God is so misrepresented to him that he cares not to retain the true and living Father in his knowledge, but turns to the worship of false gods. He knows not that the love of God is without a parallel, yet Christ has revealed that love to a fallen world. John calls upon the world to behold the wondrous love of God, saying, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." — *Review & Herald, March 9, 1897*

For what did Christ teach us to pray in anticipation of that time when the purposes of God shall be finally accomplished and the universe restored to its rightful state? Matt. 6:10

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

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Our worship will never satisfy our Creator until our worship is in harmony with His revealed truth.

Part 4: THAT OUR CHARACTERS MAY BE RIGHT

They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. (Psa 115:8)

“Like our Saviour, we are in this world to do service for God. We are here to become like God in character, and by a life of service to reveal Him to the world. In order to be co-workers with God, in order to become like Him and to reveal His character, we must know Him aright. We must know Him as He reveals Himself.

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. It is this alone that can make us like God in character.

This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come.

“The knowledge of the Holy is understanding.” Proverbs 9:10. — *Ministry of Healing*, p. 409

What ignorance on the part of the Jews led to their attempt to stone Christ? John 8:54,55

Ignorance of the true nature and character of God made it impossible for the unbelieving Jews to appreciate or to understand the works of Christ. His every deed, though being the perfect work of God irritated them and stirred up their enmity because it was so contrary to their own nature and principles. They had become so accustomed to the false concept of God which they had manufactured in their own minds that the pure holy deeds and words of the Son of God appeared to them to be the greatest blasphemy.

The popular motivational speaker, Earl Nightingale once said, “ We become like what we think about most of the time.” In saying this, he was merely rephrasing the great rule of life stated by both the Bible and Ellen White. “*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*” (2 Cor 3:18)

“It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature, that by beholding, we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted.” — *Great Controversy*, p. 555

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Our characters will always reflect the image of whatever we fix our gaze upon.

Part 5: THAT OUR BEHAVIOUR MAY BE RIGHT

They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. (John 16:2,3)

“Men think they are representing the justice of God, and they do not represent His tenderness and the great love wherewith He has loved us. Their human inventions, originating with the specious devices of Satan, appear fair enough to the blinded eyes of men, because it is inherent in their nature. A lie, believed, practiced, becomes as truth to them. Thus the purpose of the satanic agencies is accomplished, that men should reach these conclusions through the working of their own inventive minds. But how do men fall into such error? By starting with false premises, and then bringing everything to bear to make the error true. In some cases the first principles have a measure of truth interwoven with the error, but it does not lead to any just action, and this is why men are misled. In order to reign and become a power, they employ Satan's methods to justify their own principles. They exalt themselves as men of superior judgment, and they have stood as representatives of God. These are false gods.” – *The Publishing Ministry p. 127*

What critical quality characteristic of God's faithful people in the past, will characterize the remnant who face the final crisis on the earth? Daniel 11:32

“Only by knowing God here can we prepare to meet him at his coming. "This is life eternal," said Christ, "that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." But many of those who profess to believe in Christ do not know God. They have only a surface religion.” – *RH, July 20, 1897*

What action of Jehphthah demonstrates that his understanding of God's character was faulty? Judges 11:30-35)

Did God require Jephthah to carry out his vow in sacrificing his only daughter? Jephthah was a sincere man and obviously meant to serve God faithfully. On the other hand God specifically forbade the offering of human sacrifice and made it clear that it was not His will that people should kill one another. Jephthah was faithful in carrying out his vow, but had he understood the true nature of God's character he would have known that such an act was contrary to the will of God.

The last generation of God's people on this earth will develop characters which reflect the character of God. This will never become a reality as long as God's people continue to harbour faulty ideas concerning Him.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Every evil act is the result of men either being ignorant of what God is like, or a result of refusing to believe the truth about God.

Part 6: THAT OUR WITNESS MAY BE RIGHT

Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. (Psa 46:10)

"It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.

This is the work outlined by the prophet Isaiah in the words, "O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Isa. 40:9,10.

Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "Behold your God." ***The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love.*** The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them." – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 415-6*

What promise of God reveals His deepest desire for the earth, as well as the essence of the message which his people must bear to the world? Isaiah 11:9

The love of God is to be revealed to the world. God's character in all its beauty is yet to be manifested through His people. Is it possible that this is the real reason why the Lord has not yet returned? Have we been unable to understand, and therefore to manifest that character because we have been blinded by false concepts of God? When we understand this then we will realise that our first and most important work is to obtain a true knowledge of God such as is revealed in His word. "*For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.*" (Rom 8:19 NRSV)

"A revival in Bible study is needed throughout the world. Attention is to be called, not to the assertions of men, but to the Word of God. As this is done, a mighty work will be wrought. When God declared that His Word should not return unto Him void, He meant all that He said. The gospel is to be preached to all nations. The Bible is to be opened to the people. A knowledge of God is the highest education, and it will cover the earth with its wonderful truth as the waters cover the sea." -- Manuscript 139, 1898." – *Evangelism, p 456*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

"When the character of Christ shall be fully reproduced in His people then He will come to claim them as His own" (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 69)

THE IDENTITY OF GOD

In this lesson we focus on the question of God's identity. When the Bible speaks of God, does it mean a particular Person? If so, who is He? Is the Bible vague or uncertain in identifying God or may we have a clear and definite understanding on the basis of what the Bible says?

It seems obvious that if we are ever to have a true knowledge of God, then the first thing that we need to do is to know who God is. Surprisingly there are many Christians who declare that it is not really necessary to be able to identify precisely who God is. This, in spite of the fact that God has clearly identified Himself in His word in such a way that it is impossible to mistake His identity.

Just as we could never have a really personal and close relationship with our children if we kept mixing them up and thinking one was the other, so we can never have a personal and intimate relationship with God until we are absolutely certain of His personality and identity.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

Sunday**Wednesday****Monday****Thursday****Tuesday****Friday**

PART 1: GOD IS A PERSONAL BEING

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. (Mat 18:10)

"When Adam came from the Creator's hand, he bore, in his physical, mental, and spiritual nature, a likeness to his Maker. "God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27) – *Education p. 15*

What are the qualities which a person possesses?

The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defines the word "person" as "*individual human or divine being.*" Webster's New World dictionary defines the word in the following way: "*a human being, esp. as distinguished from a thing or lower animal; individual man, woman, or child: now usually pluralized as people, which formerly was used only to indicate an indefinite number of persons; personality; self; being.*"

A person then is an individual who has a personality, or who is a being. There is also the qualification that a person is a being of a higher form of existence than the lower animals.

What evidence is there that God is a Person? Genesis 6:6; Psalm 103:13

"He who denies the personality of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, is denying God and Christ. "If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." If you continue to believe and obey the truths you first embraced regarding the personality of the Father and the Son, you will be joined together with him in love. There will be seen that union for which Christ prayed just before his trial and crucifixion." – *Review & Herald, March 8, 1906.*

"It was the Maker of all things who ordained the wonderful adaptation of means to end, of supply to need. It was He who in the material world provided that every desire implanted should be met. It was He who created the human soul, with its capacity for knowing and for loving. And He is not in Himself such as to leave the demands of the soul unsatisfied. No intangible principle, no impersonal essence or mere abstraction, can satisfy the needs and longings of human beings in this life of struggle with sin and sorrow and pain. It is not enough to believe in law and force, in things that have no pity, and never hear the cry for help. We need to know of an almighty arm that will hold us up, of an infinite Friend that pities us. We need to clasp a hand that is warm, to trust in a heart full of tenderness. And even so God has in His word revealed Himself." – *Education p. 133*

p. 422

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Because God is a Person we are able to have a personal relationship with Him, as real and as close as we may have with any human being.

Part 2: GOD IS AN INDIVIDUAL

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: (Deu 6:4)

Three of the major religions in the world, Christianity, Judaism and Islam, insist that there is only one God. All three religions have roots in the Old Testament Scriptures and all base their concept of God to a great extent on the revelations of the Old Testament. Islam and Judaism however, insist that God is an individual, a single Person, while the majority of Christendom today insists that God is not an individual, but is rather an entity composed of three separate parts or Persons, all of whom are God.

How many individuals are referred to, and worshipped as God in heaven? Rev. 4:2,9,10; 5:13; 7:10

While many persons on earth are confused about the identity of God, the beings in heaven have no such problem. Over and over in the Bible we are given glimpses of scenes in heaven in which heavenly beings worship and praise God. Consistently, there is only one Person who is called God. A group of persons is never called God, or worshipped as God. Even Jesus Christ, who receives glory, praise and honour forever and ever, is clearly identified by terms which distinguish Him from the individual called God. He is referred to as "The Lamb," and "The Lord's Christ," "The Word of God," and similar terms. God, is clearly a particular individual clearly distinguishable from every other being in the universe, not excepting Jesus Christ.

How does the Bible describe God's individuality? Mark 12:32; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph. 4:6

Jesus loved to refer to God as our Father. It was His favourite term for God. It was also the term by which He addressed God. Here again we see clearly that Jesus did not regard God as consisting of several persons. God is not our "Fathers", but rather, our "Father which art in heaven."

"In His wisdom the Saviour teaches us to approach God with the confidence of a child. He instructs us to call Jehovah by the endearing name of "Father," that we may not separate from Him in awe and coldness. Constantly He points us to the emblems of fatherly love, seeking to encourage faith and confidence in God. He pleads with us to have a correct idea of the Father. He throws back the accusation of the enemy, declaring, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." He would have the memorials of redeeming grace arrest our attention, that we may know that all the goodness, mercy, patience, forbearance, seen in Him, belong to God." – *Signs of the Times, January 20, 1898*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Does our worship here on earth correspond to the worship of heaven? Does the God we worship have the same identity as the Being recognized as God in heaven?

Part 3: GOD IS UNIVERSALLY PRESENT

(Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. (Jer 23:24)

"Oh, how little man can comprehend the perfection of God, His Omnipresence united with His almighty power. ...

I am afraid we have altogether too cheap and common ideas. "Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee." Let not any one venture to limit the power of the Holy One of Israel. There are conjectures and questions in regard to God's work. Take off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." —*Selected Messages Book 3, p. 311*

What declarations of the Bible suggests that God is present in all places? Psa 139:7; 2 Chr 6:18

"The psalmist represents the presence of the Infinite One as pervading the universe. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." We can never find a solitude where God is not.

The Lord God omnipotent, who reigneth in the heavens, declares, "I am with you." He assures His people that those who are obedient are in a position where He can bless them, to the glory of His name. . . . He will be a present help to all who serve Him in preference to serving self." — *The Faith I Live By, p. 62*

Is God Himself personally with us, or is someone else here with us, representing Him?

"Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all.... In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." 1 Cor. 3:16, 17. — *The Faith I live By, p. 192*

God's word tells us that He numbers the hairs or our heads (Matt. 10:30), He knows our thoughts afar off (Ps. 139:2), that He sees every bird that falls (Matt. 10:29), that before we call He will answer (Isa. 65:24). All these declarations speak to us of a God who is universally present, in constant personal touch with every part of His creation.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Is God Himself personally with us, or does He only interact with us by means of other beings such as angels?

Part 4: GOD IS A SPIRIT

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; (Acts 17:24)

“The heavens are not large enough to contain God; how much less could those temples made with hands contain him. Paul, under the inspiration of his subject, soared above the comprehension of the idolatrous assembly, and sought to draw their minds beyond the limits of their false religion to correct views of the true Deity, whom they had styled the "Unknown God." This Being, whom he now declared unto them, was independent of man, needing nothing from human hands to add to his power and glory.” – *Sketches From The Life of Paul*, p. 94

“Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honors with His presence the assemblies of His people. He has promised that when they come together to seek Him, to acknowledge their sins, and to pray for one another, He will meet with them by His Spirit.

When Christ ascended to heaven, the sense of His presence was still with His followers. It was a personal presence, full of love and light.” – *The Faith I Live By*, p. 62

What did Jesus declare concerning the nature of God? John 4:24

The woman that Jesus met by Jacob's well was confused concerning the nature of God. Her concept of God made Him into a Being who was limited to certain times and places. Her question as to whether or not Jerusalem or Samaria was the correct place to worship revealed her ideas that God was available only in certain places and only to certain people. Jesus statement revealed not only the true nature of God, but also focused on the true nature of worship. God is not to be limited by the misconceptions of human minds, neither can He be considered to be the exclusive property of any nation, people or religious group. Worshipping God in spirit and in truth encompasses a realization of all these facts and an acknowledgement of them in our worship.

By what means is God personally present?

“The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. **By His Spirit He is everywhere present.** Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men.” – *Ministry of Healing* - p. 417

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Since God is a spirit, He must not be treated or regarded as one having the limitations of humanity. His worship cannot be limited to any particular place.

Part 5: GOD IS UNFATHOMABLE**Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? (Job 11:7)**

“No finite mind can fully comprehend the existence, the power, the wisdom, or the works of the Infinite One. Says the sacred writer: “Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” [JOB 11:7-9.] The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. Men may be ever searching, ever learning, and still there is an infinity beyond.” – *Christian Education*, p. 196

“If men could see for a moment beyond the range of finite vision, if they could catch a glimpse of the Eternal, every mouth would be stopped in its boasting. Men living in this little atom of a world are finite; God has unnumbered worlds that are obedient to His laws and are conducted with reference to His glory. When men have gone as far in scientific research as their limited powers will permit, there is still an infinity beyond what they can apprehend.” – *Counsels to Parents Teachers and Students*, p. 66

What fact must we acknowledge as we study to know more of God? Deut. 29:29

“The revelation of Himself that God has given in His word is for our study. This we may seek to understand. But beyond this we are not to penetrate. The highest intellect may tax itself until it is wearied out in conjectures regarding the nature of God; but the effort will be fruitless. This problem has not been given us to solve. No human mind can comprehend God. Let not finite man attempt to interpret Him. Let none indulge in speculation regarding His nature. Here silence is eloquence. The Omniscient One is above discussion.” – *Testimonies vol. 8*, p. 279

How much may we learn about God?

“Let none think that there is no more knowledge for them to gain. The depth of human intellect may be measured; the works of human authors may be mastered; but the highest, deepest, broadest flight of the imagination cannot find out God. There is infinity beyond all that we can comprehend. We have seen only the glimmering of divine glory and of the infinitude of knowledge and wisdom; we have, as it were, been working on the surface of the mine, when rich, golden ore is beneath the surface, to reward the one who will dig for it. The shaft must be sunk deeper and yet deeper in the mine, and the result will be glorious treasure. Through a correct faith divine knowledge will become human knowledge.” – *My Life Today*, p. 108

**KEY
THOUGHT****We may understand as much about God as He Himself has revealed. Beyond that we cannot go. All such speculations will lead to false ideas of God.**

Part 6: FALSE THEORIES OF GOD

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

Through the deceptive power of Satan men may seem to receive help by calling upon false gods. However, eternal life and happiness can come only from the true God.

How does pantheism keep men bound by sin's power?

"The theory that God is an essence pervading all nature is one of Satan's most subtle devices. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty. . . .

"There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature. This power the spiritualistic theories concerning God make of no effect. If God is an essence pervading all nature, then He dwells in all men; and in order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the power that is within him.

These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make man his own savior. These theories regarding God make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction." — *Testimonies for The Church, vol. 8, p. 291*

What was the main sin which led to the destruction of the antediluvian world? Gen. 6:5

"Not desiring to retain God in their knowledge, they soon came to deny His existence. They adored nature in place of the God of nature. They glorified human genius, worshiped the works of their own hands, and taught their children to bow down to graven images. . . .

Men put God out of their knowledge and worshiped the creatures of their own imagination; and as the result, they became more and more debased. ...Man will rise no higher than his conceptions of truth, purity, and holiness. If the mind is never exalted above the level of humanity, if it is not uplifted by faith to contemplate infinite wisdom and love, the man will be constantly sinking lower and lower. The worshipers of false gods clothed their deities with human attributes and passions, and thus their standard of character was degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity." — *Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 91*

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

The moral degradation evident in the world today is due to the fact that men have perverted ideas of God.

