

# The Father, the Son, and the Spirit

Sabbath afternoon, December 7

The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.

The office of the Holy Spirit is distinctly specified in the words of Christ: "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John 16:8. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

To the repentant sinner, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, the Holy Spirit reveals the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you," Christ said. "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 16:14; 14:26. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 52.

The word of God—the truth—is the channel through which the Lord manifests His Spirit and power. Obedience to the word produces fruit of the required quality—"unfeigned love of the brethren." This love is heaven-born and leads to high motives and unselfish actions.

When truth becomes an abiding principle in the life, the soul is "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the Word of God. When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to co-operate with God. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 519, 520.

I was carried down to the time when Jesus was to take upon Himself man's nature, humble Himself as a man, and suffer the temptations of Satan.

His birth was without worldly grandeur. He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger; yet His birth was honored far above that of any of the sons of men. Angels from heaven informed the shepherds of the advent of Jesus, and light and glory from God accompanied their testimony. The heavenly host touched their harps and glorified God. They triumphantly heralded the advent of the Son of God to a fallen world to accomplish the work of redemption, and by His death to bring peace, happiness, and everlasting life to man. God honored the advent of His Son. Angels worshiped Him.

Angels of God hovered over the scene of His baptism; the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and lighted upon Him, and as the people stood greatly amazed, with their eyes fastened upon Him, the Father's voice was heard from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased. —*Early Writings*, p. 153.

Sunday, December 8

# The Heavenly Father

The Father can not be described by the things of earth. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight. The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested. The word of God declares Him to be “the express image of His person.” “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Here is shown the personality of the Father.

The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio. In the name of these three powers,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ. — *Bible Training School, March 1, 1906, par. 1, 2.*

Let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of the heavenly atmosphere. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. “The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” James 5:11. His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son.

Jesus said, “Ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you.” “I have chosen you: . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.” John 16:26, 27; 15:16. —*Steps to Christ, pp. 99, 100.*

Monday, December 9

# Jesus and the Father

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Genesis 1:26.

The life of Christ is to be revealed in humanity. Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God; but Satan has labored to obliterate the image of God in man, and to imprint upon him his own image. Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image. This fact should impress us with the importance of teaching by precept and example the sin of defiling, by the indulgence of appetite, or by any other sinful practice, the body which is designed to represent God to the world. —*Lift Him Up*, p. 48.

Instead of destroying the world, God sent His Son to save it. Though corruption and defiance might be seen in every part of the alien province, a way for its recovery was provided. At the very crisis, when Satan seemed about to triumph, the Son of God came with the embassy of divine grace. Through every age, through every hour, the love of God had been exercised toward the fallen race. Notwithstanding the perversity of men, the signals of mercy had been continually exhibited. And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled.

Satan was exulting that he had succeeded in debasing the image of God in humanity. Then Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 37.

The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. The spiritual healing was followed by physical restoration. This lesson should not be overlooked. There are today thousands suffering from physical disease, who, like the paralytic, are longing for the message, "Thy sins are forgiven." The burden of sin, with its unrest and unsatisfied desires, is the foundation of their maladies. They can find no relief until they come to the Healer of the soul. The peace which He alone can give, would impart vigor to the mind, and health to the body.

Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil." "In Him was life," and He says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He is "a quickening spirit." 1 John 3:8; John 1:4; 10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:45. And He still has the same life-giving power as when on earth He healed the sick, and spoke forgiveness to the sinner. He "forgiveth all thine iniquities," He "healeth all thy diseases." Psalm 103:3. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 270.

Tuesday, December 10

# Knowing the Son Is Knowing the Father

God bids us fill the mind with great thoughts, pure thoughts. He desires us to meditate upon His love and mercy, to study His wonderful work in the great plan of redemption. Then clearer and still clearer will be our perception of truth, higher, holier, our desire for purity of heart and clearness of thought. The soul dwelling in the pure atmosphere of holy thought will be transformed by communion with God through the study of Scriptures. . . .

Those who, having heard the word, keep it, will bring forth fruit in obedience. The word of God, received into the soul, will be manifest in good works. Its results will be seen in a Christlike character and life. Christ said of Himself, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me." John 5:30. And the Scripture says, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." 1 John 2:6. —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 60.

