

Third Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 2, 1 – 7 July

God's Grand, Christ-Centered Plan



Sabbath Afternoon, July 1

In the gracious blessings which our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us we may discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite, and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child. When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. In the language of John we exclaim: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God and God to man. Matchless mercy reveals to us a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance which threatened only misery and despair, in the reflected light from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent and believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom.

— *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 461.*

The Lord Jesus . . . loves you. If you doubt His love, look to Calvary. The light reflected from the cross shows you the magnitude of that love which no tongue can tell.

The mercies of God surround you every moment; and it would be profitable for you to consider how and whence your blessings come every day. Let the precious blessings of God awaken gratitude in you. You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant loving-kindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain. Clouds of mercy are hanging over you, and ready to drop upon you. If you will appreciate the valuable gift of salvation, you will be sensible of daily refreshment, of the protection and love of Jesus; you will be guided in the way of peace.

—*Sons and Daughters of God, p. 340.*

The religion that comes from God is the only religion that will lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the divine Spirit. This will purify the heart and renew the mind, giving us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us a willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship. It is the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit every sincere prayer is indited, and such prayer is acceptable to God. Wherever a soul reaches out after God, there the Spirit’s working is manifest, and God will reveal Himself to that soul. For such worshipers He is seeking. He waits to receive them, and to make them His sons and daughters.

—*The Desire of Ages, p. 189.*

Sunday, July 2 Chosen and Accepted in Christ

At his creation Adam was placed in dominion over the earth. But by yielding to temptation, he was brought under the power of Satan. “Of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:19. When man became Satan’s captive, the dominion which he held, passed to his conqueror. Thus Satan became “the god of this world.” 2 Corinthians 4:4. He had usurped that dominion over the earth which had been originally given to Adam. But Christ, by His sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, would not only redeem man,

but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second. . . . [T]he apostle Paul points forward to the “redemption of the purchased possession.” Ephesians 1:14. . . . That purpose will be fulfilled, when, renewed by the power of God, and freed from sin and sorrow, it shall become the eternal abode of the redeemed.

—*Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 67.*

We must learn of Christ. We must know what He is to those He has ransomed. We must realize that through belief in Him it is our privilege to be partakers of the divine nature, and so escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then we are cleansed from all sin, all defects of character. We need not retain one sinful propensity. [Ephesians 2:1-6quoted.]

As we partake of the divine nature, hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are cut away from the character, and we are made a living power for good. Ever learning of the divine Teacher, daily partaking of His nature, we cooperate with God in overcoming Satan’s temptations. God works, and man works, that man may be one with Christ as Christ is one with God. Then we sit together with Christ in heavenly places. The mind rests with peace and assurance in Jesus.

—*Ellen G. White Comments, in The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 943.*

By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan’s purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. . . .

The exaltation of the redeemed will be an eternal testimony to God’s mercy. “In the ages to come,” He will “show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” “To the intent that . . . unto the

principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known . . . the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Ephesians 2:7; 3:10, 11, R. V.

— *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 25, 26.

Monday, July 3 Costly Redemption; Lavish Forgiveness

Our heavenly Father. . . . hates sin, but He loves the sinner, and He gave Himself in the person of Christ, that all who would might be saved and have eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. What stronger or more tender language could have been employed than He has chosen in which to express His love toward us? He declares, “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.” Isaiah 49:15. . . .

As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of Infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. “We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Ephesians 1:7. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness.

— *Steps to Christ*, pp. 54, 55.

The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy. This is a precious promise, given to fallen man to

encourage him to trust in the God of love and to seek for eternal life in His kingdom.

— ***Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 635.***

I wish I could present this matter before our people just as I view it—the great offering made in behalf of man. Justice asked for the sufferings of a man. Christ, equal with God, gave the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement Himself. It was for man—all for man. His depth of agony was proportionate to the dignity and grandeur of His character. Never shall we see and comprehend the intense anguish of the sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God until we feel how deep is the pit from which we have been delivered, how grievous the sin of which humanity is guilty, and by faith grasp the full and entire pardon.