DISCOVERING GOD

The greatest purpose of life is the discovery of God. While it is true that we cannot “by searching find out God (Job 11:7), yet it is also true that God is eager to reveal Himself to everyone who is desirous of getting to know Him better. The great purpose of life will be better appreciated in the life to come when it will be realized that the whole purpose of man’s existence is to know God, and in knowing Him, to reveal Him to the universe.

“Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be opened to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here. But what is this compared with the hereafter? There "are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7:15-17. *The Desire of Ages, p.331-2*

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: HUMANITY'S GREATEST NEED

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: (24) But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (Jer 9:23-24)

"The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. This is the knowledge that works transformation of character. Received into the life, it will re-create the soul in the image of Christ. This is the knowledge that God invites His children to receive, beside which all else is vanity and nothingness." – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 475*

"This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. And the prophet Jeremiah declared: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23, 24. Scarcely can the human mind comprehend the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments of him who gains this knowledge. – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 531*

Why does man need God? John 15:5

"Man can accomplish nothing good without God. He is the originator of every ray of light that has pierced the darkness of the world. All that is of value comes from God, and belongs to him. There is a reason that the agents of the enemy sometimes display remarkable wisdom. Satan himself was educated and disciplined in the heavenly courts, and he has a knowledge of good as well as of evil. He mingles the precious with the vile, and this is what gives him his power of deceiving the sons of men. . . ." – *Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 99*

"Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character. Through the knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ, are given to the believer "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." No good gift is withheld from him who sincerely desires to obtain the righteousness of God." – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 530*

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

The purpose of man's existence is fellowship with God. This is what we were created for. Our greatest goal should be to fulfill that purpose,

Part 2: NATURE'S REVELATION

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. (Psa 19:1-3)

"No finite mind can fully comprehend the existence, the power, the wisdom, or the works of the Infinite One. . . . The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. Men may be ever searching, ever learning, and still there is an infinity beyond.

Yet the works of creation testify of God's power and greatness. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." [PS. 19:1.] Those who take the written word as their counselor, will find in science an aid to understand God." — *Christian Education*, p. 196

Why is it that nobody in the world can be excused for being ignorant of the basic facts concerning the existence and nature of God? Rom. 1:19-20

Nature testifies that One infinite in power, great in goodness, mercy, and love, created the earth, and filled it with life and gladness. Even in their blighted state, all things reveal the handiwork of the great Master Artist. Wherever we turn, we may hear the voice of God, and see evidences of His goodness.

From the solemn roll of the deep-toned thunder and old ocean's ceaseless roar, to the glad songs that make the forests vocal with melody, nature's ten thousand voices speak His praise. In earth and sea and sky, with their marvelous tint and color, varying in gorgeous contrast or blended in harmony, we behold His glory. The everlasting hills tell us of His power. The trees that wave their green banners in the sunlight, and the flowers in their delicate beauty, point to their Creator." — *Ministry of Healing*, p. 411

What limitations are there on nature's testimony concerning God?

"But while it is true that God could thus be discerned in nature, this does not favor the assertion that after the Fall a perfect knowledge of God was revealed in the natural world to Adam and his posterity. Nature could convey her lessons to man in his innocence; but transgression brought a blight upon nature, and intervened between nature and nature's God. Had Adam and Eve never disobeyed their Creator, had they remained in the path of perfect rectitude, they could have known and understood God. But when they listened to the voice of the tempter, and sinned against God, the light of the garments of heavenly innocence departed from them; and in parting with the garments of innocence, they drew about them the dark robes of ignorance of God." — *Selected Messages bk. 1*, p. 290

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In seeking to know God we should cultivate the habit of spending time with God in nature.

Part 3: HUMAN SPECULATIONS

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, (Rom 1:22)

"There are men who think they have made wonderful discoveries in science. They quote the opinions of learned men as though they considered them infallible and teach the deductions of science as truths that cannot be controverted. And the Word of God, which is given as a lamp to the feet of the world-weary traveler, is judged by this standard, and pronounced wanting.

"The scientific research in which these men have indulged has proved a snare to them. It has clouded their minds, and they have drifted into skepticism. They have a consciousness of power; and instead of looking to the Source of all wisdom, they triumph in the smattering of knowledge they may have gained. They have exalted their human wisdom in opposition to the wisdom of the great and mighty God, and have dared to enter into controversy with Him. The word of inspiration pronounces these men "fools." – *Selected Messages bk. 3, p.306*

What is the greatest source of errors concerning God? Mark 12:24

"Says the apostle, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." On every side we see men easily led captive by the delusive imaginations of those who make void the Word of God; but when the truth is brought before them, they are filled with impatience and anger. But the exhortation of the apostle to the servant of God is, "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." . . . – *Evangelism, p. 625*

What limitations are there on man's ideas concerning God? 1 Cor. 3:19

God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in discoveries in science and art; but when professedly scientific men lecture and write upon these subjects from a merely human standpoint, they will assuredly come to wrong conclusions. The greatest minds, if not guided by the Word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempts to investigate the relations of science and revelation. The Creator and His works are beyond their comprehension; and because they cannot explain these by natural laws, Bible history is considered unreliable. Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments, will be led to go a step farther, and doubt the existence of God; and then, having let go their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity. – *Selected Messages book 3, p. 307*

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

We can know only as much about God as He has revealed. Human speculations always lead to faulty concepts of God, and vanity in our worship.

Part 4: GOD'S REVELATION – THE BIBLE

The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." Deuteronomy 29:29

"The revelation of Himself that God has given in His word is for our study. This we may seek to understand. But beyond this we are not to penetrate. The highest intellect may tax itself until it is wearied out in conjectures regarding the nature of God, but the effort will be fruitless. This problem has not been given us to solve. No human mind can comprehend God. None are to indulge in speculation regarding His nature. Here silence is eloquence. The Omniscient One is above discussion." – *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 429

"Neither by searching the recesses of the earth nor in vain endeavors to penetrate the mysteries of God's being, is wisdom found. It is found, rather, in humbly receiving the revelation that He has been pleased to give, and in conforming the life to His will." – *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 431

What should be our attitude in studying the Bible? 2 Tim. 2:15

We should not take the testimony of any man as to what the Scriptures teach, but should study the word of God ourselves. If we allow others to do our thinking, we shall have crippled energies and contracted abilities. The noble powers of the mind may be so dwarfed by lack of exercise on themes worthy of their concentration as to lose their ability to grasp the deep meaning of the word of God. The mind will enlarge if it is employed in tracing out the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture, and spiritual things with spiritual. There is nothing more calculated to strengthen the intellect than the study of the Scriptures. No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God's word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that is rarely seen in these times." – *Christain Education* p. 58

"The knowledge of God as revealed in His word is the knowledge to be given to our children. From the earliest dawn of reason they should be made familiar with the name and the life of Jesus. Their first lessons should teach them that God is their Father. Their first training should be that of loving obedience. Reverently and tenderly let the word of God be read and repeated to them in portions suited to their comprehension and adapted to awaken their interest. And, above all, let them learn of His love revealed in Christ, and its great lesson:" – *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 460

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In the Bible God has spoken to us in human language. He expects us to believe and to live by His words.

Part 5: GOD'S REVELATION – JESUS CHRIST

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. (John 1:18)

"Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds

"The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship him in spirit and in truth. – *Christian Education*, p. 73

"In His lessons and His mighty works Christ is a perfect revelation of God. This Christ declares through the inspired evangelist. "No man hath seen God at any time," He says; "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." These words show the importance of studying Christ's character. Only by knowing Christ can we know God.

"Those who think they can obtain a knowledge of God aside from His Representative, whom the Word declares is "the express image of his person" (Heb. 1:3), will need to become fools in their own estimation before they can be wise. It is impossible to gain a perfect knowledge of God from nature alone; for nature itself is imperfect. . . . But Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. As a personal Saviour, He ascended on high; and He will come again as He ascended to heaven--a personal Saviour. He is the express image of the Father's person. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9)." – *Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 295

How perfectly has God revealed Himself in Jesus Christ? Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:6

So fully did Christ reveal the Father that the messengers sent by the Pharisees to take Him were charmed by His presence. . . . As they beheld the soft light of the glory of God that enshrouded His person, as they heard the gracious words that fell from His lips, they loved Him. And when . . . they were asked by the Pharisees, "Why have ye not brought him?" they answered, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:45, 46)." – *In Heavenly Places*, p. 250

What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God." – *That I May Know Him*, p. 38

**KEY
THOUGHT**

If we wish to know God as He is we must find Him in His revelation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Part 6: SEEKING GOD

Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. (Prov 2:3-5)

“ . . . From the soul that feels his need, nothing is withheld. He has unrestricted access to Him in whom all fullness dwells.” – *Desire of Ages, p. 300*

“The soul that loves God loves to draw strength from Him by constant communion with Him. When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken, for Satan cannot abide near the soul that draws nigh unto God. If Christ is your companion, you will not cherish vain and impure thoughts; you will not indulge in trifling words that will grieve Him who has come to be the sanctifier of your soul. . . .” – *That I May Know Him, p. 250*

“ . . . In these days of peril we need men who will wrestle with God as did Jacob and who, like Jacob, will prevail. Thank God that the world’s Redeemer promised that if He went away He would send the Holy Spirit as His representative. Let us pray and grasp the rich promises of God, and then praise God that in proportion to our earnest, humble supplications the Holy Spirit will be appointed to meet our needs. If we seek God with all our heart we shall find Him, and obtain the fulfillment of the promise.” – *That I May Know Him, p. 270*

What principles must we adopt as we seek God? Isa. 66:2; Jer. 29: 13

“Nothing is more essential to communion with God than the most profound humility. “I dwell,” says the High and Holy One, “with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.” While you are so eagerly striving to be first, remember that you will be last in the favor of God if you fail to cherish a meek and lowly spirit. Pride of heart will cause many to fail where they might have made a success. . . .

“ Few receive the grace of Christ with self-abasement, with a deep and permanent sense of their unworthiness. They cannot bear the manifestations of the power of God, for this would encourage in them self-esteem, pride, and envy. This is why the Lord can do so little for us now. . . .” – *Testimonies vol. 5, p. 50*

“We often sorrow because our evil deeds bring unpleasant consequences to ourselves; but this is not repentance. Real sorrow for sin is the result of the working of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit reveals the ingratitude of the heart that has slighted and grieved the Saviour, and brings us in contrition to the foot of the cross. By every sin Jesus is wounded afresh; and as we look upon Him whom we have pierced, we mourn for the sins that have brought anguish upon Him. Such mourning will lead to the renunciation of sin.” – *Desire of Ages, p. 300*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Have I experienced the reality of what it means to seek God with all my heart?

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, the word "**sovereign**" has the following meanings:

1. above or superior to all others; chief; greatest; supreme
2. supreme in power, rank, or authority
3. of or holding the position of ruler; royal; reigning

It is evident that in the truest sense of the word, there can only be one sovereign of the universe. Only one "supreme in power, rank or authority," only one above all others.

Most Christians today claim that the Sovereign of the universe is really three persons, that there is not one supreme Being, but rather, three supreme Beings. However, this claim is not supported by biblical facts. The Bible everywhere identifies the Sovereign of the universe as one almighty Being, a supreme Ruler to whom all others are subject.

Because God is sovereign, His will is supreme in the universe. Not only are we as Christians obligated to obey that will, but all creation must submit to His purposes. God's sovereignty is the guarantee that all He has promised in His word will surely come to pass.

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PART 1: THE SUPREME RULER

Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. 1 Tim 6:15-1

“God would have the rulers of the nations know that He is the supreme Ruler. Those who preside over the affairs of nations should realize that there is a King of kings. The man who does not know God as his Father, and Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of the infinite God, cannot rule wisely. He who has been placed where he has authority over others should seek the Lord for wisdom, that he may govern wisely the subjects of God’s kingdom. An earthly ruler cannot exercise authority wisely or set an example that is safe to follow, unless he obtains wisdom from God, who is too wise to err and too good to do injustice to His human subjects.” – *Manuscript Releases Vol. 3, p. 37*

What is the significance of the fact that God sits on the throne of heaven? Rev. 5:13,14; Rev. 19:5,6

God is the great I AM, the source of being, the center of authority and power. Whatever the condition or situation of his creatures, they can have no sufficient excuse for refusing to answer the claims of God. The Lord holds us responsible for the light shining upon our pathway. We may be surrounded by difficulties that appear formidable to us, and because of these we may excuse ourselves for not obeying the truth as it is in Jesus; but there can be no excuse that will bear investigation.” – *Sketches From The Life of Paul, p. 296*

“Even to discuss the authority of the Almighty God seems a bit meaningless, and to question it would be absurd. Can we imagine the Lord God of Hosts having to request permission of anyone or to apply for anything to a higher body? To whom would God go for permission? Who is higher than the Highest? Who is mightier than the Almighty? Whose position antedates that of the Eternal? At whose throne would God kneel? Where is the greater one to whom He must appeal? ‘Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.’ (Isa 44:6)” – *The Knowledge of The Holy, p.116 by A.W. Tozer*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

As the supreme Ruler of the universe, God is entitled to supreme obedience, and worship.

Part 2: AN IRRESISTIBLE GOD

This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. (Dan 4:17)

“But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. "Afterward," He said, "shall they come out with great substance." Gen. 15:14. Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh's proud empire battled in vain. On "the self-same day" appointed in the divine promise, "it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Ex. 12:41. So in heaven's council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined. When the great clock of time pointed to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

"When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son." Providence had directed the movements of nations, and the tide of human impulse and influence, until the world was ripe for the coming of the Deliverer." – *The Desire of Ages*, p. 32

By what symbol did God reveal the certainty of His purposes to Ezekiel? Ezekiel 1:4, 26; 10:8

“As the wheellike complications were under the guidance of the hand beneath the wings of the cherubim, so the complicated play of human events is under divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult of nations He that sitteth above the cherubim still guides the affairs of this earth.

“The history of nations speaks to us today. To every nation and to every individual God has assigned a place in His great plan. Today men and nations are being tested by the plummet in the hand of Him who makes no mistake. All are by their own choice deciding their destiny, and God is overruling all for the accomplishment of His purposes.

“The prophecies which the great I AM has given in His word, uniting link after link in the chain of events, from eternity in the past to eternity in the future, tell us where we are today in the procession of the ages and what may be expected in the time to come. All that prophecy has foretold as coming to pass, until the present time, has been traced on the pages of history, and we may be assured that all which is yet to come will be fulfilled in its order.” – *Prophecy and Kings*, p. 536

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Since God is irresistible why was sin permitted to rise, and why has it been allowed to continue for so long?

Part 3: THY WILL BE DONE

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Mat 6:10.

“Christ has taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” This opens before us the height to which we are to attain by steady progress and continual advancement. As members of the church of Christ, we are to do His will on earth. If all would do unto others as they would have others do unto them, we would see indications of a converted world. Upon this principle the Christian is to build. We are to ascend a ladder whose top reaches to heaven. . . .

“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord.” Can we comprehend this? In Christ’s stead we are to beseech men to become reconciled to God. . . . Acknowledge Him as your Redeemer, and you will become one with Him, even as He is one with the Father.”--*Letter 190, 1907. Reflecting Christ, p. 204*

Is God’s will being done in the conflicts and upheavals which seem to determine the place and destiny of nations today? Isa. 45:7; Dan. 4:17

“John beheld four angels standing on the corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. These symbols are illustrative of the troubles that will come upon the earth, but that the angels of God have been mercifully holding back until the servants of God should be sealed in their foreheads.

“Winds and earthquakes and tempests are not capricious outbreaks of unregulated mechanical forces. All nature is in the fullest sense under the control of physical law. It is the expression of a higher will. “He holdeth the winds in His fists;” “He gathereth the waters in the hollow of His hands;” “He maketh the clouds His chariots;” “The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth king forever.” Let not human wisdom dethrone and defy the great Sovereign of the universe. “He that made the world, and all things that are therein,” He is the sustainer. All nature is but the working out of the laws which He has made, a manifestation of His sovereign will.”--*Ms 10, 1906. Manuscript Releases, Vol. 3, p. 342*

Though God’s will is supreme, what fact must we recognize as we look at the situation in the world today? Joshua 24:15

“God might have created man without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case man would have been, not a free moral agent, but a mere automation. Without freedom of choice, his obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character. . . . It would have been unworthy of man as an intelligent being, and would have sustained Satan’s charge of God’s arbitrary rule.” – *Conflict and Courage, p. 13*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What is the difference between God’s permissive will and God’s perfect will.

