

Third Quarter 2023

EGW Notes - Lesson 4, 15 – 21 July

How God Rescues Us



Sabbath Afternoon, July 15

By accepting Christ as his personal Saviour, man is brought into the same close relation to God, and enjoys His special favor as does His own beloved Son. He is honored and glorified and intimately associated with God, his life being hid with Christ in God. O what love, what wondrous love! . . .

The purity of Christ has revealed to him his own impurity in its odious colors. He turns from the defiling sin; he looks to Jesus and lives.

He finds an all-absorbing, commanding, attractive character in Jesus Christ, the one who died to deliver him from the deformity of sin, and with quivering lip and tearful eye he declares, "He shall not have died for me in vain." "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

—*Lift Him Up*, p. 297.

O Precious, loving, long-suffering, long-forbearing Jesus, how my soul adores Thee! That a poor, unworthy, sin-polluted soul can stand before the Holy God, complete in the righteousness of our Substitute and Surety! Wonder, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth, that fallen man is the object of His infinite love and delight. He rejoices over them with celestial songs, and man defiled with sin, having become cleansed through the righteousness of Christ, is presented to the Father free from every spot and stain of sin, "not having

spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing” (Ephesians 5:27). “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (Romans 8:33).

— ***The Upward Look, p. 377.***

Oh, when shall we ever realize the full value of our Saviour’s work and intercession? When shall we rely upon Him with full confidence, and live a noble, pure, and devoted life? To what heights may the imagination reach when sanctified and inspired by the virtue of Christ! We may take in the glories of the future, eternal world. We may live as seeing Him who is invisible. Walk by faith and not by sight.

Through searching the Scriptures we may come to understand what we are to Christ, and what He is to us. By beholding Him we are to become changed into His image, becoming colaborers with Him, representatives of Him in life and character. We must learn to realize that we are to live as the sons and daughters of God, loving God supremely, and our neighbors as ourselves. We are to live a pure, perfect life for Christ’s sake. We are to love perfection because Jesus is the embodiment of perfection, the great center of attraction. The life we now live we must live by faith in the Son of God.

— ***Reflecting Christ, p. 318.***

Sunday, July 16 Once Dead and Deceived by Satan

The same spirit that prompted rebellion in heaven still inspires rebellion on earth. Satan has continued with men the same policy which he pursued with the angels. His spirit now reigns in the children of disobedience. Like him they seek to break down the restraints of the law of God and promise men liberty through transgression of its precepts. . . . When God’s messages of warning are brought home to the conscience, Satan leads men to justify themselves and to seek the sympathy of others in their course of sin. Instead of correcting their errors, they excite indignation against the reprovor, as if he were the sole

cause of difficulty. From the days of righteous Abel to our own time such is the spirit which has been displayed toward those who dare to condemn sin.

– ***The Great Controversy, p. 500.***

Satan will accuse and seek permission to destroy, but it is God that opens the door of refuge. It is God that justifieth him that entereth that door. Then if God be for us, who can be against us? Oh, the bright glorious truth. Why do not men discern it? Why not walk in its bright beams? Why do not all who believe talk of Christ's matchless love?

– ***The Upward Look, p. 377.***

The Christian's life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God.

“Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” 1 John 5:4. Truly spoke God's servant Nehemiah: “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10. And Paul says: “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.” “Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

– ***The Great Controversy, p. 477.***

By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. . . . In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through co-operation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God's assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.

Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God's word declares he must have

before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience.

– *The Acts of the Apostles, p. 531, 532.*

Monday, July 17 Once Deluded by Our Own Desires

Even one wrong trait of character, one sinful desire cherished, will eventually neutralize all the power of the gospel. The prevalence of a sinful desire shows the delusion of the soul. Every indulgence of that desire strengthens the soul's aversion to God. The pains of duty and the pleasures of sin are the cords with which Satan binds men in his snares. Those who would rather die than perform a wrong act are the only ones who will be found faithful. . . .

The testimony borne to you by the Spirit of God is: Parley not with the enemy. Kill the thorns, or they will kill you. Break up the fallow ground of the heart. Let the work go deep and thorough. Let the plowshare of truth tear out the weeds and briars.

