



## **Sabbath School Lesson 4 | Oct 16 – Oct 22**

# **ADDITIONAL READING: SELECTED QUOTES FROM ELLEN G. WHITE**

## ***To Love the Lord Your God***

### **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16**

Man gains everything by obeying the covenant-keeping God. God's attributes are imparted to man, enabling him to exercise mercy and compassion. God's covenant assures us of His unchangeable character. Why, then, are those who claim to believe in God changeable, fickle, untrustworthy? Why do they not do service heartily, as under obligation to please and glorify God? It is not enough for us to have a general idea of God's requirements. We must know for ourselves what His requirements and our obligations are. The terms of God's covenant are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." These are the conditions of life. "This do," Christ said, "and thou shalt live."—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 932.

The love of Christ is a golden chain that binds finite, human beings who believe in Jesus Christ to the Infinite God. The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it.

Selfishness and pride hinder the pure love that unites us in spirit with Jesus Christ. If this love is truly cultivated, finite will blend with finite, and all will center in the Infinite. Humanity will unite with humanity, and all will be bound up with the heart of Infinite Love. Sanctified love for one another is sacred. In this great work Christian love for one another—far higher, more constant, more courteous, more unselfish, than has been seen—preserves Christian tenderness, Christian benevolence, and politeness, and enfolds the human brotherhood in the embrace of God, acknowledging the dignity with which God has invested the rights of man.—*Our High Calling*, p. 73.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.

[The apostle] John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them

would be complete. They could then come to Him in full confidence of faith, knowing that they would receive from Him everything needful for their present and eternal good.—The Acts of the Apostles, p. 551.

### **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17**

All should learn . . . that they are individually amenable to God. When they love God with all their hearts, they will be wise unto salvation. They will do His will, and their light will ever be their glory, and be undiminished because they recognize and fear and serve their Lord. The solemn work rests upon every soul to consider that he is a servant of Jesus Christ. . . .

The one all-important matter is to serve the Lord with full purpose of heart, and seek to become the Lord's, heart and mind. All who come to the Saviour for counsel will receive the very help they need, if they will come in humility, and with assurance cling to that promise, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).

Lift up the standard, beginning with full surrender and continuing in the simplicity of obedience to all the Lord's commandments, according to His special directions. None of the important things specified in His Word are to be neglected.—This Day With God, p. 128.

God claims the whole of the affections of man, the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole mind, the whole strength. He lays claim to all that there is of man, because He has poured out the whole treasure of heaven by giving us His all at once, reserving nothing greater that heaven can do.

When I commence writing on this subject, I go on and on, and try to get beyond the outer edge, but I fail. When we shall reach the mansions above, Jesus will Himself lead the white-robed ones, made white in the blood of the Lamb, to the Father. "Therefore 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." Revelation 7:15.—Our High Calling, p. 12.

The atmosphere of the church is so frigid, its spirit is of such an order, that men and women cannot sustain or endure the example of primitive and heaven-born piety. The warmth of their first love is frozen up, and unless they are watered over by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, their candlestick will be removed out of its place, except they repent and do their first works. The first works of the church were seen when the believers sought out friends, relatives, and acquaintances, and with hearts overflowing with love told the story of what Jesus was to them and what they were to Jesus.—Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 167.

Our Redeemer says: "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." "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. 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 we know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, unspeakable gladness will come to the soul. Oh, how we need the divine presence!—Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 169.

### **MONDAY, OCTOBER 18**

Humility and reverence should characterize the deportment of all who come into the presence of God. In the name of Jesus we may come before Him with confidence, but we must not approach Him with the boldness of presumption, as though He were on a level with ourselves. There are those who address the great and all-powerful and holy God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, as they would address an equal, or even an inferior. There are those who conduct themselves in His house as they would not presume to do in the audience chamber of an earthly ruler. These should remember that they are in His sight whom seraphim adore, before whom angels veil their faces. God is greatly to be revered; all who truly realize His presence will bow in humility before Him, and, like Jacob beholding the vision of God, they will cry out, ". . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 252.

The heart that has once tasted the love of Christ, cries out continually for a deeper draft, and as you impart

you will receive in richer and more abundant measure. Every revelation of God to the soul increases the capacity to know and to love. The continual cry of the heart is, "More of Thee," and ever the Spirit's answer is, "Much more." Romans 5:9, 10. For our God delights to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Ephesians 3:20. . . .

God has poured out His love unstintedly, as the showers that refresh the earth. He says, "Let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together." . . . Isaiah 45:8.—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, pp. 20, 21.

The first angel of Revelation 14 calls upon men to "fear God, and give glory to him," and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Without obedience to His commandments, no worship can be pleasing to God; for "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3).

Many religious teachers say that Christ, by His death, freed us from the law; but not all take this view. The law of God, from its very nature, is unchangeable. It is a revelation of the will and character of its Author. God is love, and His law is love. Its two great principles are love to God and man. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The character of God is righteousness and truth, and such is the nature of His law. The psalmist says, "Thy law is the truth"; "all thy commandments are righteousness." And the apostle Paul declares, "The law is holy, and the commandments holy, and just, and good." Such a law, an expression of the mind and will of God, must be as enduring as its Author.—Reflecting Christ, p. 62.