Part 4: WITHOUT AN ABSOLUTE EQUAL

Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. (2 Sam 7:22)

“He who gave being to the world has not lost His power or sovereignty. He still presides over the world. It is His prerogative to speak out His purposes. By His Son, the Mediator between God and man, these purposes are executed, and the Holy Spirit gives them effect. . . .” – *Manuscript Releases, vol. 7, p. 343*

Which other being is equal to God in nature? John 1:1; Phil. 2:5,6

“Jesus alone could give security to God; for He was equal to God. He alone could be a mediator between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity” – *Review and Herald, April 3, 1894*

Is Jesus Christ equal to God in absolute authority? 1 Cor. 15:27, 28; Matt. 11:25

“The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His Son. . . . The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. . . . His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father’s will would be fulfilled in Him.” – *The Story of Redemption, p. 13*

“The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that his life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man. He was of as much more value than man as his noble, spotless character, and exalted office as commander of all the heavenly host, were above the work of man. He was in the express image of his Father, not in features alone, but in perfection of character.” – *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 2, p. 9*

What name given to God the Father illustrates the fact of His ageless eternity? Daniel 7:9

“The Ancient of Days is God the Father. Says the psalmist: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.” Psalm 90:2. It is He, the source of all being, and the fountain of all law, that is to preside in the judgment.” – *The Great Controversy, p. 479*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What thought came to the Psalmist as he considered the greatness of God? Psalm 8:3,4

Part 5: LORD OF TIME

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Psa 90:1-2

"I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike with God. He sees the most remote events of past history and the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things which are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM. . . . Our Saviour says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56). Fifteen hundred years before Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and left His position of honor in the heavenly courts, assumed humanity, and walked a man among the children of men, Abraham saw His day, and was glad. (John 8:57, 58). . . ." – *That I May Know Him*, p. 12

What ability of the true God further emphasizes His authority as Lord of time? Isaiah 46. 9,10

Time is something which comes and goes without our thinking about it. We can use it, lose it, manage it and waste it, but we can never control it. What about God, does He have control of time? think about this: Did time exist before God, or did God create time? If time existed apart from God, then it would mean that time is greater than God. However, if all things were created by God, then this must also include time. Therefore we must look at the concept of time as having a definite beginning, with the period before this being eternity.

The Bible was inspired by the mind of God. contains hundreds of prophecies, some of which span thousands of years, and yet, which are being faithfully and accurately fulfilled with the passing of the centuries. One may ask the question, "What is the reason for the accuracy of the Bible? Is it simply that God is good at calculating averages? Is it simply that the laws of cause and effect indicate that certain end results must take place as a result of certain actions over a period of centuries?" Only a very simple person who is unacquainted with the prophecies of the Bible would come to such a conclusion. The prophecies of the Bible are so detailed and accurate in their predictions that an intelligent mind immediately recognizes that the Being who was the author of those prophecies knew exactly, in every minute detail, exactly what would happen in the far distant future. This is not simply because God is able to see the future, but because as the Lord of time of time, He is able to use time to accomplish His purposes.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Time marks the beginning of created existence. God dwells in eternity but time dwells in God.

Part 6: LORD OF MY LIFE

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. (Psa 139:8-10)

“We are never alone. We have a Companion, whether we choose Him or not. Remember, young men and young women, that wherever you are, whatever you are doing, God is there. To your every word and action you have a witness,—the holy, sin-hating God. Nothing that is said or done or thought can escape His infinite eye. Your words may not be heard by human ears, but they are heard by the Ruler of the universe. He reads the inward anger of the soul when the will is crossed. He hears the expression of profanity. In the deepest darkness and solitude He is there. No one can deceive God; none can escape from their accountability to Him.” — *The Youth’s Instructor, May 26, 1898*

How should we acknowledge God’s claim upon us and His authority over our lives? 1 Cor. 10:31

“Here is a principle which lies at the foundation of every act, thought, and motive; the consecration of the entire being, both physical and mental, to the control of the Spirit of God.

“Even the natural act of eating or drinking, should be done . . . ”to the glory of God.” — *The Faith I Live By, p. 230*

How may we relate to the future in light of God’s certainty? Matt. 6:31,32

“Much unnecessary care and anxiety is felt in regard to our future, concerning what we shall eat and drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed. The labor and worry of needless display in apparel causes much fatigue and unhappiness and shortens our lives. Our Saviour would not only have us discern the love of God displayed in the beautiful flowers about us, but He would have us learn from them lessons of simplicity and of perfect faith and confidence in our heavenly Father.

“If God cares to make these inanimate things so beautiful, that will be cut down and perish in a day, how much more careful will He be to supply the needs of His obedient children, whose lives may be as enduring as eternity. How readily will He give them the adornment of His grace, the strength of wisdom, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The love of God to man is incomprehensible, broad as the world, high as heaven, and as enduring as eternity.” — *In Heavenly Places, p. 115*

“The word that fed Israel in the desert, and sustained Elijah through the time of famine, has the same power today. “Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink?” (Matt. 6:31, RV). . . .” — *Lift Him Up, p. 304*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. (2 Chr 16:9)

EXPERIENCING GOD

The men who framed the Westminster Confession included a question in the document which reveals that they had at least a good understanding of the true goal of life. The question and answer read as follows:

Question: What is man's chief end?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

This is a wonderful truth. "We were made for Him and our souls are restless until they find rest in Him." In all our searching to understand doctrine and to be theologically correct, we must always remember that all this is only a means to an end. The end, the goal, the purpose is God Himself. To know, to experience, to enjoy God, this is the purpose of life, the aim of all true knowledge.

What profit is there in knowing how to define God when we are strangers to that God? How can we ever represent that God to the world unless we are in a constant loving fellowship with Him in which we are being transformed by association with Him?

LESSON STUDY RECORD

Sunday

Wednesday

Monday

Thursday

Tuesday

Friday

PART 1: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “KNOW” GOD?

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (John 15:15)

“All that was communicated to Him by His Father, Christ makes known to His followers. "Henceforth I call you not servants;" He says, "for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). How was this done? By words merely? No; by character; by the daily life. It was thus that Christ represented His Father. My brethren and sisters, let us make it known that we are branches of the living vine in that we represent the character of Christ. By a life of fruitbearing we are to make known the truth of the Word. You may profess a religion that is as high as the heavens; but unless you do the commandments of God, you are certainly not recommending the love of Christ to the world.” – *Sermons and Talks, Vol. 1, p. 401*

“The pure in heart shall see God. While all men shall behold Christ as a judge, the pure in heart shall behold him as a friend;” {ST, October 3, 1895 par. 3}

How can we get to know God? John 14:7-9

“But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus.” – *Desire of Ages, p.21*

“We cannot by searching find out God, but He has revealed Himself in His Son, who is the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person. If we desire a knowledge of God we must be Christlike. . . . Living a pure life through faith in Christ as a personal Saviour will bring to the believer a clearer, higher conception of God. . . .” – *That I May Know Him, p. 9*

“Jesus presented the Father as one to whom we could give our confidence and present our wants. When we are in terror of God, and overwhelmed with the thought of His glory and majesty, the Father points us to Christ as His representative. What you see revealed in Jesus, of tenderness, compassion, and love, is the reflection of the attributes of the Father. The cross of Calvary reveals to man the love of God. Christ represents the Sovereign of the universe as a God of love. By the mouth of the prophet He said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). – *In Heavenly Places, p. 18*

“Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father’s heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God “manifest in the flesh.” – *Steps To Christ, p. 12*

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

What vital ingredient will be manifested in the characters of those who know God? (Jer 22:16)

Part 2: GOD IS SEEKING AFTER YOU

The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Jer 31:3)

“The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption.” {SC 21.2}

“Many are the ways in which God is seeking to make himself known to us and to bring us into communion with him. Nature speaks to our senses without ceasing. The open heart will be impressed with the love and glory of God as revealed through the works of his hands. The listening ear can hear and understand the communications of God through the things of nature. The green fields, the lofty trees, the buds and flowers, the passing cloud, the falling rain, the babbling brook, the glories of the heavens, speak to our hearts, and invite us to become acquainted with him who made them all.” — *Christian Education*, p. 54

What passages in the Bible represent God’s attitude towards us? Hosea 11:3,4; Matt. 23:37; Luke 15:4-32

“But in the parable of the lost sheep, Christ teaches that salvation does not come through our seeking after God but through God’s seeking after us. “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way.” Rom. 3:11, 12. We do not repent in order that God may love us, but He reveals to us His love in order that we may repent.

“When the straying sheep is at last brought home, the shepherd’s gratitude finds expression in melodious songs of rejoicing. He calls upon his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, “Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.” So when a wanderer is found by the great Shepherd of the sheep, heaven and earth unite in thanksgiving and rejoicing.

“Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” You Pharisees, said Christ, regard yourselves as the favorites of heaven. You think yourselves secure in your own righteousness. Know, then, that if you need no repentance, My mission is not to you. These poor souls who feel their poverty and sinfulness, are the very ones whom I have come to rescue. Angels of heaven are interested in these lost ones whom you despise. You complain and sneer when one of these souls joins himself to Me; but know that angels rejoice, and the song of triumph rings through the courts above.” — *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 189

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What is our response to God’s yearning for close fellowship with us?

Part 3: THE KEY OF FAITH

For we walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Cor 5:7)

“There is no need for us to hunger, there is no need for us to thirst, while the storehouse of heaven is open for us and the key is given into our possession. What is the key? Faith, which is the gift of God. Unlock the storehouse; take of its rich treasures.” – *That I May Know Him*, p. 7

“The prayer of faith is the key that unlocks the treasury of heaven. As we commit our souls to God, let us remember that He holds Himself responsible to hear and answer our supplications. He invites us to come to Him, and He bestows on us His best and choicest gifts--gifts that will supply our great need. He loves to help us. Let us trust in His wisdom and His power. O what faith we should have! O what peace and comfort we should enjoy! Open your heart to the Spirit of God. Then the Lord will work through you and bless your labors.”--Letter 49, 1903, pp. 4, 6-8. (To Elder Daniells and His Fellow-Workers, April 12, 1903). – *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 8, p. 196

What was the key to Moses extraordinary relationship with God (Numbers 12:6–8)? Heb. 11:27

“Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. He was not only looking down through the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh, but he saw Christ in a special manner accompanying the children of Israel in all their travels. God was real to him, ever present in his thoughts. When misunderstood, when called upon to face danger and to bear insult for Christ's sake, he endured without retaliation. Moses believed in God as one whom he needed and who would help him because of his need. God was to him a present help.

“. . . Moses did not merely think of God; he saw Him. God was the constant vision before him; he never lost sight of His face. He saw Jesus as his Saviour, and he believed that the Saviour's merits would be imputed to him. This faith was to Moses no guesswork; it was a reality. This is the kind of faith we need, faith that will endure the test. Oh, how often we yield to temptation because we do not keep our eye upon Jesus!” – *Conflict and Courage*, p. 85

Which other Bible personalities were able to attain unto a special relationship with God through faith? Heb 11:5; Rom 4:3

“When we learn to walk by faith and not by feeling, we shall have help from God just when we need it, and his peace will come into our hearts. It was this simple life of obedience and trust that Enoch lived. If we learn this lesson of simple trust, ours may be the testimony that he received, that he pleased God.” – *Historical Sketches*, p. 133

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God never changes. If we do not have the same relationship with God as these men did, it is because we have not sought after God as they did

Part 4: WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (Rom 8:9)

“ . . . None are so vile, none have fallen so low, as to be beyond the working of this power. In all who will submit themselves to the Holy Spirit a new principle of life is to be implanted; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity.

“But man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change can be effected. The leaven--something wholly from without--must be put into the meal before the desired change can be wrought in it. So the grace of God must be received by the sinner before he can be fitted for the kingdom of glory. All the culture and education which the world can give will fail of making a degraded child of sin a child of heaven. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. All who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 96

How does the Bible describe the Christian’s experience of total submissiveness to God? (Gal 5:25)

“Walk in the Spirit. Be followers of God as dear children. Seek to be conformed to the image of Christ, and do not seek for the mastery in discussion, but speak the truth in love, because the truth dwells in you. If the truth is in you Christ is in you, and you are then becoming sanctified through the truth, conforming to the image of Christ. Then you can represent Christ to all with whom you associate, and your spirit and actions will speak louder than your profession. You may live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and bear the fruits of the Spirit; you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Then you will be living channels of light, having your life hid with Christ in God. And though the world does not see the heavenly character of the life that is hid with Christ, the effects of that life will be manifest; for those who are partakers of the divine nature will walk as children of light. . . .” – *Manuscript Releases Vol. 4*, p. 49

What was Paul’s reason for insisting on going to Jerusalem, even though all his friends warned him of the danger awaiting him there? (Acts 20:22)

Though danger lay ahead of him Paul had committed his way unto the Lord. He was always ready and willing to go where God directed him by His Spirit. He did not allow consideration of the dangers to persuade him to change his mind, though he was urged to do so by his brethren.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

A person who walks in the spirit will live with the constant realization of the real presence of God.

Part 5: FELLOWSHIP

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (John 14:23)

“Communion with God is the life of the soul. It is not a something which we can interpret, a something which we can clothe with beautiful words, but which does not give us the genuine experience that makes our words of real value. Communion with God gives us a daily experience that does indeed make our joy full.” – *In Heavenly Places, p. 72*

“What higher power can man require than this--to be linked with the infinite God? Feeble, sinful man has the privilege of speaking to his Maker. We utter words that reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets. Then we go forth to walk with God as did Enoch.” – *In Heavenly Places, p. 81*

“Let us turn aside from the dusty, heated thoroughfares of life to rest in the shadow of Christ's love, and learn from Him the lesson of quiet trust. Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him,--this is our need. Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. With hurried steps they press through the circle of Christ's loving presence, pausing perhaps a moment within the sacred precincts, but not waiting for counsel. They have no time to remain with the divine Teacher. With their burdens they return to their work.” – *Signs of The Times, July 6, 1904*

How does the word of God emphasize the reality of our fellowship with God and His Son? 1 John 1:3

“Nothing of the world can make sad those whom Jesus makes glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect peace. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee.” Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the keeping of the Master-worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory.

“As through Jesus we enter into rest, heaven begins here. We respond to His invitation, “Come, learn of Me,” and in thus coming, we begin the life eternal. Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ. The longer we are in the heaven of bliss, the more and still more of glory will be revealed to us; and the more we know of God, the more intense will be our happiness. As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here.” – *Signs of The Times, July 6, 1904*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

My fellowship with God may be, and should be closer than that which I enjoy with any human being.

Part 6: ABIDING IN HIM

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (Psa 91:1)

"It was not on the cross only that Christ sacrificed Himself for humanity. As He "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38), every day's experience was an outpouring of His life. In one way only could such a life be sustained. Jesus lived in dependence upon God and communion with Him. To the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, men now and then repair; they abide for a season, and the result is manifest in noble deeds; then their faith fails, the communion is interrupted, and the lifework marred. But the life of Jesus was a life of constant trust, sustained by continual communion; and His service for heaven and earth was without failure or faltering." – *Education*, p. 80

"There are troublous times before us; the judgments of God are coming upon our world. The nations of the earth are to tremble. There will be trials and perplexities on every hand; men's hearts will fail them for fear. And what shall we do in that day? Though the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed like a cottage, if we have made God our trust, He will deliver us. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee. . . . For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." – *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 354

What wonderful promise is there for those who abide in God through His Son? John 15:7

. . . . We have the promise that if we abide in him, and his words abide in us, we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. Is it indeed possible that Christ may abide in us, and we in him? Christ says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Would he tempt us and deceive us?--No, indeed. There is everything to encourage any soul who by faith claims the promises that God has given us, for through his grace we may be overcomers." – *Review and Herald*, July 29, 1890

"Herein is My Father glorified," said Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit." God desires to manifest through you the holiness, the benevolence, the compassion, of His own character. Yet the Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells them to abide in Him. "If ye abide in Me," He says, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. . . ." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 677

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

"Abide" means to remain always. Why is it that our relationship with God is so fluctuating, at times close, at other times very distant and shaky?