– *Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 53.*

[The poor publican] felt his need, and with his burden of guilt and shame he came before God, asking for His mercy. His heart was open for the Spirit of God to do its gracious work and set him free from the power of sin. The Pharisee's boastful, self-righteous prayer showed that his heart was closed against the influence of the Holy Spirit. Because of his distance from God, he had no sense of his own defilement, in contrast with the perfection of the divine holiness. He felt no need, and he received nothing.

If you see your sinfulness, do not wait to make yourself better. . . . Do you expect to become better through your own efforts? "Can the Ethiopian change

his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” Jeremiah 13:23. There is help for us only in God. We must not wait for stronger persuasions, for better opportunities, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing of ourselves. We must come to Christ just as we are.

—*Steps to Christ, pp. 30, 31.*

The Lord Jesus . . . is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen men, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God. . . .

The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against.

—*In Heavenly Places, p. 282.*

Tuesday, July 18 Now Resurrected, Ascended, and Exalted With Christ

Christ gave Himself for the redemption of the race, that all who believe in Him may have everlasting life. Those who appreciate this great sacrifice receive from the Saviour that most precious of all gifts—a clean heart. They gain an experience that is more valuable than gold or silver or precious stones. They sit together in heavenly places in Christ, enjoying in communion with Him the joy and peace that He alone can give. They love Him with heart and mind and soul and strength, realizing that they are His blood-bought heritage. Their spiritual eyesight is not dimmed by worldly policy or worldly aims. They are one with Christ as He is one with the Father.

—*In Heavenly Places, p. 7.*

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? . . . It was that the universe might be convinced of God's justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?

Even now, “unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places” is “made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.” And He “hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places: . . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 3:10, R.V.; 2:6, 7.

—Education, p. 308.

Satan cannot hold the dead in his grasp when the Son of God bids them live. . . . It is all offered us in His word. If we receive the word, we have the deliverance.

And “if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” “For 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.” Romans 8:11;

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. This is the word of comfort wherewith He bids us comfort one another.

—The Desire of Ages, p. 320.

Wednesday, July 19 Now Blessed Forever by Grace

Not because we first loved Him did Christ love us; but “while we were yet sinners” He died for us. He does not treat us according to our desert. Although our sins have merited condemnation, He does not condemn us. Year after year He has borne with our weakness and ignorance, with our ingratitude and waywardness. Notwithstanding our wanderings, our hardness of heart, our neglect of His Holy Word, His hand is stretched out still.

Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need. . . .

Every human being is the object of loving interest to Him who gave His life that He might bring men back to God. Souls guilty and helpless, liable to be destroyed by the arts and snares of Satan, are cared for as a shepherd cares for the sheep of his flock.

— *The Ministry of Healing, pp. 161, 162.*

Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven’s chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls.

It is for our own benefit to keep every gift of God fresh in our memory. By this means faith is strengthened to claim and to receive more and more. There is greater encouragement for us in the least blessing we ourselves receive from God than in all the accounts we can read of the faith and experience of others. The soul that responds to the grace of God shall be like a watered garden. His health shall spring forth speedily; his light shall rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord shall be seen upon him.

—*The Ministry of Healing, p. 100.*

In the matchless gift of His Son, God has encircled the whole world with an atmosphere of grace as real as the air which circulates around the globe. All who choose to breathe this life-giving atmosphere will live and grow up to the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

—*Steps to Christ, p. 68.*

Thursday, July 20 Now Saved by God

Such is the grace of God, such the love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, enemies in our minds by wicked works, serving divers lusts and pleasures, the slaves of debase appetites and passion, servants of sin and Satan. What depth of love is manifested in Christ, as He becomes the propitiation for our sins. Through the ministration of the Holy Spirit souls are led to find forgiveness of sins.

The purity, the holiness, of the life of Jesus as presented from the Word of God possess more power to reform and transform the character than do all the efforts put forth in picturing sins and crimes of men and the sure results. One steadfast look to the Saviour uplifted upon the cross will do more to purify the mind and heart from every defilement than will all the scientific explanations by the ablest tongue.