## **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19**

God desired to make of His people Israel a praise and a glory. Every spiritual advantage was given them. God withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of character that would make them representatives of Himself.

Their obedience to the law of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. He who could give them wisdom and skill in all cunning work would continue to be their teacher, and would ennoble and elevate them through obedience to His laws. If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations, and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth.

In the most definite manner Christ through Moses had set before them God's purpose, and had made plain the terms of their prosperity. "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God," He said; "the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. . . . Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations." Deuteronomy 7:6, 7.—Christ's Object Lessons, p. 288.

[God] does not ask if we are worthy of His love, but He pours upon us the riches of His love, to make us worthy. He is not vindictive. He seeks not to punish, but to redeem. Even the severity which He manifests through His providences is manifested for the salvation of the wayward. He yearns with intense desire to relieve the woes of men and to apply His balsam to their wounds. It is true that God "will by no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:7), but He would take away the guilt.

The merciful are "partakers of the divine nature," and in them the compassionate love of God finds expression. All whose hearts are in sympathy with the heart of Infinite Love will seek to reclaim and not to condemn. Christ dwelling in the soul is a spring that never runs dry. Where He abides, there will be an overflowing of beneficence.—Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 22.

The loveliness of the character of Christ will be seen in His followers. It was His delight to do the will of God. Love to God, zeal for His glory, was the controlling power in our Saviour's life. Love beautified and ennobled

all His actions. Love is of God. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns. "We love, because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19, R.V. In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, subdues enmity, and ennoble the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.—Steps to Christ, p. 59.

### **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20**

Keep Jesus uplifted. We are laborers together with God. We are provided with spiritual weapons, mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of the enemy. We must in no case misrepresent our faith by weaving unChristlike attributes into the work. We must exalt the law of God, as binding us up with Jesus Christ and all who love Him and keep His commandments. We are also to reveal a love for the souls for whom Christ has died. Our faith is to be demonstrated as a power of which Christ is the Author. And the Bible, His word, is to make us wise unto salvation.—This Day With God, p. 99.

We are to reflect the character of Jesus. Everywhere . . . we should let the lovely image of Jesus appear. This we cannot do unless we are filled with His fullness. If we would become better acquainted with Jesus, we should love Him for His goodness and excellence and we should desire to become so assimilated to His divine character that all would know that we had been with Jesus, and learned of Him. . . .

. . . Sinners will be constrained to confess that we are not the children of darkness, but the children of light. How shall they know this? By the fruits we bear. . . . There must be a deep work of grace—the love of God in the heart, and this love is expressed by obedience. . . .

Our hearts may be filled with all the fullness of God; but there is something for us to do. We must not pet our faults and sins, but put them away, and make haste to set our hearts in order. When this is done, let us take the key of faith, and unlock the storehouse of God's rich blessings.—Lift Him Up, p. 266.

Christ attaches a weight of importance to the obedience of His people to the commandments of God. They are to have an intelligent knowledge of them, and bring them into their daily life. Man cannot keep the commandments of God, only as he is in Christ, and Christ in him. And it is not possible for him to be in Christ, having light on His commandments, while disregarding the least of them. By steadfast, willing obedience to His word, they evidence their love for the Sent of God.

Not to keep the commandments of God is not to love Him. None will keep the law of God unless they love Him who is the only begotten of the Father. And nonetheless surely; if they love Him, they will express that love by obedience to Him. All who love Christ will be loved of the Father, and He will manifest Himself to them. In all their emergencies and perplexities they will have a helper in Jesus Christ.—This Day With God, p. 142.

### **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21**

Let us individually consider what is the record made in the books of heaven concerning our life and character, and our attitude toward God. Has our love for God been increasing during the past year? If Christ is indeed abiding in our hearts, we shall love God, we shall love to obey all His commandments, and this love will continually deepen and strengthen. If we represent Christ to the world, we shall be pure in heart, in life, in character; we shall be holy in conversation; there will be no guile in our hearts or upon our lips. Let us examine our past life and see if we have given evidence of our love for Jesus by seeking to be like Him, and by working, as He worked, to save those for whom He died.—Lift Him Up, p. 325.

Christ's death and resurrection completed His covenant. Before this time, it was revealed through types and shadows, which pointed to the great offering to be made by the world's Redeemer, offered in promise for the sins of the world. Anciently believers were saved by the same Saviour as now, but it was a God veiled. They

saw God's mercy in figures. The promise given to Adam and Eve in Eden was the gospel to a fallen race. The promise was made that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and it should bruise His heel. Christ's sacrifice is the glorious fulfillment of the whole Jewish economy. The Sun of Righteousness has risen. Christ our righteousness is shining in brightness upon us.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 932.

The reason why we are not more joyful is that we have lost our first love. Let us then be zealous and repent, lest the candlestick be moved out of its place.

The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. We need to study, to meditate, and to pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the themes of song and thanksgiving of the heavenly choir round about the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and precious songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assemblies of the saints. . . .

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 368.

## **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22**

Lift Him Up, "The Principle of Love in the Law," p. 151;

That I May Know Him, "Rich Depths of Knowledge," p. 205.