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

In our lesson this week we look at some of the attributes of God. We can do no more than take a quick glance at some of His qualities. The knowledge of God is “. . . as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.” (Job 11:8-9) Yet in spite of the fact that we can never “find out the almighty unto perfection” (Job 11:7) Yet it is our privilege and our duty to find out as much about God as He has revealed about Himself.

This is an absolute necessity for we can only develop a relationship with God as we learn to love and trust Him. Yet, how can we trust somebody when we do not know the kind of person he is? Would a woman be willing to marry a man if she doubted that he would be able to take care of her and of any children they might have? In a similar way, millions of people in the world have no confidence in God and will not place their trust in Him because they do not know, or do not believe that He is able or willing to help them in their particular situation. Ignorance of God in every case is the reason for unbelief and the corresponding ungodliness which prevails in the church and the world.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday | <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monday | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday |
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PART 1: OMNIPOTENCE

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. (Isa 40:26)

“God calls upon men to see Him in the wonders of the heavens. "Lift up your eyes on high," He says, "and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might," Isaiah 40:26. God would have us study the works of infinity, and from this study learn to love and reverence and obey Him. The heavens and the earth with their treasures are to teach the lessons of God's love and care and power.” – *Counsels to Teachers, p.456*

What event in the time of Joshua illustrated God's power over the forces of nature? Joshua 10:12,13

“This mighty miracle testifies that the creation is under the control of the Creator. Satan seeks to conceal from men the divine agency in the physical world--to keep out of sight the unwearied working of the first great cause. In this miracle all who exalt nature above the God of nature stand rebuked.

“At His own will God summons the forces of nature to overthrow the might of His enemies--"fire, and hail; snow, and vapor; stormy wind fulfilling His word." Psalm 148:8. When the heathen Amorites had set themselves to resist His purposes, God interposed, casting down "great stones from heaven" upon the enemies of Israel. We are told of a greater battle to take place in the closing scenes of earth's history, when "Jehovah hath opened His armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of His indignation." Jeremiah 50:25. "Hast thou," he inquires, "entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" Job 38:22, 23. – *Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 509*

What truth concerning God's power did Jesus seek to impress upon His disciples? Matt. 19:26

“There are miracles to be wrought in genuine conversion, miracles that are not now discerned. The greatest men of the earth are not beyond the power of a wonder-working God. If those who are workers together with Him will be men of opportunity, doing their duty bravely and faithfully, God will convert men who occupy responsible places, men of intellect and influence. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, many will accept the divine principles. . . .” – *Lift Him Up, p.293*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Since all power belongs to God I may safely place myself in His care, concerning myself only with trusting and obeying Him in all things.

Part 2: ETERNITY

(Deu 32:40) For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

One of the outstanding attributes of the true God is that He lives forever. He has always existed and He always will. No doubt we have all considered the question, especially when we were children, “where did God come from?” Today, as adults we know that this is a vain question. God was always there. This is something which we are not required to understand, and it is unlikely that we could understand even if it were explained to us. However, it is the great truth which gives stability and patience and purpose to our existence because we realize that since we are dealing with a Being such as this, nothing that is of earth can nullify with His purposes for our lives. Though we may have to wait patiently for the fulfillment of His promises, they will surely be fulfilled and since our lives are a part of His life, we can afford to wait until He sees fit to bring them to pass.

Is Christ as old as God the Father? In other words has He always existed? Did He ever have a beginning? Prov. 8:22-30

The Scriptures declare that Christ is “the only begotten son of God.” He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told. The prophet Micah tells us all that we can know about it in these words, “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2, margin. There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning.” – *Christ and His Righteousness - Is Christ a Created Being? by E.J. Waggoner*

What truth concerning God’s existence do heavenly beings continually keep in mind? Rev. 4:8

The eternity of God is brought out in several different ways in the Bible. In the book of Revelation the heavenly beings speak of Him as the One who “was and is and is to come,” the One who exists in the past, the present and the future. This is a title which is used exclusively with reference to God, the One seated on the throne and suggests that in the sense of absolute eternity, only the One seated on the throne has always been in existence. Please read Revelation 1:4,5 and you will see that this title is used with reference to God the Father as opposed to Jesus Christ, as well as the “seven spirits which are before the throne.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Through faith in the Son of God men may obtain a life which measures with the life of God.

Part 3: INFINITUDE

Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD. (Jer 23:23-24)

The word “infinite” refers to a condition in which there are absolutely no limits. We often use this word because it is a part of our vocabulary. However, it is only when it is used with reference to God that this word may be used accurately because all things are limited in some way, with the exception of God. In His wisdom, His power, His knowledge, God has absolutely no limits. This concept is truly an awesome one but all that we have learned about God compels us to acknowledge that it is true.

How did the apostle Paul express the infinitude of God’s nature and being? Acts 17:27,28

Paul attempted to impress on the minds of the Athenians the fact that God was not difficult to find. They had no reason for thinking that He was unavailable or that getting to know Him would be a difficult process because, He was not far from “every one of us.” “In Him we live and move and have our being.” This is an interesting phrase and especially in light of the point Paul was trying to make. How can we be said to *live* in God? How can we be said to *move* in God? A fear of pantheism has led some to deny the fact that God is Himself present in all places. However, while pantheism teaches that everything is a part of God, the Bible teaches that God is present in all places. In other words, there is no place where we can go that God is not there. This does not mean that we worship places and things because God is present, but rather, that we can worship God and recognize His presence no matter where we may be.

With what words did king Solomon reveal the truth that God is a being without limits? 1 Kings 8:27

God promised Solomon wisdom above any who were before him or who would come after him. (1 Kings 3:12). Undoubtedly his statement concerning the infinity of God was a revelation of the wisdom which God had bestowed upon him. Solomon’s declaration that “the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee” was a revolutionary declaration in those days when many of the Israelites worshipped a severely limited God who was only accessible to them in the temple at Jerusalem. Solomon recognized that God, the Person was limitless in every respect and that though He chose to reveal, or manifest His presence in various places, in reality, He was literally present everywhere.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In serving a God who is infinite I have the assurance that my little problems are of little consequence; I may be contented in all circumstances.

Part 4: SELF-EXISTENCE

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (John 5:26)

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). It is not physical life that is here specified, but immortality, the life which is exclusively the property of God. The Word, who was with God, and who was God, had this life. Physical life is something which each individual receives. It is not eternal or immortal; for God, the Life-giver, takes it again. Man has no control over his life. But the life of Christ was unborrowed. No one can take this life from Him. "I lay it down of myself" (John 10: 18), He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. He cannot earn it; it is given him as a free gift if he will believe in Christ as His personal Saviour. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). This is the open fountain of life for the world." – *Selected Messages, bk.1, p.296-7*

**How does the first verse of the Bible emphasize God's self-existence?
Genesis 1:1**

The Bible tells us simply that in the beginning God created all things. The minds of men have vainly sought to search into the question, "what was there before the beginning." The only possible answer is, "before the beginning there was God." All things came from God and all things exist by the power of God, but God Himself has no source, no origin, no beginning. God is, and that is all that we can really say on the matter.

By what revealing name did the angel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, identify Himself to Moses? Exodus 3:14

When Jesus, the "angel of the Lord" appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He came as the representative of His Father, the Almighty God. He came with the authority of the Father and revealed to Moses God's name of Jehovah, or Yahweh. This name is loosely translated to mean, "I AM," and suggests the self-existence of the God to whom it applies.

What could God say to explain Himself to humanity? How could He explain His existence? Before this awesome God man must bow in humility and confess his nothingness. All that we can understand concerning the existence of God is revealed in the name by which He made Himself known to Moses. He is the great I AM. He is and that is the end of the matter. All things in the infinite universe have a source, had a beginning. But of God, it can only be said that He is.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Pride cannot remain in the heart of the one who recognizes the greatness of God and sees his littleness by comparison.

Part 5: IMMUTABILITY

For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (Mal 3:6)

Because God is absolutely perfect, He cannot change. If God were to change, then He would have to change from a state of perfection to a state of imperfection. It is easy to understand then, why the Bible insists in many places that God is a Being who is immutable, that is, a Being who cannot change. This means that we can always depend on His mercy, His justice, His love, His concern etc. We do not have to concern ourselves with the question, "I wonder if God is in a bad mood or a good mood today?" or, "I wonder if God still loves me?" We may always be absolutely sure of where we stand with God, because His word clearly reveals the kind of Person that He is, and this never changes.

In spite of his rebellion against God, what characteristic of God was well known to Balaam? Num. 23:19

Balaam knew that in spite of Balak's persistence and in spite of His (Balaam's) own intense desire to receive Balak's reward, God could not be bribed, pleaded with or in any way persuaded to change His principles. What He had said was what He would do. He had blessed Israel and He would not reverse it.

What certainty may we embrace as we seek salvation through Christ? Heb. 13:8

"With the continual change of circumstances, changes come in our experience; and by these changes we are either elated or depressed. But the change of circumstances has no power to change God's relation to us. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and He asks us to have unquestioning confidence in His love." – *In Heavenly Places, p.120*

"Jesus has not changed. With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He still loves and pities the erring, seeking to draw them to Himself, that He may give them divine aid. He knows that a demon power is struggling for the control of every soul striving for the mastery; but Jesus came to break the power of Satan, and to set the captives free. He will provide strength from above, that we may see and resist the temptations of the enemy. Through communion with God we may have divine discernment; but Satan ever seeks to hinder men from engaging in prayer. He seeks to fill their time with business or pleasure, or to lead them into such evil that they will have no desire to pray." – *Bible Echo, March 1, 1893*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Those who become like Christ will also become, like Him, unchangeable in their principles and approach to life.

Part 6: SELF-SUFFICIENCY

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. (Rom 11:34-36)

God has no dependence on any being in the universe. He does not need any creature or thing in order to survive. We cannot advise Him, counsel Him or convince Him of a wiser course. He Himself is the source of all wisdom and power. In Himself He has all that He needs. All depend on Him for *ALL* things, but He Himself depends on no one.

What declaration of God emphasizes the fact that He needs nothing from any creature in the universe? Ps. 50:12

Many primitive religions and unfortunately, even the Jews to a great extent, had the idea that the sacrifices which they offered to God were for the purpose of appeasing Him. They had the feeling that He had a need for the flesh and blood of animals, for the smell of the incense, for their offerings of money, and as a result, they came to believe that in offering these things they were really helping God and doing Him a favour. It is this kind of attitude which leads to self-righteousness in our religion. Men are led to think that God needs them and that because they “help” God (whether by their works or their gifts), then this makes them good and brings them into favour with God. However, as we recognize that everything belongs to God, then we will recognize our utter dependence on Him and our complete nothingness and insufficiency. This is the only safe attitude which a Christian may take.

What is the only appropriate gift to give to our God who Himself is the possessor of all things? Ps. 116: 12,13; 1 Chr 29:14

David recognized what many today fail to recognize. All that we can do to please God really is to take what He gives to us. We cannot really give to the one who owns and possesses all things, but we may show our need of Him by humbly taking the salvation which He offers to us. In fact, this is the only thing which will please God for it is only in this relationship with God that we will recognize His total claim on our lives and return His gifts to Him with a truly grateful and honest heart.

We can never really give anything to God. All things come from Him and belong to Him by right. However, we may acknowledge His ownership and reveal our love and appreciation for Him by voluntarily returning to Him that which He has placed in our hands.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

We can give nothing to God. All we can really do is show appreciation for what He has given to us.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

Equally as important as knowing the attributes of God, is knowing the character of God. There are many who are convinced that God is truly an almighty Being, the One who is Ruler of the entire universe, yet still, they will not serve Him. Why? The reason is that they do not know the kind of Person that God is in His character. Some view Him as a tyrant who is happy to destroy men for the slightest reason, a harsh demanding dictator whose pleasure it is to roast men in a never-ending fire. Others see Him as a pretender who says one thing, but means something else, who misleads men by making statements which are not really true (such as the statement that Christ is His begotten Son).

With this kind of ignorance of God, it is impossible to learn to love Him and to trust Him. The Psalmist declares, *“And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee:”* (Psalms 9:10). God’s name is His character. To know Him is to love Him, because He is eminently lovable. The love and mercy revealed in God’s character is beyond the ability of man to comprehend but like Moses, we may plead, “I beseech Thee, show me thy glory,” and we may have the privilege of beholding all that man may see and live.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: LOVE

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (1 John 4:8)

"God is love" is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green -- all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy." – *Steps To Christ, p. 10*

"All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. . . ." – *Testimonies for The Church, Vol.5, p. 740*

What is the greatest demonstration of the love of God? John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10

The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom Him who was made in the express image of his person, and sent him down to earth to reveal how greatly he loved mankind. He is willing to do more, "more than we can ask or think." An inspired writer asks a question which should sink deep into every heart: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Shall not every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ say, "Since God has done so much for us, how shall we not, for Christ's sake, show our love to him by obedience to his commandments, by being doers of his word, by unreservedly consecrating ourselves to his service?" – *Review and Herald, RH, July 9, 1895*

"You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding more and more. . . ." – *Testimonies for The Church, Vol.5, p. 740*

Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God." – *Steps To Christ, p. 15*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Can I truly believe in the love of God without having a transformation in my life?

Part 2: MERCY

He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. (Psa 103:10-14)

"Meditate on the beneficence of God, dear reader; you will find it most profitable to recount your blessings. Let the language of your heart be, "God had been very good to me. He delights in mercy; therefore I may trust in him. His love, his patience, his long-suffering, have followed me all the days of my life. I will believe and watch and pray; and unworthy and helpless as I am, exposed to disappointment and sorrow, and the temptations of a wily foe whom I cannot resist in my own strength, Jesus will be my helper, and will fight my battles for me. He loves me. He has given the fullest evidence of his love in dying for me. He will withhold no real blessing." – *Bible Echo, January 1, 1888*

"When we dwell upon the justice of God, we look upon only one side of his character; for in his greatness and might he has condescended to our feebleness in sending his Son to the world that man may not perish. In the cross we may read his tender mercy and forgiveness, harmoniously combined with His stern, unwavering justice. The severity of God is felt when we are separated from him; but when we repent of our sins, and make our peace with him through the virtue of the cross, we find him a merciful Father, reconciled to men through his Son." – *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 3, p. 186*

What statement made by God concerning the inhabitants of Canaan reveals God's mercy towards those who are in rebellion against Him? Gen. 15:13-16

"In the days of Abraham the Lord declared, "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." He would not at that time allow them to be destroyed. In this is revealed the long-sufferance of God. The Amorites were at enmity against His law; they believed not in Him as the true and living God; but among them were a few good persons, and for the sake of these few, He forbore long. Centuries afterward, when the Israelites returned from Egypt to the promised land, the Amorites were "cast out before the children of Israel." They finally suffered calamity because of continued willful disregard of the law of God." – *Review and Herald, July 12, 1906*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Does the fact the Christ paid the price for our sins mean that we are now free to trifle with the mercy of God?

Part 3: JUSTICE

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (Gen 18:25)

“In the final execution of the judgment it will be seen that no cause for sin exists. When the Judge of all the earth shall demand of Satan, "Why hast thou rebelled against Me, and robbed Me of the subjects of My kingdom?" the originator of evil can render no excuse. Every mouth will be stopped, and all the hosts of rebellion will be speechless. . . . The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe. . . . Never will evil again be manifest. Says the Word of God, "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. . . . A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them.” – *The Faith I Live By*, p. 71

What act of God shows that though He is merciful He cannot overlook sin? Isaiah 53:6

“The exceeding sinfulness of sin can be estimated only in the light of the cross. When men urge that God is too good to cast off the sinner, let them look to Calvary. It was because there was no other way in which man could be saved, because without this sacrifice it was impossible for the human race to escape from the defiling power of sin, and be restored to communion with holy beings--impossible for them again to become partakers of spiritual life--it was because of this that Christ took upon Himself the guilt of the disobedient, and suffered in the sinner's stead. The love and suffering and death of the Son of God all testify to the terrible enormity of sin, and declare that there is no escape from its power, no hope of the higher life, but through the submission of the soul to Christ.” – *The Faith I Live By*, p. 60

The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death-knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain. The Son of God passed through the portals of the tomb, that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." [HEB. 2:14.] – *The Great Controversy*, p. 503

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Though God is merciful there are consequences and a penalty for every sin. (see Exodus 34:7)

Part 4: FAITHFULNESS

It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (Lam 3:22-23)

"At times the arm of faith seems too short even to touch the Saviour's garment, but there stands the promise, with God behind it: "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58:9-11). . . .