—*Lift Him Up, p. 297.*

In His Word God reveals what He can do for human beings. He molds and fashions after the divine similitude the characters of those who will wear His yoke. Through His grace they are made partakers of the divine nature, and are thus enabled to overcome the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is God who gives us power to overcome. Those who hear His voice and obey His commandments are enabled to form righteous characters. Those who disregard His expressed commands will form characters like the propensities that they indulge.

It is a knowledge of the perfection of the divine character, manifested to us in Jesus Christ, that opens up to us communion with God. It is by appropriating the great and precious promises that we are to become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

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

Our acceptance with God is sure only through his beloved Son, and good works are but the result of the working of his sin-pardoning love. They are no credit to us, and we have nothing accorded to us for our good works by which we may claim a part in the salvation of our souls. Salvation is God's free gift to the believer, given to him for Christ's sake alone. The troubled soul may find peace through faith in Christ, and his peace will be in proportion to his faith and trust. He cannot present his good works as a plea for the salvation of his soul.

But are good works of no real value? Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity? The Scripture answers, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

—Selected Messages, book 3, p. 199.

Friday, July 21 For Further Reading

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, “The Victorious Life,” pp. 515–520;

My Life Today, “The Exceeding Riches of His Grace,” p. 100.

The Victorious Life

[Reprint of a little tract, the last of Mrs. White’s writing before her death.]

Sanitarium, California,

June 14, 1914

Dear Friend,

The Lord has given me a message for you, and not for you only, but also for other faithful souls who are troubled by doubts and fears regarding their acceptance by the Lord Jesus Christ. His word to you is, “Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine.” You desire to please the Lord, and you can do this by believing His promises. He is waiting to take you into a harbor of gracious experience, and He bids you, “Be still, and know that I am God.” You have had a time of unrest; but Jesus says to you, “Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest.” The joy of Christ in the soul is worth everything. “Then are they glad,” because they are privileged to rest in the arms of everlasting love. {TM 516.1}

Put away your distrust of our heavenly Father. Instead of talking of your doubts, break away from them in the strength of Jesus, and let light shine into your soul by letting your voice express confidence and trust in God. I know that the Lord is very nigh to give you victory, and I say to you, Be helped, be strengthened, be lifted out of and away from the dark dungeon of unbelief. Doubts will rush into your mind, because Satan is trying to hold you in captivity

to his cruel power; but face him in the strength that Jesus is willing to give you, and conquer the inclination to express unbelief in your Saviour. {TM 516.2}

Do not talk of your inefficiency and your defects. When despair would seem to be sweeping over your soul, look to Jesus, saying, He lives to make intercession for me. Forget the things that are behind, and believe the promise, “I will come to you,” and “abide with you.” {TM 516.3}

God is waiting to bestow the blessing of forgiveness, of pardon for iniquity, of the gifts of righteousness, upon all who will believe in His love and accept the salvation He offers. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner, “Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners. This blood “cleanseth us from all sin.” {TM 517.1}

It is your privilege to trust in the love of Jesus for salvation, in the fullest, surest, noblest manner; to say, He loves me, He receives me; I will trust Him, for He gave His life for me. Nothing so dispels doubt as coming in contact with the character of Christ. He declares, “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out;” that is, there is no possibility of My casting him out, for I have pledged My word to receive him. Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory. {TM 517.2}

Is Jesus true? Does He mean what He says? Answer decidedly, Yes, every word. Then if you have settled this, by faith claim every promise that He has made, and receive the blessing; for this acceptance by faith gives life to the soul. You may believe that Jesus is true to you, even though you feel yourself to be the weakest and most unworthy of His children. And as you believe, all your dark, brooding doubts are thrown back upon the archdeceiver who originated them. You can be a great blessing if you will take God at His word. By living faith you are to trust Him, even though the impulse is strong within you to speak words of distrust. {TM 517.3}