Here is where thousands are failing. They do not really believe that Jesus pardons them individually. They fail to take God at His word. He has assured us that He is faithful that hath promised to forgive us and be just to His own law. His mercy is not wanting in anything. Were there one defective link in the chain, then we are hopelessly ruined in our sins. There is not one flaw in it, not one missing link. Oh, precious redemption! Why do we not bring this great truth more fully into our lives? How broad it is, that God for Christ’s sake forgives us—me, even me—the moment we ask Him to, in living faith, believing that He is fully able to do this.

— ***The Upward Look, p. 219.***

Tuesday, July 4 God’s Grand, Christ-Centered Plan

Never can the cost of our redemption be realized until the redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer before the throne of God. Then as the glories of the eternal home burst upon our enraptured senses we shall remember that Jesus left all this for us, that He not only became an exile from the heavenly courts,

but for us took the risk of failure and eternal loss. Then we shall cast our crowns at His feet, and raise the song, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Revelation 5:12.

–*The Desire of Ages*, p. 131.

Study this chapter [John 15]. You will see from it that the man who is truly united with Christ will never act as though he were a complete whole in himself.

The perfection of the church depends not on each member being fashioned exactly alike. God calls for each one to take his proper place, to stand in his lot to do his appointed work according to the ability which has been given him.

–*Ellen G. White Comments, in The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1090.

Only in the light that shines from Calvary can nature’s teaching be read aright. Through the story of Bethlehem and the cross let it be shown how good is to conquer evil, and how every blessing that comes to us is a gift of redemption.

In brier and thorn, in thistle and tare, is represented the evil that blights and mars. In singing bird and opening blossom, in rain and sunshine, in summer breeze and gentle dew, in ten thousand objects in nature, from the oak of the forest to the violet that blossoms at its root, is seen the love that restores. And nature still speaks to us of God’s goodness.

“I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil.” Jeremiah 29:11. This is the message that, in the light from the cross, may be read upon all the face of nature. The heavens declare His glory, and the earth is full of His riches.

–*Education*, p. 101.

Wednesday, July 5 Living in Praise of His Glory

Christ should never be out of the mind. The angels said concerning Him, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Jesus, precious Saviour! Assurance, helpfulness, security, and peace are all in Him. He is the dispeller of all our doubts, the earnest of all our hopes. How precious is the thought that we may indeed become partakers of the divine nature, whereby we may overcome as Christ overcame! Jesus is the fullness of our expectation. He is the melody of our songs, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He is living water to the thirsty soul. He is our refuge in the storm. He is our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption. When Christ is our personal Saviour, we shall show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 21.

By and by the gates of heaven will be thrown open to admit God’s children, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall on their ears like richest music, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthew 25:34.

Then the redeemed will be welcomed to the home that Jesus is preparing for them. There . . . they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and through divine grace have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection, that afflicts them here has been removed by the blood of Christ, and the excellence and brightness of His glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, is imparted to them. . . .

In view of the glorious inheritance that may be his, “what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Matthew 16:26. . . . The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in heaven in the presence of God and the

holy angels over one soul redeemed, a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.

—*Steps to Christ, pp. 125, 126.*

Christians sometimes think they have a hard time . . . that the road seems hard and that they have many sacrifices to make, when in reality they make no sacrifice at all. If in reality they are adopted into the family of God, what sacrifice have they made? Their following Christ may have broken some friendship with their world-loving relatives, but look at the exchange—their names written in the Lamb’s book of life, elevated, yes, greatly exalted, to be partakers of salvation, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to an imperishable inheritance. . . .

If there is any one who should be continually grateful, it is the follower of Christ. . . . If we appreciate or have any sense of how dearly our salvation was purchased, anything which we may call sacrifice will sink away into insignificance.

—*Our High Calling, p. 201.*

Thursday, July 6 The Holy Spirit: Seal and Down Payment

We are to be distinguished from the world because God has placed His seal upon us, because He manifests in us His own character of love. Our Redeemer covers us with His righteousness.

In choosing men and women for His service, God does not ask whether they possess worldly wealth, learning, or eloquence. He asks, “Do they walk in such humility that I can teach them My way? Can I put My words into their lips? Will they represent Me?”

God can use every person just in proportion as He can put His Spirit into the soul temple. The work that He will accept is the work that reflects His image.

His followers are to bear, as their credentials to the world, the ineffaceable characteristics of His immortal principles.