"It is not our efforts that bring victory. It is seeing God behind the promise, and believing and trusting Him. Grasp by faith the hand of infinite power. The Lord is faithful who hath promised."

"There are critics who, if you listen to their words, will rob you of all heart and hope. Do not allow them to discourage you. Say, "God abideth faithful. He cannot deny Himself." He has given to every man his work, and He calls upon all to begin to work just where they are. He cannot do what He desires to do until the human agent acts his part." – *The Upward Look*, p. 133

What assurance may we have as we face the assaults of Satan each day? 1 Cor. 10:13

"This promise is to you, my beloved sister. Jesus loves you. You have been purchased by the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave His precious life to redeem you. Through faith, you are a child of promise. In giving Jesus, in that one precious Gift, our heavenly Father gave you all the treasures of heaven. And when you come to God in prayer, bear in mind that He is your Father, and that He regards you as His child. He looks upon you with the most tender pity. He will not forsake you, though you may be the weakest, the very feeblest of His creatures. If you put your trust in Him, He abideth faithful.

"You are not to entertain the thought that because you have made mistakes and your life has been darkened with errors, your heavenly Father does not love you and therefore has forsaken you. No, dear sister. I tell you NO! Jesus loves you still. His eye is upon you, and He "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). – *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 12, p. 34

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Does God's faithfulness depend on man's faithfulness?

Part 5: LONGSUFFERING

(2 Pet 3:9) The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

“The reason why the Bridegroom delays is because He is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. O the precious longsuffering of our merciful Saviour! O that each of the dear youth would appreciate the value of the soul that has been purchased at infinite cost on Calvary! O that each one would place a proper estimate upon the capabilities that have been given him of God! Through Christ you may climb the ladder of progress, and bring every power under the control of Jesus. . . .

“We are living in altogether too solemn a period of the world’s history to be careless and negligent. . . . You must pray, believe, and obey. In your own strength you can do nothing; but in the grace of Jesus Christ, you can employ your powers in such a way as to bring the greatest good to your own soul, and the greatest blessing to the souls of others. Lay hold of Jesus, and you will diligently work the works of Christ, and will finally receive the eternal reward.” – *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 118

By what parable did Jesus illustrate God’s longsuffering in His dealings with the Jews? Mark 12:1-9

With a father’s heart, God bore with His people. He pleaded with them by mercies given and mercies withdrawn. Patiently He set their sins before them, and in forbearance waited for their acknowledgment. Prophets and messengers were sent to urge God’s claim upon the husbandmen; but instead of being welcomed, they were treated as enemies. The husbandmen persecuted and killed them. God sent still other messengers, but they received the same treatment as the first, only that the husbandmen showed still more determined hatred.

As a last resource, God sent His Son, saying, “They will reverence My Son.” But their resistance had made them vindictive, and they said among themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and let us seize on His inheritance.” We shall then be left to enjoy the vineyard, and to do as we please with the fruit.

The Jewish people cherished the idea that they were the favorites of heaven, and that they were always to be exalted as the church of God. . . .so firm did the foundation of their prosperity seem to them that they defied earth and heaven to dispossess them of their rights. But by lives of unfaithfulness they were preparing for the condemnation of heaven and for separation from God.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 293

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In spite of His longsuffering what decision will God finally have to take? Rev. 22:11 (See 2 Chron. 36:15,16)

Part 6: HOLINESS

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. (Isa 6:3)

“These holy beings sang forth the praise and glory of God with lips unpolluted with sin. The contrast between the feeble praise which he [Isaiah] had been accustomed to bestow upon the Creator and the fervid praises of the seraphim, astonished and humiliated the prophet. . . .

“The seraphim before the throne are so filled with reverential awe in beholding the glory of God that they do not for an instant look upon themselves with self-complacency, or in admiration of themselves or one another. Their praise and glory are for the Lord of Hosts. . . . They are fully satisfied to glorify God; and in His presence, beneath His smile of approbation, they wish for nothing more. In bearing His image, in doing His service and worshiping Him, their highest ambition is fully reached.

“While he [Isaiah] listened to the song of the angels, . . . the glory, the infinite power, and the unsurpassed majesty of the Lord passed before his vision, and was impressed upon his soul. In the light of this matchless radiance that made manifest all he could bear in the revelation of the divine character, his own inward defilement stood out before him with startling clearness. His very words seemed vile to him.” – *Conflict and Courage*, p. 233

What effect does the manifestation of the presence of a holy God have upon men? Isa. 6:4; Gen. 3:8

“Thus when the servant of God is permitted to behold the glory of the God of heaven, as He is unveiled to humanity, and realizes to a slight degree the purity of the Holy One of Israel, he will make startling confessions of the pollution of his soul, rather than proud boasts of his holiness. . . . This is not that voluntary humility and servile self-reproach that so many seem to consider it a virtue to display. This vague mockery of humility is prompted by hearts full of pride and self-esteem. There are many who demerit themselves in words, who would be disappointed if this course did not call forth expressions of praise and appreciation from others. But the conviction of the prophet was genuine.” – *Conflict and Courage*, p. 233

“There can be no self-exaltation, no boastful claim to freedom from sin, on the part of those who walk in the shadow of Calvary’s cross. They feel that it was their sin which caused the agony that broke the heart of the Son of God, and this thought will lead them to self-abasement. Those who live nearest to Jesus discern most clearly the frailty and sinfulness of humanity, and their only hope is in the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 471

**KEY
THOUGHT**

How does God express His desire that His people should be as He is? 1 Peter 1:15,16

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD

In the wisdom of God He has established a government with different kinds and levels of administration and responsibility. While it is true that every individual must know God and be accountable to God personally, yet it is also true that God has assigned duties and responsibility to each of us in varying degrees. Paul says,

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. (1 Corinthians 12:5-6)

We all are accountable to God. We must all do our appointed task with faithfulness, but in order to do this we must first have a proper understanding of God's government, our place in that government and the duty which God has assigned to us. God has a personal plan for every one of us, but in a general way, each individual plan will be in harmony with the general plan which God has outlined in establishing the order of His government. As an example of what I mean, no man can ever be the head of the Church, because God's appointed head for all time is Christ.

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PART 1: AN ORDER OF AUTHORITY

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. (1 Cor 11:3)

The word of God reveals that there is an order of authority ordained by God. The Christian who acknowledges the authority of the word of God cannot ignore this aspect of God's word, anymore than he can ignore any other part. We are all accountable to God as the absolute supreme Authority. No other obligation is to come before, or be equal to our obligation to God. But subject to that obligation, we are to submit to the order which God has in His wisdom ordained and neither the customs of society, nor the wisdom of men should influence our obedience to God in this, or any other respect.

Where does Christ stand in God's appointed order? 1 Cor. 15:27,28

"The head of every man is Christ." God, who put all things under the Saviour's feet, "gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 1:22, 23. The church is built upon Christ as its foundation; it is to obey Christ as its head. It is not to depend upon man, or be controlled by man. . . ." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 414

". . . The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. . . ." – *Story of Redemption*, p. 13

What is God's appointed plan for the marriage relationship? Eph. 5:24,25

". . . Give careful study to the following instruction: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. . . . Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." – *Adventist Home*, p. 114

"The spirit that Christ manifests toward us is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other. "As Christ also hath loved us," "walk in love." "As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." – *Daughters of God*, p. 182

**KEY
THOUGHT**

If we recognize God's authority, we must also recognize and respect the authority He has designated.

Part 2: LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (Mat 11:25)

"As Jehovah, the supreme Ruler, God could not personally communicate with sinful men, but He so loved the world that He sent Jesus to our world as a revelation of Himself. "I and My Father are one," Christ declared. No man knoweth "the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matthew 11:27). And Christ is also the revealer of the hearts of men. He is the exposor of sin. By Him the characters of all are to be tested. To Him all judgment has been committed, "because He is the Son of man." – *Manuscript Releases Vol. 9, p. 122*

How did the converted Nebuchadnezzar describe the inevitability of God's purposes? Dan 4:35

". . . God governs the world. He is Omnipotent. Be sure then, whatever His wisdom desires, or His love inspires, His power will execute. "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto Thee? or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them. Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before Thy face" (Psalm 89:8, 9, 14).--Letter 49, 1886, pp. 1, 2. (To L. R. Conradi, August 30, 1886.) Released August 3, 1978." – *Manuscript Releases Vol. 8, p. 411*

Is there one supreme Ruler in the universe, or are there two or three? 1 Tim. 6:15,16; Jude 9

"God, as the supreme ruler of the universe has ever required prompt and unquestioning obedience. Even Christ, in the days of his flesh, was obedient to the law of the Father. Through the inspired psalmist he declares: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;" "burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." But men are lulled to sleep by the deceptions of Satan, who suggests excuses and conquers their scruples, saying, as he said to Eve in the garden, "Ye shall not surely die." They forget that the word of the Lord is steadfast, and that every transgression will receive a "just recompense of reward." – *Signs of The Times, July 22, 1886*

". . .He who could influence the angels of God against their Supreme Ruler, and against his Son, their loved commander, and enlist their sympathy for himself, was capable of any deception. Four thousand years he had been warring against the government of God, and had lost none of his skill or power to tempt and deceive." – *Review and Herald, Aug. 18, 1874*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God the Father sits at the pinnacle of authority and power in the universe. In this sense there is none equal to Him.

Part 3: GOD'S CHOSEN KING

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:14)

“. . . The apostle Paul speaks of our Mediator, the only-begotten Son of God, who in a state of glory was in the form of God, the Commander of all the heavenly hosts, and who, when He clothed His divinity with humanity, took upon Him the form of a servant. Isaiah declares: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:6, 7). — *Selected Messages, bk. 1, p.243*

Is there any person in the universe who has the same authority as God the Father? Matt. 28:18;

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son. {8T 268.3}

“The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His Son. . . . The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself; so that wherever was the presence of His Son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was His Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him.”— *Lift Him Up, p. 18*

What is the present authority of Christ and will it always be this way? 1 Cor. 15:24-28

All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Christ by His Father. The Scriptures teach that He is God's appointed agent for destroying the works of the devil. However, the Scriptures also teach that when this work is fully accomplished, Christ will hand back rulership of the universe to His Father, that God (the Father) may be all in all.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

All who honour God must honour and worship His Son.

Part 4: MESSENGERS OF LIGHT

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? (Heb 1:13-14)

“We need to understand better than we do the mission of the angels. It would be well to remember that every true child of God has the co-operation of heavenly beings. Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength, stand at God's right hand, "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Hebrews 1:14.” – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 154*

“The principalities and powers of heaven are watching the warfare which, under apparently discouraging circumstances, God's servants are carrying on. New conquests are being achieved, new honors won, as the Christians, rallying round the banner of their Redeemer, go forth to fight the good fight of faith. All the heavenly angels are at the service of the humble, believing people of God; and as the Lord's army of workers here below sing their songs of praise, the choir above join with them in ascribing praise to God and to His Son. . . .” – *Conflict and Courage, p.336*

What promises of protection does God give to those who are His? Psalm 34:7; Psalm 91:11-12

“The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7. God commissions His angels to save His chosen ones from calamity, to guard them from "the pestilence that walketh in darkness" and "the destruction that wasteth at noonday." Psalm 91:6. Again and again have angels talked with men as a man speaketh with a friend, and led them to places of security. Again and again have the encouraging words of angels renewed the drooping spirits of the faithful and, carrying their minds above the things of earth, caused them to behold by faith the white robes, the crowns, the palm branches of victory, which overcomers will receive when they surround the great white throne.” – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 153*

“It is the work of the angels to come close to the tried, the suffering, the tempted. They labor untiringly in behalf of those for whom Christ died. When sinners are led to give themselves to the Saviour, angels bear the tidings heavenward, and there is great rejoicing among the heavenly host A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host.” – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 153*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

How much power has God given to angels?

Part 5: DIVINE LAW

(Psa 119:142) Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

“Before this earth was called into being, God’s law existed. Angels are governed by its principles, and in order for earth to be in harmony with heaven, man also must obey the divine statutes. To man in Eden Christ made known the precepts of the law “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). The mission of Christ on earth was not to destroy the law, but by His grace to bring man back to obedience to its precepts.” – *Reflecting Christ*. {RC 68.3}

What truth underlies the fact that God’s commandments stand forever? Rom. 7:12; Ps. 111:7,8

“Says the psalmist, “The law of the Lord is perfect.” How wonderful in its simplicity, its comprehensiveness and perfection, is the law of Jehovah! It is so brief that we can easily commit every precept to memory, and yet so far-reaching as to express the whole will of God, and to take cognizance, not only of the outward actions, but of the thoughts and intents, the desires and emotions, of the heart. Human laws cannot do this. They can deal with the outward actions only. A man may be a transgressor, and yet conceal his misdeeds from human eyes; he may be a criminal,--a thief, a murderer, or an adulterer,--but so long as he is not discovered, the law cannot condemn him as guilty. The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action, because the opportunity, not the will, has been wanting. And these sinful emotions will be brought into the account in the day when “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.” – *Signs of The Times, Apr. 15, 1886*

What guarantee is there that God’s law will always be observed in the new earth? Heb. 8:10

“The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. . . .” – *Steps To Christ, p. 60*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Since God is perfect, any law which He has ordained cannot be anything less than perfect.

Part 6: GOD'S KINGDOM

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. (Dan 7:27)

"We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the City of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God." – *The Adventist Home*, p. 542

". . . Those who accept the teachings of God's Word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. And yet "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the paradise of God." – *The Adventist Review*, Oct. 22, 1908

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of his character. As Jesus opens before them the riches of redemption, and the amazing achievements in the great controversy with Satan, the hearts of the ransomed thrill with more fervent devotion, and with more rapturous joy they sweep the harps of gold." – *The Great Controversy*, p. 678

What truth concerning the kingdom of God did the Jews not understand at the time of Christ's first advent? luke 17:21

"The announcement which had been made by the disciples in the name of the Lord was in every particular correct, and the events to which it pointed were even then taking place. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15), had been their message. . . . And the "kingdom of God" which they had declared to be at hand was established by the death of Christ. This kingdom was not, as they had been taught to believe, an earthly empire. Nor was it that future, . . . everlasting kingdom, in which "all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27). As used in the Bible, the expression "kingdom of God" is employed to designate both the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. . . ." – *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 19

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God's kingdom is not limited to this earth. It includes the entire universe. (see Rev. 5:13)

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

“In His wisdom the Saviour teaches us to approach God with the confidence of a child. He instructs us to call Jehovah by the endearing name of "Father," that we may not separate from Him in awe and coldness. Constantly He points us to the emblems of fatherly love, seeking to encourage faith and confidence in God. He pleads with us to have a correct idea of the Father. He throws back the accusation of the enemy, declaring, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." He would have the memorials of redeeming grace arrest our attention, that we may know that all the goodness, mercy, patience, forbearance, seen in Him, belong to God.”
 – *Signs of the Times, January 20, 1898*

“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.” – *The Great Controversy, p.652*

“The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ . . .

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God.”
 – *Testimonies Vol. 8, p.268*

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: THE FATHER OF JESUS CHRIST

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

The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each. . . .

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son." – *Testimonies Vol. 8, p.268*

What assurance are we given of the certainty of God's provision for us? Rom. 8:32; Eph. 1:3

You who feel the most unworthy, fear not to commit your case to God. When He gave Himself in Christ for the sin of the world, He undertook the case of every soul . . . Will He not fulfill the gracious word given for our encouragement and strength?" – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 174*

When we seem to doubt God's love and distrust His promises we dishonor Him and grieve His Holy Spirit. . . . How can our heavenly Father regard us when we distrust His love, which has led Him to give His only-begotten Son that we might have life? The apostle writes, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things" (Rom. 8:32)? And yet how many, by their actions, if not in word, are saying, "The Lord does not mean this for me. Perhaps He loves others, but He does not love me." – *God's Amazing Grace, p. 216*

When Jesus came to this earth what new development took place in His relationship with God? Luke 1:35

"Christ brought men and women power to overcome. He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature. In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world--the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race." – *Selected Messages, bk. 1, p. 226*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The Father's love for men can only be appreciated when we recognize that Jesus was truly the begotten Son of God.