The acceptance of Christ gives value to the human being. His sacrifice carries life and light to all who take Christ as their personal Saviour. The love of God through Jesus Christ is shed abroad in the heart of every member of His body, carrying with it the vitality of the law of God the Father. . . .

God loves those who are redeemed through Christ, even as He loves His Son. What a thought! Can God love the sinner as He loves His own Son?—Yes; Christ has said it, and He means just what He says. He will honor all our drafts if we will grasp His promise by living faith, and put our trust in Him. Look to Him, and live. All who obey God are embraced in the prayer which Christ offered to His Father, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:26). Wonderful truth, too difficult for humanity to comprehend! —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 299, 300.

To redeem man, Christ became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden linked chain which binds our souls to Christ and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man, and He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. And He was God in the flesh. . . .

Christ's position with His Father is one of equality. This enabled Him to become a sin-offering for transgressors. He was fully sufficient to magnify the law and make it honorable. —Ellen G. White *Comments*, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 904, 905.

Wednesday, December 11

# The Holy Spirit

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.

The Holy Spirit recognizes and guides us into all truth. God has given His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Christ is the sinner's Saviour. Christ's death has redeemed the sinner. This is our only hope. If we make a full surrender of self, and practice the virtues of Christ, we shall gain the prize of eternal life.

"He that believeth in the Son, hath the Father also." He who has continual faith in the Father and the Son has the Spirit also. The Holy Spirit is his comforter, and he never departs from the truth. —*Bible Training School*, March 1, 1906, par. 5, 6.

As a witness for Christ, John entered into no controversy, no wearisome contention. He declared what he knew, what he had seen and heard. He had been intimately associated with Christ, had listened to His teachings, had witnessed His mighty miracles. Few could see the beauties of Christ's character as John saw them. For him the darkness had passed away; on him the true light was shining. His testimony in regard to the Saviour's life and death was clear and forcible. Out of the abundance of a heart overflowing with love for the Saviour he spoke; and no power could stay his words.

"That which was from the beginning," he declared, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

So may every true believer be able, through his own experience, to "set to his seal that God is true." John 3:33. He can bear witness to that which he has seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ. —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 555, 556.

Thursday, December 12

# The Prayer of Jesus

I urge our people to cease their criticism and evil-speaking, and go to God in earnest prayer, asking Him to help them to help the erring. Let them link up with one another and with Christ. Let them study the seventeenth of John, and learn how to pray and how to live the prayer of Christ. He is the Comforter. He will abide in their hearts, making their joy full. His words will be to them as the bread of life, and in the strength thus gained they will be enabled to develop characters that will be an honor to God. Perfect Christian fellowship will exist among them. . . .

When you as individual workers of the church love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself . . . there will be oneness in Christ. . . . The members of the church will cherish love and unity and be as one great family. Then we shall bear the credentials to the world that will testify that God has sent His Son into the world. Christ has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 200.

We must open our hearts to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. . . . We want to become so sensitive to holy influences, that the lightest whisper of Jesus will move our souls, till he is in us, and we in Him, living by the faith of the Son of God. . . .

Then we shall delight to do the will of God, and Christ can own us before the Father and before the holy angels as those who abide in Him, and he will not be ashamed to call us brethren.

But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotlessness and infinite purity, we shall feel as did Daniel, when he beheld the glory of the Lord, and said, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption." . . .

But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus, the blessed hope is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; complete in Christ, robed in his righteousness and perfection. —*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 355.

The church is to reflect light into the moral darkness of the world, as the stars reflect light into the darkness of the night. These who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, do not reflect light into the world, and will not have power to reach the hearts of the unsaved. . . . But if Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, his saving grace will be manifested in sympathy and love for perishing souls.

Every soul truly converted to God will be a light in the world. Bright, clear rays from the Sun of Righteousness will shine forth through human agents who use their intrusted ability to do good; for they will cooperate with heavenly agencies, and labor with Christ for the conversion of souls. They will diffuse the light which Christ sheds upon them. The Sun of Righteousness shining in their hearts will shine forth, enlightening and blessing others. —*Signs of the Times*, September 11, 1893, par. 1, 2.

**Friday, December 13**

## **For Further Reading**

*My Life Today*, "Abundant Life in Christ," p. 295;

*Sons and Daughters of God*, "Oneness with Christ," p. 295.