Peace comes with dependence on divine power. As fast as the soul resolves to act in accordance with the light given, the Holy Spirit gives more light and strength. The grace of the Spirit is supplied to cooperate with the soul's resolve, but it is not a substitute for the individual exercise of faith. Success in the Christian life depends upon the appropriation of the light that God has given. It is not an abundance of light and evidence that makes the soul free in Christ; it is the rising of the powers and the will and the energies of the soul to cry out sincerely, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." {TM 518.1}

I rejoice in the bright prospects of the future, and so may you. Be cheerful, and praise the Lord for His loving-kindness. That which you cannot understand, commit to Him. He loves you and pities your every weakness. He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It would not satisfy the heart of the Infinite One to give those who love His Son a lesser blessing than He gives His Son. {TM 518.2}

Satan seeks to draw our minds away from the mighty Helper, to lead us to ponder over our degeneration of soul. But though Jesus sees the guilt of the past, He speaks pardon; and we should not dishonor Him by doubting His love. The feeling of guiltiness must be laid at the foot of the cross, or it will poison the springs of life. When Satan thrusts his threatenings upon you, turn from them, and comfort your soul with the promises of God. The cloud may be dark in itself, but when filled with the light of heaven, it turns to the brightness of gold; for the glory of God rests upon it. {TM 518.3}

God's children are not to be subject to feelings and emotions. When they fluctuate between hope and fear, the heart of Christ is hurt; for He has given them unmistakable evidence of His love. He wants them to be established, strengthened, and settled in the most holy faith. He wants them to do the work He has given them; then their hearts will become in His hands as sacred harps, every chord of which will send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sins of the world. {TM 518.4}

Christ's love for His children is as tender as it is strong. And it is stronger than death; for He died to purchase our salvation, and to make us one with Him, mystically and eternally one. So strong is His love that it controls all His powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good. It is without variableness or shadow of turning—the same yesterday, today, and forever. Although sin has existed for ages, trying to counteract this love and obstruct its flowing earthward, it still flows in rich currents to those for whom Christ died. {TM 519.1}

God loves the sinless angels, who do His service and are obedient to all His commands; but He does not give them grace; they have never needed it, for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it; it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow grace upon all who hunger and thirst for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we shall receive the gift. {TM 519.2}

It should not be difficult to remember that the Lord desires you to lay your troubles and perplexities at His feet, and leave them there. Go to Him, saying: "Lord, my burdens are too heavy for me to carry. Wilt Thou bear them for me?" And He will answer: "I will take them. 'With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' I will take your sins, and will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove." {TM 519.3}

"I, even I, am He," the Lord declares, "that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified." "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye Me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I

am God, and there is none else.” Respond to the calls of God’s mercy, and say: “I will trust in the Lord and be comforted. I will praise the Lord; for His anger is turned away. I will rejoice in God, who gives the victory.” {TM 520.1}

The Exceeding Riches of His Grace

Growing in Grace

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, ... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-7 {ML 100.1}

We would never have learned the meaning of this word “grace” had we not fallen. God loves the sinless angels who do His service and are obedient to all His commands, but He does not give them grace. These heavenly beings know naught of grace; they have never needed it, for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving human beings. We did not seek after it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace on everyone who hungers for it, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we will receive this gift. {ML 100.2}

But God does not use this grace to make His law of none effect or to take the place of His law. “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honorable.” His law is truth.... {ML 100.3}

God’s grace and the law of His kingdom are in perfect harmony; they walk hand in hand. His grace makes it possible for us to draw nigh to Him by faith.

By receiving it, and letting it work in our lives, we testify to the validity of the law; we exalt the law and make in honorable by carrying out its living principles.... {ML 100.4}

How may we witness for God? ... By rendering pure, wholehearted obedience to God's law. If we will let Him, He will manifest Himself in us, and we shall be witnesses, before the universe of heaven and before an apostate world who are making void the law of God, to the power of redemption. {ML 100.5}

There is but one power that can bring us into conformity to the likeness of Christ, that can make us steadfast and keep us constant. It is the grace of God that comes to us through obedience to the law of God.⁶ {ML 100.6}