Part 2: ADOPTED SONS

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)

“ . . . the word that was spoken to Jesus at the Jordan, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," embraces humanity. God spoke to Jesus as our representative. With all our sins and weaknesses, we are not cast aside as worthless. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Eph. 1:6. The glory that rested upon Christ is a pledge of the love of God for us. It tells us of the power of prayer,--how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and our petitions find acceptance in the courts of heaven. By sin, earth was cut off from heaven, and alienated from its communion; but Jesus has connected it again with the sphere of glory. His love has encircled man, and reached the highest heaven. The light which fell from the open portals upon the head of our Saviour will fall upon us as we pray for help to resist temptation. The voice which spoke to Jesus says to every believing soul, This is My beloved child, in whom I am well pleased. {DA 113.1}

“ . . . Our Redeemer has opened the way so that the most sinful, the most needy, the most oppressed and despised, may find access to the Father. All may have a home in the mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare. {DA 113.2}

In what tender words did the Psalmist express God's attitude towards us? Psalm 103:13,14

“ . . . those who are deceived by Satan look upon God as hard and exacting. They regard Him as watching to denounce and condemn, as unwilling to receive the sinner so long as there is a legal excuse for not helping him. His law they regard as a restriction upon men's happiness, a burdensome yoke from which they are glad to escape. But he whose eyes have been opened by the love of Christ will behold God as full of compassion. He does not appear as a tyrannical, relentless being, but as a father longing to embrace his repenting son. The sinner will exclaim with the Psalmist, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Ps. 103:13. {COL 204.2}

What vital gift of God enables us to experience a true Father-son relationship with God? Romans 8:14,15

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not now see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruit of the Spirit--love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. {TMK 57.5}

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What precious assurance may be cherished by all the children of God? Romans 8:16,17

Part 3: A FATHER'S CONCERN

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. (Isa 49:15,16)

"It is possible even for a parent to turn away from his hungry child, but God can never reject the cry of the needy and longing heart. With what wonderful tenderness He has described His love! To those who in days of darkness feel that God is unmindful of them, this is the message from the Father's heart: "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" (Isa. 49:14-16).

"Every promise in the Word of God furnishes us with subject matter for prayer, presenting the pledged word of Jehovah as our assurance. Whatever spiritual blessing we need, it is our privilege to claim through Jesus. We may tell the Lord, with the simplicity of a child, exactly what we need. We may state to Him our temporal matters, asking Him for bread and raiment as well as for the bread of life and the robe of Christ's righteousness. Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things, and you are invited to ask Him concerning them . . ." – *Lift Him Up*, p. 107

In what moving words did God express His feelings towards rebellious Israel? Ezekiel 33:11

"The Lord seeks to save, not to destroy. He delights in the rescue of sinners. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Ezekiel 33:11. By warnings and entreaties He calls the wayward to cease from their evil-doing and to turn to Him and live. He gives His chosen messengers a holy boldness, that those who hear may fear and be brought to repentance. How firmly the man of God rebuked the king! And this firmness was essential; in no other way could the existing evils have been rebuked. The Lord gave His servant boldness, that an abiding impression might be made on those who heard. The messengers of the Lord are never to fear the face of man, but are to stand unflinchingly for the right. So long as they put their trust in God, they need not fear; for He who gives them their commission gives them also the assurance of His protecting care." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 105

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God's concern for us far exceeds that of an earthly parent. If we cooperate with Him He will not find it difficult to save us.

Part 4: THE FATHER'S HOUSE

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:32)

"We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the City of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God." – *The Adventist Home*, p. 542

How did Christ express the certainty of a better place prepared for us by our Heavenly Father? John 14:1-3

"A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house. Those who accept the teachings of God's word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. . . . Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God. . . .

"There are homes for the pilgrims of earth. There are robes for the righteous, with crowns of glory and palms of victory. All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying. As we realize the tender care of Him who makes all things work together for our good, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. . . ." – *The Adventist Home*, p. 542

What hope enabled Abraham to cheerfully pass through life without owning any permanent dwelling place? Hebrews 11:10

"The gift to Abraham and his seed included not merely the land of Canaan, but the whole earth. So says the apostle, "The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Romans 4:13. And the Bible plainly teaches that the promises made to Abraham are to be fulfilled through Christ" – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 169

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What should be our attitude toward even the most beautiful homes on this earth? (Heb. 13:14)

Part 5: A FATHER'S PROVISION

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (Mat 6:31-32)

“Much unnecessary care and anxiety is felt in regard to our future, concerning what we shall eat and drink and wherewithal we shall be clothed. The labor and worry of needless display in apparel causes much fatigue and unhappiness and shortens our lives. Our Saviour would not only have us discern the love of God displayed in the beautiful flowers about us, but He would have us learn from them lessons of simplicity and of perfect faith and confidence in our heavenly Father.

“If God cares to make these inanimate things so beautiful, that will be cut down and perish in a day, how much more careful will He be to supply the needs of His obedient children, whose lives may be as enduring as eternity. How readily will He give them the adornment of His grace, the strength of wisdom, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The love of God to man is incomprehensible, broad as the world, high as heaven, and as enduring as eternity.” – *Heavenly Places, p.115*

How did God impress upon the Israelites the fact of their continual need of Him during the wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan? Deut. 8:3

“In the wilderness, when all means of sustenance failed, God sent His people manna from heaven; and a sufficient and constant supply was given. This provision was to teach them that while they trusted in God and walked in His ways He would not forsake them. . . .” – *Desire of Ages, p.121*

What event in the life of Christ illustrates God's concern for our most basic needs and His ability and willingness to provide? Matt. 15: 32-39

“Thus there is no place for anxious care. Diligence, fidelity, caretaking, thrift, and discretion are called for. Every faculty is to be exercised to its highest capacity. But the dependence will be, not on the successful outcome of our efforts, but on the promise of God. The word that fed Israel in the desert, and sustained Elijah through the time of famine, has the same power today. “Be not therefore anxious (R.V.), saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? . . . Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:31-33. – *Education, p.138*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The God who clothes the flowers and feeds the birds is able and willing to provide for all my genuine needs.

Part 6: THE FATHER'S NAME

And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. (19) And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. (Exo 33:18-19)

“The glory of God is His character. While Moses was in the mount, earnestly interceding with God, he prayed, “I beseech thee, show me thy glory.” In answer God declared, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” The glory of God--His character--was then revealed: “The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty” (Ex. 33:18, 19; 34:6, 7). – *God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 322

How does God indicate that His remnant people will have a pure character like His? Revelation 14:1

“The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. . . . Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices. . . . The remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. “A fair miter” is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father’s name written in their foreheads.” – *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 369

What vital work did Christ accomplish as He lived a pure and spotless life here on the earth? John 17:6

“In all the gracious deeds that Jesus did, He sought to impress upon men the parental, benevolent attributes of God. In all His lessons He was seeking to teach men the wonderful truth that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” Jesus would have us understand the love of the Father, and He seeks to draw us to Him by presenting His parental grace.” – *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 139

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What will be the fruitage of knowing God’s name? (Psalm 9:10; John 17:26)

GOD IN THE SANCTUARY

God instructed the Israelites to build a sanctuary that He might “dwell among them.” (Exodus 25:8). The sanctuary built by the Hebrews was a type or a symbol representing greater realities. The New Testament Scriptures reveal that there are several places where God dwells, all of which were symbolised by the Hebrew temple.

1. There is the temple of the human soul. (1 Corinthians 6:19)
2. There is the sanctuary of the Christian Church. (Ephesians 2:19-22)
3. There is the sanctuary in heaven, the literal dwelling place of God where He sits on the throne of the universe. (Hebrews 8:1,2; Revelation 11:19)

“Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul.” – *Education*, p.36

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: THE PRESENCE BEHIND THE VEIL

Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. 1 Tim 6:15-16

“Man cannot by searching find out God. Let none seek with presumptuous hand to lift the veil that conceals His glory. "Unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out." Romans 11:33. It is a proof of His mercy that there is the hiding of His power; for to lift the veil that conceals the divine presence is death. No mortal mind can penetrate the secrecy in which the Mighty One dwells and works. Only that which He sees fit to reveal can we comprehend of Him. Reason must acknowledge an authority superior to itself. Heart and intellect must bow to the great I AM.” – *Ministry of Healing, p.438*

How did God manifest His presence in the Jewish sanctuary? Lev 16:2

“. . . Under the Old Testament dispensation every important work was closely connected with the sanctuary. In the holy of holies the great I AM took up His abode. . . . There, above the mercy seat, overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim, dwelt the Shekinah of His glory, the perpetual token of His presence, while the breastplate of the high priest, set with precious stones, made known from the sacred precincts of the sanctuary the solemn message of Jehovah to the people . . .” – *That I May Know Him, p. 101*

“Above the mercy seat was the Shekinah, the manifestation of the divine Presence; and from between the cherubim, God made known His will. Divine messages were sometimes communicated to the high priest by a voice from the cloud. Sometimes a light fell upon the angel at the right, to signify approval or acceptance, or a shadow or cloud rested upon the one at the left to reveal disapproval or rejection. . . .” – *Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 349*

What greater reality did the Jewish sanctuary represent? Heb. 8:5

“No language can describe the glory of the scene presented within the sanctuary--the gold-plated walls reflecting the light from the golden candlestick, the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels, the table, and the altar of incense, glittering with gold; beyond the second veil the sacred ark, with its mystic cherubim, and above it the holy Shekinah, the visible manifestation of Jehovah's presence; all but a dim reflection of the glories of the temple of God in heaven, the great center of the work for man's redemption.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 349*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What lessons may be learned from the fact that God veiled His presence from the Jews?

Part 2: A MEDIATOR

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. (Rev 8:4)

"The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin, ascend from true believers as incense to the heavenly sanctuary: but passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God. . . . All incense from earthly tabernacles must be moist with the cleansing drops of the blood of Christ. He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. . . ." – *God's Amazing Grace, p. 154*

Who was represented by the high priest in the Sanctuary Service? Heb. 8:1,2; 1 Tim. 2:5

"The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man: "You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; through a mediator you can approach God." And now He stands to mediate for you. He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and you are to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God." – *God's Amazing Grace, p. 154*

"Let faith pierce through the hellish shadow of Satan and center in Jesus, our high priest, who hath entered for us within the veil. Whatever clouds overcast the sky, whatever storms surge around the soul, this anchor holds firm, and we may be sure of victory." – *In Heavenly Places, p. 127*

As we seek salvation through Christ what assurance may we have? Heb. 7:25

"In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church --pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice. Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast. If our salvation depended on our own efforts, we could not be saved; but it depends on the One who is behind all the promises. Our grasp on Him may seem feeble, but His love is that of an elder brother; so long as we maintain our union with Him, no one can pluck us out of His hand." – *Acts of The Apostles, p. 552*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

No matter how bitterly we have been battered by sin we have a Mediator who can sympathise with us (Heb. 4:14-16)

Part 3: JUSTICE AND MERCY

Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. (Psa 97:2)

“God’s love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan’s purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God’s law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God’s plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” Ps. 85:10.” – *The Desire of ages, p. 762*

How did God illustrate the fact that His justice is mingled with mercy? Exodus 25:21,22

“The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God’s holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can “be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:26.” – *The Desire of ages, p. 762*

“By His life and His death, Christ proved that God’s justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan’s charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love.” – *The Desire of ages, p. 762*

How was it possible for us (great sinners that we are) to escape the judgement of God? Isa. 53: 5,6

“Through Jesus, God’s mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God’s character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man’s redemption. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Cor. 5:19.” – *The Desire of ages, p. 762*

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race.” – *The Desire of ages, p. 834*

KEY THOUGHT

While mercy finds a way to satisfy justice, it does not nullify justice of excuse sin. (Exodus 34:7)

Part 4: THE WAY TO GOD ILLUSTRATED**Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God? (Psa 77:13)**

“. . . Those who make slurring remarks concerning the old Jewish age, show that they are ignorant of the Scriptures, and of the power of God. Amid the moral darkness of the idolatrous nations of that time are seen burning traces of the great I AM. His goings forth stand registered in the pages of Bible history. What is now needed is divine enlightenment, and a more intelligent knowledge of the wonderful dealings of God with his people anciently. The psalmist exclaims, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God." – *Review and Herald, March 2, 1886*

Who was the central focus of the Sanctuary services (apart from God the Father). John 14:6; John 1:29, Rev. 5:6; Heb. 8:1,2

"The system of sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ. Through these, the ancient worthies saw Christ, and believed in him. These were ordained of Heaven to keep before the people the fearful separation which sin had made between God and man, requiring a mediating ministry. Through Christ, the communication which was cut off because of Adam's transgression was opened between God and the ruined sinner. But the infinite sacrifice that Christ voluntarily made for man remains a mystery that angels cannot fully fathom.

"The Jewish system was symbolical, and was to continue until the perfect Offering should take the place of the figurative. The Mediator, in his office and work, would greatly exceed in dignity and glory the earthly, typical priesthood. The people of God, from Adam's day down to the time when the Jewish nation became a separate and distinct people from the world, had been instructed in regard to the Redeemer to come, which their sacrificial offerings represented. This Saviour was to be a mediator, to stand between the Most High and his people. Through this provision, a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another. The sinner could not come in his own person, with his guilt upon him, and with no greater merit than he possessed in himself. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish. The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race." – *Review and Herald, Dec. 17, 1872*

**KEY
THOUGHT****If I wish to know God I must find Him through Christ.
There is no other way.**

Part 5: GOD IN THE HUMAN SOUL

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. (Exo 25:8)

"God commanded Moses for Israel, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Ex. 25:8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us, and make us familiar with His divine character and life. "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14, R. V., margin." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 23

What vital truth did God seek to convey to men by the Hebrew sanctuary? 1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16

"Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:" – *Education*, p. 36

The Jews often misunderstood the words of Christ. What truth were they ignorant of as John 2:19-21 illustrates?

They went to Jesus with a deference born of the fear that still hung over them; for they concluded that he must be a prophet sent of God to restore the sanctity of the temple. They asked him, "What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" Jesus had already given them the strongest proof of his divine commission. He knew that no evidence he could present to them would convince them that he was the Messiah if his act of cleansing the temple had failed to do so. Therefore he answered their challenge with these words, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They supposed he referred to the temple of Jerusalem, and were astounded at his apparent presumption. Their unbelieving minds were unable to discern that he referred to his own body, the earthly temple of the Son of God. With indignation they answered, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" – *Spirit of Prophecy Vol. 2*, p. 121

**KEY
THOUGHT**

May I believe the Bible when it says that God lives in the temple of my body? What effect should this realization have on my behaviour?

Part 6: GOD IN THE CHURCH

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Eph 2:19-22)

The church on earth is God's temple, and it is to assume divine proportions before the world. This building is to be the light of the world. It is to be composed of living stones laid close together, stone fitting to stone, making a solid building. All these stones are not of the same shape or dimension. Some are large and some are small, but each one has its own place to fill. In the whole building there is not to be one misshapen stone. Each one is perfect. And each stone is a living stone, a stone that emits light. The value of the stones is determined by the light they reflect to the world." – *In Heavenly Places, p. 281*

What description of the Church suggests the very close relationship between God and the Church? (Eph. 1:22,23)

So to Israel, whom He desired to make His dwelling place, He revealed His glorious ideal of character. The pattern was shown them in the mount when the law was given from Sinai. . . ." – *The Faith I Live By, p. 192*

How was God's ultimate purpose for His Church illustrated by the services of the Hebrew sanctuary? Lev. 16:30 (compare Eph. 4:11-13; Mal. 3:1-3)

"The apostles built upon a sure foundation, even the Rock of Ages. To this foundation they brought the stones that they quarried from the world. Not without hindrance did the builders labor. Their work was made exceedingly difficult by the opposition of the enemies of Christ. They had to contend against the bigotry, prejudice, and hatred of those who were building upon a false foundation. . . . But in the face of imprisonment, torture, and death, faithful men carried the work forward; and the structure grew, beautiful and symmetrical. . . .