– *The Ministry of Healing, p. 37.*

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. “He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13), the Saviour declared. If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.

– *The Acts of the Apostles, p. 52.*

God desires to refresh His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, baptizing them anew in His love. There is no need for a dearth of the Spirit in the church. After Christ’s ascension the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting, praying, believing disciples with a fullness and power that reached every heart. In the future the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to men.

– *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 40.*

Friday, July 7 For Further Reading

Our High Calling, “Take God Into Your Counsel,” p. 44;

Reflecting Christ, “By Faith All Things Are Ours,” p. 124.

Take God Into Your Counsel

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 2:24. {OHC 44.1}

Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree.... What must sin be, if no finite being could make atonement? What must its curse be if Deity alone could exhaust it? The cross of Christ testifies to every man that the penalty of sin is death.... Oh, must there be some strong bewitching power which holds the moral senses, steeling them against the impressions of the Spirit of God? I entreat of you, as Christ’s ambassador, ... to be diligent in securing the grace of God. You need it every day, that you make no mistake in your life.... {OHC 44.2}

You may feel that you are competent to manage yourself, to lay plans and execute them in your own judgment. This is unsafe for you or for any one to do. I speak of the things I know. Take God into your counsel. Seek Him for guidance. He will not be sought of in vain.... I entreat of you not to let these precious hours of probation pass without spiritual advancement. In no case allow your moral powers to become dwarfed.... {OHC 44.3}

Heaven with its attractions is before you, an eternal weight of glory, which you may lose or gain. Which shall it be? Your life and your character will testify the choice you have made. I feel the more anxious because I see so many indifferent upon the subjects of infinite importance. They are always busy here and there about matters of minor importance, and the one great subject is put out of their thoughts. They have no time to pray, no time to watch, no time to

search the Scriptures. They are altogether too busy to make the necessary preparation for the future life. They cannot devote time to perfect Christian characters and in diligence to secure a title to heaven. {OHC 44.4}

If you have life eternal, you must be earnest and work to the point.... Glorify God by choosing His way, His will. He will be your wise counselor and your fast, unchanging friend. {OHC 44.5}

By Faith All Things Are Ours

For all things are yours; ... and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s. 1
Corinthians 3:21-23. {RC 124.1}

Not only has the Son of God been given as a sacrifice for the guilty, as a Redeemer for the lost, but through Him all things are ours. Those who have faith in Christ, those who are obedient to His instruction, will know by experience the boundlessness of the power that gives us constant witness that we are Christ’s, and that Christ is ours. The Saviour has given us the charter of our inheritance, and we stand on vantage ground, because we have chosen Christ as our portion. {RC 124.2}

Those who are obedient to His Word can receive this evidence—the assurance of the truth as it is in Jesus. If we will accustom our minds to dwell upon the facts of faith that have been given us, we may endure the seeing of Him who is invisible. Those who walk with Jesus may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.... {RC 124.3}

An abiding faith, a constant obedience, is essential to a continuance in His love.... We are to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the truth as it is in Jesus, the truth that is exemplified in His character, will be expressed in our lives, in our spirit, our words, our temper. Truth will be the law of the mind. Christ will be formed within, the hope of glory. {RC 124.4}

There is a peculiarly close union between the transformed soul and God. It is impossible to find words to describe this union. It is a treasure worth infinitely more to the true believer than gold and silver. {RC 124.5}

The Christian sees the Saviour ever before him, and by beholding, he becomes changed into the same image, from glory to glory. He bears the signature of God. Shall we give this up for the science of sophistry? Never! Truth is full of Godlike richness. He who is a partaker of the divine nature will hold firm to the truth. He will never let go; for the truth holds him. {RC 124.6}

Let us never forget that by the characters which we are forming day by day, we are deciding our future destiny. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Christ will find in the heavenly courts a glad reception.... {RC 124.7}

It is the spirituality of the children of God that is their glory in His eyes. This is the distinguishing mark that separates them from the world.... We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we may represent Christ to the world. If His love abides in our hearts, it will be distinctly revealed. We shall be lights in the world. Christ calls upon every follower of His to reveal His virtues of character, to represent Him in word and deed, to make known His love.—
Manuscript 84, 1905. {RC 124.8}