

## Lesson 8

# The New Testament Hope

Sabbath Afternoon, November 12

“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son,” (1 John 5:11). . . .

He [the Christian] may die; but the life of Christ is in him, and at the resurrection of the just he will rise to newness of life.

“In him [Christ] was life; and the life was the light of men.” 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,” He said. In Him was life, original, unborrowed, underived. This life is not inherent in man. He can possess it only through Christ. . . .

. . . We derive immortality from God by receiving the life of Christ, for in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. This life is the mystical union and cooperation of the divine with the human.

—*Maranatha*, p. 302.

The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The Saviour’s parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His disciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, the “appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” was the “blessed hope.” When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones, who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul, their teacher, pointed them to the resurrection, to take place at the Saviour’s advent. Then the dead in Christ should rise, and together with the living be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. “And so,” he said, “shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

—*The Great Controversy*, p. 302.

These are the things we are never to forget. The love of Jesus, with its constraining power, is to be kept fresh in our memory. Christ has instituted this service, [communion], that it may speak to our senses of the love of God that has been expressed in our behalf. There can be no union between our souls and God except through Christ. The union and love between brother and brother must be cemented and rendered eternal by the love of Jesus. And nothing less than the death of Christ could make His love efficacious for us. It is only because of His death that we can look with joy to His second coming. His sacrifice is the center of our hope. Upon this we must fix our faith.

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 660.

Sunday, November 13

## Hope Beyond This Life

[Esau] represents those who lightly value the redemption purchased for them by Christ, and are ready to sacrifice their heirship to heaven for the perishable things of earth. Multitudes live for the present, with no thought or care for the future. Like Esau they cry, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." 1 Corinthians 15:32. They are controlled by inclination; and rather than practice self-denial, they will forgo the most valuable considerations. . . . How many, even of professed Christians, cling to indulgences that are injurious to health and that benumb the sensibilities of the soul. When the duty is presented of cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, they are offended. . . . They conclude that since the way to eternal life is so strait, they will no longer walk therein.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 181.

He who repents of his sin and accepts the gift of the life of the Son of God, can not be overcome. Laying hold by faith of the divine nature, he becomes a child of God. He prays, he believes. When tempted and tried, he claims the power that Christ died to give, and overcomes through His grace. This every sinner needs to understand. He must repent of his sins, he must believe in the power of Christ, and accept that power to save and to keep him from sin. . . .

Heaven is worth everything to us, and if we lose heaven we lose all.

—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 349.

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.

. . . O how privileged we are that we may come to Jesus just as we are and cast ourselves upon His love! We have no hope but in Jesus. He alone can reach us with His hand to lift us up out of the depths of discouragement and hopelessness and place our feet upon the Rock. Although the human soul may cling to Jesus with all the desperate sense of his great need, Jesus will cling to the souls bought by His own blood with a firmer grasp than the sinner clings to Him.

—*That I May Know Him*, p. 80.

Monday, November 14

## “I Will Come Again”

Our danger is presented before us by Christ Himself. He knew the perils we should meet in these last days, and would have us prepare for them. “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.” They were eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the Flood came and swept them all away. The day of God will find men absorbed in like manner in the business and pleasures of the world. . . .

Belief in the near coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven will not cause the true Christian to become neglectful and careless of the ordinary business of life. The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly, but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness.

—*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 309.*

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 [one] 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! . . .

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.*

Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ’s return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfillment of the Saviour’s promise, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.” John 14:3. To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness. . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

—*The Acts of the Apostles, p. 536.*

Tuesday, November 15

## “ ‘I Will Raise Him Up’ ”

Many suppose that in following Christ they will be obliged to be gloomy and disconsolate, because they are required to deny themselves the pleasures and follies that the world indulge in. The living Christian will be filled with cheerfulness and peace, because he lives as seeing Him who is invisible; and those who seek Christ in His true character have within them the elements of everlasting life, because they are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Jesus said, “This is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:39, 40).

—*Selected Messages, book 1, p. 136.*

Those who will permit God to work in them will grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. Every power of the mind and body will be used in the service of God. . . . He has wonderful blessings to give to those who will receive Him. He is mighty in strength and wonderful in counsel. By the ministration of the Holy Spirit, He seeks to impress His image upon our characters. If we will feed upon Him we shall become new creatures in Christ Jesus. The virtues of a true Christian character, the excellences that are revealed in the character of Christ, will be seen in the life born of the Spirit. Man, with his human nature, will become a partaker of divinity. The power of Christ will work to sanctify every part of the being, diffusing life, activity, and soundness through the whole, and developing spiritual efficiency.

—*That I May Know Him, p. 106.*

Wednesday, November 16

## At the Sound of the Trumpet

When about to leave His disciples, Jesus did not tell them that they would soon come to Him. “I go to prepare a place for you,” He said. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.” John 14:2, 3. And Paul tells us, further, that “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” And he adds: “Comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. . . . Paul points his brethren to the future coming of the Lord, when the fetters of the tomb shall be broken, and the “dead in Christ” shall be raised to eternal life.

—*The Great Controversy*, p. 548.

To the believer, Christ is the resurrection and the life. In our Saviour the life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality. The life that He laid down in humanity, He takes up again, and gives to humanity.

When Christ comes to gather to Himself those who have been faithful, the last trump will sound, and the whole earth, from the summits of the loftiest mountains to the lowest recesses of the deepest mines, will hear. The righteous dead will hear the sound of the last trump, and will come forth from their graves. . . .

. . . All [the righteous dead] arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. . . . The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. . . . Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. . . .

The living righteous are changed “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” 1 Corinthians 15:52. At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal, and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. . . . Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers’ arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.

All the precious dead, from righteous Abel to the last saint that dies, shall awake to glorious, immortal life.

—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 183.

Thursday, November 17

## The Everlasting Encounter

The Lifegiver is coming to break the fetters of the tomb. He is to bring forth the captives and proclaim, “I am the resurrection and the life.” There stands the risen host. The last thought was of death and its pangs. The last thoughts they had were of the grave and the tomb, but now they proclaim, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory” (1 Corinthians 15:55). The pangs of death were the last things they felt. . . .

When they awake the pain is all gone. “O grave, where is thy victory?” here they stand and the finishing touch of immortality is put upon them and they go up to meet their Lord in the air. The gates of the city of God swing back upon their hinges, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in.

—*Selected Messages, book 3, pp. 430, 431.*

When Christ shall come to the earth again, not as a prisoner surrounded by a rabble will men see Him. They will see Him then as heaven’s King. Christ will come in His own glory, in the glory of His Father, and the glory of the holy angels. Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels, the beautiful and triumphant sons of God, possessing surpassing loveliness and glory, will escort Him on His way. Then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Then every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory,—a crown within a crown. In place of that old purple kingly robe, He will be clothed in raiment of whitest white, “so as no fuller on earth can white them.” Mark 9:3. And on His vesture and on His thigh a name will be written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:16.

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 739.*

Christ is coming with clouds and with great glory. A multitude of shining angels will attend Him. He will come to raise the dead, and to change the living saints from glory to glory. He will come to honor those who have loved Him, and kept His commandments, and to take them to Himself. He has not forgotten them nor His promise. There will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we may think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, when “the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:52. A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and He will present us “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 1:24. Wherefore, when He gave the signs of His coming He said, “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 632.*

Friday, November 18

## For Further Reading

*This Day With God*, “Christ, the Bread of Life,” p. 112;

*The Acts of the Apostles*, “Called to Reach a Higher Standard,” pp. 319–321.