"Through the ages that have passed since the days of the apostles, the building of God's temple has never ceased. We may look back through the centuries and see the living stones of which it is composed gleaming like jets of light through the darkness of error and superstition. Throughout eternity these precious jewels will shine with increasing luster. . . ." – *God's Amazing Grace, p. 123*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The body of Christ will never be stronger than its weakest member. We must help one another to grow.

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD IN THE LAST DAYS

If the whole purpose of life is to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength (Mark 12:30), then it is obvious that any doctrine which is worth knowing, must have some relationship to this supreme purpose of knowing and loving God with all our being.

Most Christians are convinced that we are living in the last days. Most Christians are also concerned that as we approach the last great crisis we should relate to it in a way that is pleasing to God and that the witness which we bear before the world is a correct one, in harmony with the purposes of God.

What is the real problem with the world? *“It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.”* – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p.415

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PART 1: THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:34)

In this verse we find a wonderful expression of the relationship which God desires to have with each human being. God promises that a day will come when the sins and iniquities of His people will be blotted out and entirely forgotten. In this day, men will not depend on others to come to God on their behalf. The priest and the pastor will not have a relationship with God which is unavailable to the common people. All God's people – every single one of them – will know Him. The emphasis of this verse is the idea that each person may, and ought to have a relationship with God in which there is personal intimacy and interaction. This is God's earnest desire and will for His people because He loves and saves us as individuals, not as groups or churches.

What is God's great desire for the entire world? Isa. 11:9; Num. 14:21

"The Saviour longs to manifest His grace and stamp His character on the whole world. It is His purchased possession, and He desires to make men free, and pure, and holy. Though Satan works to hinder this purpose, yet through the blood shed for the world there are triumphs to be achieved that will bring glory to God and the Lamb. Christ will not be satisfied till the victory is complete, and "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Isa. 53:11. All the nations of the earth shall hear the gospel of His grace. Not all will receive His grace; but "a seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." Ps. 22:30. . . .and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun." Isa. 11:9; 59:19." – *The Desire of Ages, p.827-8*

What statement by the redeemed multitude in Revelation Chapter 7 reveals that they have a true knowledge of the identity of God? Rev. 7:9,10

This statement reveals that the redeemed know two things. Firstly, they know that salvation is the work of God and Christ and that they are both to be glorified and praised for what they have done. Secondly, they know that there is only one God and that He is the one who sits on the throne. Jesus is given proper recognition as "the Lamb" of God.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The knowledge of God will fill the earth because His people will reveal this knowledge to the world by their teachings as well as by their lives.

Part 2: THE MESSAGE OF GOD

**O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain;
O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength;
lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!
(Isa 40:9)**

“ It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to be shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy, and truth.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons, p.415*

What will be the main focus of the remnant as they proclaim the fall of Babylon and warn against receiving the Mark of the Beast? Rev. 14:7

Revelation 14:6–12 presents the great crisis of the last days. It shows us that the issues to be prepared for are (a) The hour of God’s judgement (b) The fall of Babylon (c) The mark of the beast crisis. How are we to prepare to meet these tremendous issues? What should be our focus as we enter the last great conflict? Revelation 14:7 gives us the answer and it is interesting to note that this is the only place where we are given instructions as to what we are to do in light of the coming conflict. God’s command to us is threefold: (1) Fear God (2) Give glory to Him (3) Worship Him. Notice that the focus is entirely upon God . This command can never be obeyed by people who have confused or false ideas as to who God really is.

In what critical respect must the work of God’s people be similar to that of Christ? John 1:18

“Heaven, looking down, and seeing the delusions into which men were led, knew that a divine Instructor must come to earth. Men in ignorance and moral darkness must have light, spiritual light; for the world knew not God, and he must be revealed to their understanding. Truth looked down from heaven and saw not the reflection of her image; for dense clouds of moral darkness and gloom enveloped the world, and the Lord Jesus alone was able to roll back the clouds; for he was the light of the world. By his presence he could dissipate the gloomy shadow that Satan had cast between man and God. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Through the accumulated misrepresentations of the enemy, many were so deceived that they worshiped a false god, clothed with the attributes of the satanic character.

“ . . . the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship him in spirit and in truth.” – *Christian Education, p. 73*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The most vital message needed by the world today is the message of the love of God, revealed in the gift of His Son.

Part 3: THE CHARACTER OF GOD

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. (1 Pet 1:15-16)

“ . . . Through sin the divine likeness was marred, and well-nigh obliterated. Man's physical powers were weakened, his mental capacity was lessened, his spiritual vision dimmed. He had become subject to death. Yet the race was not left without hope. By infinite love and mercy the plan of salvation had been devised, and a life of probation was granted. To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized--this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life.” – *Education, p. 15*

What fact may give us confidence as we contemplate the reality of a day of judgement? 1 John 4:17

The apostle Paul speaks in several places of the value of a “good conscience.” There is nothing which gives peace of mind and confidence in our approach to God as much as the realization that we are becoming like God in character. John gives us insight into the reason why some will flee from Christ while some will greet His return with great joy. It is the awareness that we are like Him in character. We are able to walk together with God because we agree with Him. This relationship can never exist between God and those who are not becoming like Him in character.

Will the people of God ever come to the place in this life where their characters are like His? Isa. 60:1,2

“By beholding the character of Christ you will become changed into His likeness. The grace of Christ alone can change your heart and then you will reflect the image of the Lord Jesus. God calls upon us to be like Him--pure, holy, and undefiled. We are to bear the divine image. . . .” – *God's Amazing Grace, p.299*

God's people must be growing more like Him every day as they learn more of His character. “By beholding we are changed.” As we learn more of God and our understanding of Him becomes more accurate we shall grow more and more into His likeness. The last generation of God's people upon this earth will reflect the image of Jesus perfectly simply because they will have the most complete understanding of God of any generation. This understanding of God will not be just a dry theory, but something which affects our lives because we believe it. Faith must be mixed with our understanding of truth.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Is my understanding of God helping me to be a better person? To be more like Him each day?

Part 4: THE WORKS OF GOD

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. (John 14:12)

Jesus promised that His disciples would do “greater works” than even those which He performed when on this earth. This is a truly wonderful promise and one which we know to be absolutely true. However, we dare not forget the means by which these greater works will be accomplished. It would not be because the believer was in any way on a level with Jesus. It would be “because I go to my Father.” Because Jesus would be our intercessor in the heavenly courts, the Father would do mighty works through the believers.

What is the first “work” required of Christians upon which every other good work depends? John 6:29

The first and greatest need of any person is to believe in Jesus Christ. To believe that He is God’s Son, that He reveals the Father’s character, that He is the wisdom and power of God, that He died to bring us back to God, in a nutshell, that God has given Him to us to be our all in all. As the song says, “He’s everything to me.” Without this primary faith in Christ, all attempts to live the life which pleases God will be an utter failure.

What must we always bear in mind as we seek to fulfill the commission of preaching the gospel? John 15:5

Every Christian must guard against the tendency to depend on self. In a world where the word, “self-reliance” and “independence” are regarded as descriptions of a complete person and where social programmes, psychology and education are being substituted for the gospel, the do-it-yourself religion has become the order of the day. Yet it is still true that men without Christ can do nothing and in the final day of reckoning it will be revealed that a great deal of what took place in the name of Christ was really an abundance of rubbish. Only the work performed under the influence of Christ, by His direction will bear the test of eternity.

How will God’s people be enabled to finish the work when they are so few, in a world of so many people? Joel 2:28,29; Rev. 18:1-4

“. . . Then, as at the Pentecostal season, the people will hear the truth spoken to them, every man in his own tongue. . . . Thousands of voices will be imbued with the power to speak forth the wonderful truths of God’s word. The stammering tongue will be loosed, and the timid will be made strong to bear courageous testimony to the truth.” – *Gospel Workers*, p. 383

**KEY
THOUGHT**

We must cleanse the soul-temple from every defilement, and maintain so close a connection with Christ that we may partake of the latter rain when it is poured out.

Part 5: THE HONOUR OF GOD

Do not abhor us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us. (Jer 14:21)

God's people often have a very limited understanding of the consequences which result from the way in which they live their lives. When a person claims to be a child of God, then every act which he performs reflects upon the government and character of God.

What specific purpose does God have in perfecting His people in the last days? Isaiah 43:21

"Those who think of the result of hastening or hindering the gospel think of it in relation to themselves and to the world. Few think of its relation to God. Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God. Every departure from the right, every deed of cruelty, every failure of humanity to reach His ideal, brings grief to Him: . . . " – *Education, p. 263*

"The Saviour came to glorify the Father by the demonstration of His love; so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing His grace to the world. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honor of God, the honor of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people." – *Desire of Ages, p.671*

As we desire to be used by God in carrying out His purposes, what important principle must we always keep in mind? 1 Sam. 2:30

Those who desire to be used by the Lord in promoting His cause upon earth must always remember that God can only use those who are determined to seek only His glory and to honour Him by always obeying His instructions. He will bless the work only which is done in His way by those who acknowledge that they know nothing and depend wholly upon God to lead and direct them.

". . . Like the disciples, we are in danger of losing sight of our dependence on God, and seeking to make a savior of our activity. We need to look constantly to Jesus, realizing that it is His power which does the work. While we are to labor earnestly for the salvation of the lost, we must also take time for meditation, for prayer, and for the study of the Word of God. Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good."--*The Desire of Ages, p. 362.*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Do we mean what we say when we end our prayers with the words, "for thy name's sake?"

Part 6: THE FEAR OF GOD

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Prov 9:10)

“ . . . The life of Abraham, the friend of God, was signaled by a strict regard for the word of the Lord. He cultivated home religion. The fear of God pervaded his household. He was the priest of his home. He looked upon his family as a sacred trust. His household numbered more than a thousand souls, and he directed them all, parents and children, to the divine Sovereign. He suffered no parental oppression on the one hand or filial disobedience on the other. By the combined influence of love and justice, he ruled his household in the fear of God, and the Lord bore witness to his faithfulness.” – *Conflict and Courage, p. 49*

What will be the fruitage of a healthy fear of God? 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:21

“All the varied capabilities that men possess--of mind and soul and body--are given them by God, to be so employed as to reach the highest possible degree of excellence. But this cannot be a selfish and exclusive culture; for the character of God, whose likeness we are to receive, is benevolence and love. Every faculty, every attribute, with which the Creator has endowed us is to be employed for His glory and for the uplifting of our fellow men. And in this employment is found its purest, noblest, and happiest exercise.” – *Reflecting Christ, p. 158*

What must we be determined to do as we face the last great crisis? Rev. 14:7

The religious and the secular world today has many heroes who are admired, respected and greatly feared. These men are considered to be great in the world and their pronouncements are highly valued and respected. Whenever the Pope or the president of the United States, or even one of the sports heroes makes a comment on any issue, a great deal is made of his words in the public media and people will discuss these statements and comment on their implications for days afterwards.

Those who are faithful to God during the last great crisis will have learned to fear God only. Not in the sense that they have no respect for human leaders and rulers, but in the sense that they recognize that God alone is wise and that His way alone must be obeyed supremely. The “fear” of those who are considered great and who are honoured by the world is the key factor which will lead to almost the entire world receiving the Mark of the Beast. Men will refuse to believe that the Mark of the Beast can be an evil thing, because it will be instituted by their popular leaders, whom they have learned to trust and obey, even above the word of God.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Do I respect God so much that His word is what determines how I behave at all times?

THE GIFTS OF GOD

“We can discern his love to us in giving us all these things in nature. We can see it in the lovely flowers in the valleys and on the surface of the lake. Anywhere, everywhere, we may read expressions of God's love in the opening buds and blooming flowers. As God has given us these things of beauty and purity how much more will he delight to give us an eternal inheritance. He wants you to come into that position where he may grant you the gift of immortality. He has given you the gift of his Son, the greatest gift that Heaven could bestow; and now if you connect with God, if you connect with heaven, you may, in the name and strength of Jesus develop symmetrical characters; characters that are spotless as the pure lily that opens its blossom on the bosom of the lake. I invite you to take hold of heaven's blessings and then you can have a right hold upon the earth. I invite you to look up through nature to nature's God. Let these things teach you the love of God, and the care that he has for those formed in his image.” – *Signs of The Times, February 7, 1878*

“ . . . God delights to give. He is full of compassion, and He longs to grant the requests of those who come unto Him in faith. He gives to us that we may minister to others and thus become like Himself.” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p.141*

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PART 1: AN ETERNAL SAVIOUR

(Heb 7:25) Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

God is not pleased with our sinful state. His law still stands unchangeable with the penalty of death being the consequence of disobedience. However, when God gave His Son to be our sacrifice and subsequently, our High Priest, He made an eternal provision to meet the needs of repentant sinners. As long as we desire salvation and seek mercy and help from God, Jesus will always be available to us, our Substitute and Mediator, One who represents us before the throne of God. We may be confident that "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" (Philippians 1:6)

What assurance may the Christian face as he encounters numerous temptations and is often buffeted by trials? (Heb 4:15; 2 Tim 1:12)

"Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, Fear not; I am with you. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore." Rev. 1:18. I have endured your sorrows, experienced your struggles, encountered your temptations. I know your tears; I also have wept. The griefs that lie too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isa. 54:10. — *The Desire of Ages*, p.483

In what way will the memory of Christ's great sacrifice be always remembered in the years eternity? (Habakkuk 3:4)

"... Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. . . . That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God--there is the Saviour's glory, there "the hiding of His power." "Mighty to save," through the sacrifice of redemption, He was therefore strong to execute justice upon them that despised God's mercy. And the tokens of His humiliation are His highest honor; through the eternal ages the wounds of Calvary will show forth His praise and declare His power." — *The Great Controversy*, p. 674

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God has given Christ to us. We have a brother at the throne of God. We may be confident that if we place ourselves in His hand, He will do the work in us.

Part 2: ETERNAL LIFE

(Rom 6:23) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Christ calls upon every one to consider. Make an honest reckoning. Put into one scale Jesus, which means eternal treasure, life, truth, heaven, and the joy of Christ in souls redeemed; put into the other every attraction the world can offer. Into one scale put the loss of your own soul, and the souls of those whom you might have been instrumental in saving; into the other, for yourself and for them, a life that measures with the life of God. Weigh for time and for eternity. While you are thus engaged, Christ speaks: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36. – *Christs Object Lessons, p.374*

Christians often complain that it is difficult or impossible for them to serve God properly because of the influence of unconverted persons in their lives. Is this claim one that can be justified? (John 10:27-28)

“. . . if those who engaged in this race here upon the earth for a temporal crown, could be temperate in all things, cannot we, who have in view an incorruptible crown, an eternal weight of glory, and a life which measures with the life of God? When we have this great inducement before us, cannot we "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith"? Hebrews 12:1, 2. He has pointed out the way for us and marked it all along by His own footsteps. It is the path that He traveled, and we may, with Him, experience the self-denial and the suffering, and walk in this pathway imprinted by His own blood." – *Counsels on Health, p.48*

Though eternal life is “the gift of God” (Rom. 6:23), in what way should we respond to God’s assurance that this gift is available (1 Tim 6:12; Rom 2:7)

No one should cherish the false idea that because eternal life is a gift, this means that Christians need to make no earnest effort to obtain it. We can never afford to become lax and careless in fighting the fight of faith. constant vigilance is required. It is true that we cannot obtain this life by our works. There is no saving merit in our deeds. At the same time we may be assured that eternal life is not for those who are spiritually lazy, and who treat salvation as a light matter. “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil 2:12)

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Eternal life is not just a span of time. It is also a quality of life which we may begin to experience now, as we enter into union with Christ. (1 John 5:11)

Part 3: ETERNAL PEACE

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (Rev 21:4)

"In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called "a country" (Heb. 11:16). There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home." – *God's Amazing Grace, p.363*

What promise does God make to those who keep their minds fixed upon Him? (Isa 26:3; Phil 4:7; Col 3:15)

George Muller once said, "where anxiety begins, faith ends; where faith begins anxiety ends." Muller knew what he was talking about. After his conversion in his early twenties he set out to live a life of total dependence on God and at the end of his life he had recorded more than 52,000 instances in which God had definitely and specifically answered prayer and supplied his need. George Muller's experience may belong to all of us. It is when we live in this kind of total trust and dependence upon God that we may know the peace which passeth understanding which will be the heritage of the redeemed.

What certainty may every Christian have in the midst of a world plagued by problems? (Phil 4:19; 1 Cor 10:13)

"Whoever consents to renounce sin and open his heart to the love of Christ, becomes a partaker of this heavenly peace. There is no other ground of peace than this. The grace of Christ, received into the heart, subdues enmity; it allays strife and fills the soul with love. He who is at peace with God and his fellow men cannot be made miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil surmisings will find no room there; hatred cannot exist. The heart that is in harmony with God is a partaker of the peace of heaven and will diffuse its blessed influence on all around. The spirit of peace will rest like dew upon hearts weary and troubled with worldly strife." – *Heavenly Places, p.35*

Why is it that men's efforts to achieve peace on earth will always come to failure. (Isaiah 57:20-21)

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Lack of peace in the life of a Christian is an evidence that he is not walking closely with God.

Part 4: KINGS AND PRIESTS

Rev 1:6) And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

“. . . Upon the heads of the overcomers, Jesus with his own right hand places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown, bearing his own "new name," [REV. 2:17.] and the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord." In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the harp strings with skillful touch, awaking sweet music in rich, melodious strains. Rapture unutterable thrills every heart, and each voice is raised in grateful praise

"Before the ransomed throng is the holy city. Jesus opens wide the pearly gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. There they behold the Paradise of God, the home of Adam in his innocency. Then that voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, is heard, saying, "Your conflict is ended." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." – *The Great Controversy, p.646*

What purpose of God for Israel, proclaimed to Moses was fulfilled in the New Testament Church? Exodus 19:6

God's purpose was that as the children of Israel learned more about Him and were drawn into closer fellowship with Him, all of them would enjoy the privilege of being kings and priests. The privilege of personal intimacy with God would be not just for the priests, but for all. The privileges of royalty would not be just for the king of Israel and his family, but for all who were a part of the people of God.

“. . . Those who are willing to share in this life the humiliation of the Saviour, will share with Him in His glory. Those who choose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, will be given a place with Christ on His throne." – *Signs of The Times, November 14, 1900*

What is one of the primary obligations of all who have been granted the privilege of being kings and priests unto God? 1 Pet 2:9

“. . . We may become the sons of God, the heirs of an eternal inheritance, partakers of the divine nature, kings and priests unto God. The most exalted privileges are offered to the obedient. Shall we turn away in rebellion and unbelief, and propose to go back to Egypt? Never! Our march should be onward, toward the heavenly Canaan. Every step should be from faith to a greater faith, from obedience to a more perfect obedience, from light to a brighter light; for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." – *Signs of The Times, January 6, 1888*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Though we may not yet be experiencing the privileges of kings, yet it is our privilege to bear ourselves with the dignity and nobility of royalty.

Part 5: ETERNAL FELLOWSHIP

(Rev 21:3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“Those who take no pleasure in thinking and talking of God in this life, will not enjoy the life that is to come, where God is ever present, dwelling among His people. But those who love to think of God will be in their element, breathing in the atmosphere of heaven. Those who on earth love the thought of heaven will be happy in its holy associations and pleasures. . . .” “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads” (Rev. 22:3, 4). – *In Heavenly Places, p.370*

What special privilege will the 144,000 enjoy? (Rev 14:4; Rev 7:15)

“Only by looking to Jesus, the Lamb of God, and following in His steps, can you prepare to meet God. Follow Him, and you will one day walk the golden streets of the city of God. You will see Him who laid aside His royal garments and His kingly crown, and disguising Himself with humanity, came to our world and bore our sins, that He might lift us up and give us a revelation of His glory and majesty. We shall see Him face to face if we now give ourselves up to be molded and fashioned by Him and prepared for a place in the kingdom of God.” – *That I May Know Him, p.364*

What promise made by Jesus reveals His longing to have unbroken fellowship with His people? (John 14:3)

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

“With uplifted heads, with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon them, with rejoicing that their redemption draweth nigh, they go forth to meet the Bridegroom, saying, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us.” ...

“The time of tarrying is almost ended. The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home.” – *Our High Calling, p.367*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Only those who love to have fellowship with God and His Son here, can look forward to greater fellowship with them in the life to come.

Part 6: HEIRS OF GOD

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. (Rev 21:7)

“. . . One of the lessons that we are to learn in the school of Christ is that the Lord's love for us is far greater than that of our earthly parents. We are to have unquestioning faith and perfect confidence in Him. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Verses 16, 17. – *Testimonies for The Church, Vol. 8, p.126*

Among what kind of people will we find those who will inherit the kingdom of God? (James 2:5)

“. . . Those who have faith in Christ as a personal Saviour, even though they may occupy a humble place in the world, are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ to an immortal inheritance. They have an insurance policy to eternal life. “ – *The Upward Look, p. 45*

“The members of the heavenly family are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ--heirs to the treasures of heaven. They will not follow the ambition and madness of this world, to heap up treasures here below, at the loss of a Christian character that would insure them a life that measures with the life of God--a life free from sin, sickness, sorrow, and death. “ – *The Upward Look, p. 105*

“Those who will be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ to the immortal inheritance, will be peculiar. Yes, so peculiar that God places a mark upon them as His, wholly His. Think ye that God will receive, honor, and acknowledge a people so mixed up with the world that they differ from them only in name? Read again Titus 2:13-15. It is soon to be known who is on the Lord's side, who will not be ashamed of Jesus. Those who have not moral courage to conscientiously take their position in the face of unbelievers, leave the fashions of the world, and imitate the self-denying life of Christ, are ashamed of Him, and do not love His example.” – *Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p.287*

What wonderful facts will always be unknown to us as long as we remain in this life? (1 Cor 2:9)

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. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." – *The Adventist Home, p.545*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

We do not know what wonders we shall experience and enjoy in the life to come, but we do know that all that belongs to Christ, will belong to us.

THE REVELATION OF GOD

"We are to know God as He is revealed in His marvelous works." – Special Testimonies, Series b7, p.7

A knowledge of God may be obtained from a study of His creation. Every leaf and bud and flower, every moving thing testifies of the character of God. However, in seeking to know God, these avenues of research are limited. They can give only a partial revelation of God.

"To know God as He is--this is the science of all goodness and truth and righteousness. We must obey every expression of His character as revealed in His law." – The Upward Look, p.347

Yet, even the law of God, sacred as it is, gives only a partial understanding of the character of God. It is only in His Son that we may find the perfect knowledge of God.

"To know God in His works is true science, but to know God as He is in Christ is life eternal." – Manuscript Releases, Vol. 21, p.427

"Oh, that men might open their minds to know God as he is revealed in his Son!" – Signs of The Times, January 20, 1890

LESSON STUDY RECORD

<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/> Friday

Part 1: THE WORD OF GOD

And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. (Rev 19:13)

“By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,—God’s thought made audible. In His prayer for His disciples He says, “I have declared unto them Thy name . . . Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which “seeketh not her own” has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.” — *The Desire of Ages, p.19*

According to the apostle Paul, by what means has God “spoken” unto the world in these “last days?” (Heb 1:1-2)

God’s great purpose is the manifestation of His character to the universe. God spoke to mankind in many ways in an effort to get men to understand what He was really like. But even though He revealed Himself through the writings of Moses to be a God “merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth,” the true nature of His character could not be revealed by mere words. A living manifestation of God’s character was needed and this was unfolded in the life of Christ. God “spoke” to the world by His Son in the sense that in Him, God finally was able to reveal Himself in the fullness of His glorious character of love.

What event emphasized to the disciples the fact that Jesus’ authority to speak for God was greater than all who had gone before Him? Matthew 17:4,5

The disciples were sure that Jesus was a great prophet but they did not yet fully realize the exalted nature of their Lord. The realization that He was the divine Son of God had not yet come home to them, in spite of Peter’s confession that “thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16).” The sight of Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus seemed to Peter to be a confirmation of the fact that Jesus was one of the great prophets — equal to Moses and Elijah. He proposed to build three tabernacles, one each for Moses, Elijah and Jesus, to show that he regarded Jesus as being equal with these prophets. But God corrects him. None is equal to Christ. This was His beloved Son and they should listen to Him above all others. No other servant of God should ever be placed in His category.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God’s greatest desire is that we should know Him as He is. In Jesus He has revealed the fullness of His character, therefore to understand God we must behold Christ.

Part 2: THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. (Exo 3:2)

The Person who appeared to Moses in the burning bush is called “the Angel of the LORD (Jehovah)” This makes it clear that the Person was not Jehovah Himself, but rather His representative. This was none other than Jesus, the Son of God. He, being of the very same nature as the almighty God and having inherited the name of His Father (Hebrews 1:4) Could identify Himself as Jehovah. No created being could have taken upon himself such a prerogative without being guilty of the greatest blasphemy.

How do Paul and Isaiah both reinforce the truth that it was not God Himself, but His Representative, Jesus Christ, who dealt with the Israelites in the Old Testament? Isa 63:9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4

The fact that Jesus is referred to as “the Angel of the Lord” does not mean that He is inferior to God or that the angels are on a level with Him. The word “angel” simply signifies a messenger. Jesus as the Representative of God, the anointed One who carries out His purposes is the Messenger of God. It is He who bears the name of God and whose authority is second only to that of God the Father.

“ Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God’s plan, but would exalt the Father’s glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets, p.36*

How does the prophet Daniel describe the relationship of Christ with regards to God’s people? (Dan 12:1)

“ . . . They knew that He was before the throne of God, their Friend and Saviour still; that His sympathies were unchanged; that He would forever be identified with suffering humanity. They knew that He was presenting before God the merit of His blood, showing His wounded hands and feet as a remembrance of the price He had paid for His redeemed ones; and this thought strengthened them to endure reproach for His sake. Their union with Him was stronger now than when He was with them in person ” – *Acts of The Apostles, p.65*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

As God’s appointed Representative Jesus has been given all authority and power in heaven and earth. The Son must be honoured equally with the Father.

PART 3: GOD'S EXPRESS IMAGE

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb 1:3)

“Jesus did not represent his work as differing from that of his Father. His plans were not independent of God. He moved in perfect harmony with God; his every act carried out his Father's will. His life was the mind of God expressed in humanity. He had come to the world in the Father's name, that through him we might have life” – *Review and Herald, February 15, 1898*

How closely does Jesus represent the character of God the Father? (John 14:9)

“. . . Christ Himself is the pearl of great price. In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fullness of the Godhead. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God is expressed in His character” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 115*

“. . . Jesus, the express image of the Father's person, the effulgence of His glory; the self-denying Redeemer, throughout His pilgrimage of love on earth was a living representative of the character of the law of God. In His life it is made manifest that heaven-born love, Christlike principles, underlie the laws of eternal rectitude. {AG 102.4}

“The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that His life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man. He was of as much more value than man as His noble, spotless character, and exalted office as commander of all the heavenly host were above the work of man. He was in the express image of His Father, not in features alone, but in perfection of character.” – *Lift Him Up, p.24*

Where must we look if we desire to see the glory of God? (2 Cor 4:6)

“But turning from all lesser representations, we behold God in Jesus. . . .” – *The Desire of Ages, p.21*

“To comprehend and enjoy God, is the highest exercise of the powers of man. . . . No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.” In Christ was “God manifested in the flesh, reconciling the world unto himself.” In Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person.” – *Review and Herald, RH, May 30, 1882*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Through the indwelling spirit of God we may become like God in character as we keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus Christ.

Part 4: HE HATH DECLARED HIM

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

“Those who think they can obtain a knowledge of God aside from his Representative, whom the word declares is "the express image of his person," will need to become fools in their own estimation before they can be wise. Christ came as a personal Saviour to the world. He represented a personal God. He ascended on high as a personal Saviour, and will come again as he ascended into heaven, a personal Saviour” – *Healthful Living, p.296*

What did John mean by saying that no man had seen God, when Moses Enoch and Elijah were all already in heaven? (John 1:18)

John was making it clear that the only person who was qualified to reveal what God was really like was the Son of God. He was the teacher who came down from heaven. He had first-hand knowledge of what He was talking about. All the prophets spoke of what they had heard, but Jesus spoke of what He had seen, what He knew. He revealed God in His life because He was of the same nature as God, being His only begotten Son. John says, “. . . and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14). No man, (no previous prophet or teacher) had ever seen God (had a personal intimate knowledge of His nature and character). The point is that we must turn to Jesus if we wish to have clear ideas of God’s character.

According to Jesus, how did He receive for the knowledge which He sought to impart to the people? (John 3:11)

“. . . God had spoken through nature, through types and symbols, patriarchs and prophets. Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity. The messenger of the covenant, the Sun of Righteousness, must rise upon the world. His voice must be heard in His own temple. Christ must come to utter words which would be clearly and definitely understood. He, the Author of truth, must separate truth from the chaff of man’s utterance, which had made it of none effect....

“When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son.” Man’s terrible necessity demanded help without delay. Who met this necessity?--An illustrious Teacher, the Son of God. The eternal Word came to our world to win the confidence of humanity. The Prophet that had been revealed to Moses, like unto His brethren, whom they should hear in all things, came as man’s Redeemer.” – *Bible Echo, March 8, 1897*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Have we received the understanding of God’s nature and character which have been revealed by Christ?

Part 5: THE SON OF GOD

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

“How can we understand God? How are we to know our Father? We are to call Him by the endearing name of Father. And how are we to know Him and the power of His love? It is through diligent search of the Scriptures. We cannot appreciate God unless we take into our souls the great plan of redemption. We want to know all about these grand problems of the soul, of the redemption of the fallen race. It is a wonderful thing that after man had violated the law of God and separated himself from God, was divorced, as it were, from God --that after all this there was a plan made whereby man should not perish, but that he should have everlasting life. . . . God gave His only-begotten Son to die for us. . . . When our minds are constantly dwelling upon the matchless love of God to the fallen race, we begin to know God, to become acquainted with Him. . . .” – *Heavenly Places, p.11*

What guarantee do we have that the deeds which Jesus did when on earth were exactly what God would have done in His place? (John 1:14)

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

John says that the glory which they beheld in Jesus was “the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.” Only one being could have lived such a life and revealed God's glory in such a way. Jesus was guaranteed to behave like God because He was born of God. He was the begotten Son of God having by nature the life and character of God. Because of this He was guaranteed to behave like the Father in every situation which arose.

What did God think of the way Jesus represented Him? Mat 3:17; Luke 9:35; Luke 20:13

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

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Because He was the true Son of God Jesus was exactly like God in character. So must we also be like God who become His sons by the impartaion of His life.

Part 6: GOD WITH US

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Mat 1:23)

"The light of the knowledge of the glory of God" is seen "in the face of Jesus Christ." From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory." It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love,--to be "God with us" – *The Desire of Ages, p.19*

What description of Christ reveals the fact that as the Son of God He is a divine being, possessing the fullness of the nature of God? John 1:1; Philippians 2:5,6

There is only one Being who is rightly identified as God in the sense of being the supreme One who is above all others, the originator and source of all things. This Person is God the Father (1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 17:3; Rev. 21:22). However, God has an only begotten Son who was brought forth (not created) from His own substance. Clearly, this means that God and Christ must share the same *divine* nature. Therefore, in His nature, Christ is God (or a divine Being), though He is not the Person whom the Bible refers to as "the only true God."

"Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by Him as His right." – *The Faith I Live By, p.46*

Is the divinity of Jesus less than that of God the Father in any way? Colossians 2:9; Colossians 1:19

Just as a man's son is not less human than his father, so Christ's divinity cannot be less than His Father's in the slightest degree.

"A complete offering has been made; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,"-- not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father's person, and in all the brightness of his majesty and glory, one equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection. In him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." – *Signs of The Times, May 30, 1895*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The divinity of Christ is our assurance of eternal life. One equal to God paid the price for our sins and ministers on our behalf before the throne of God.

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