

EGW Notes - Lesson 4

Sharing God's Mission



Sabbath Afternoon, October 21

He who claims to be a Christian should examine himself and see if he is as kind and considerate of his fellow beings as he desires his fellow beings to be of him. Christ taught that rank or wealth should make no difference in our treatment of one another and that in the light of heaven all are brethren. Earthly possessions or worldly honor do not count in God's valuation of man. He created all men equal; He is no respecter of persons. He values a man according to the virtue of his character.

To possess true godliness means to love one another, to help one another, to make apparent the religion of Jesus in our lives. We are to be consecrated channels through which the love of Christ flows to those who need help. He who approaches nearest to obedience to the divine law will be of the most service to God. He who follows Christ, reaching out after His goodness, His compassion, His love for the human family, will be accepted by God as a worker together with Him.—*In*

Heavenly Places, p. 287.

The foundation of our hope in Christ is the fact that we recognize ourselves as sinners in need of restoration and redemption. It is because we are sinners that we have courage to claim Him as our Saviour. Then let us take heed lest we deal with the erring in a way that would say to others that we have no need of redemption. Let us not denounce, condemn, and destroy as though we were faultless. It is the work of Christ to mend, to heal, to restore. God is love. He gives Satan no occasion for triumphing by making the worst appear or by exposing our weaknesses to our enemies.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 291.

God has given to His servants precious knowledge of His truth, and He desires that they shall closely connect themselves with Jesus and, through sympathy, draw near to their brethren, that they may do them all the good that lies in their power. The Redeemer of the world did not consult His own pleasure, but went about doing good. He bound Himself closely to the Father, that He might bring Their united strength to bear upon the souls of men to save them from eternal ruin. In like manner should His servants cultivate spirituality if they expect to succeed in their work.

Jesus pitied poor sinners so much that He left the courts of heaven and laid aside the robes of royalty, humiliating Himself to humanity, that He might become acquainted with the needs of man and help him to rise above the degradation of the Fall. When He has given to man such unquestionable evidence of His love and

tenderest sympathy, how important that His representatives should imitate His example in coming close to their fellow men and helping them to form a true Christian character.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 268.

Sunday, October 22

The Gift of Hospitality

The Bible lays much stress upon the practice of hospitality. Not only does it enjoin hospitality as a duty, but it presents many beautiful pictures of the exercise of this grace and the blessings which it brings. Foremost among these is the experience of Abraham.

In the records of Genesis we see the patriarch at the hot summer noontide resting in his tent door under the shadow of the oaks of Mamre. Three travelers are passing near. They make no appeal for hospitality, solicit no favor; but Abraham does not permit them to go on their way unrefreshed. He is a man full of years, a man of dignity and wealth, one highly honored, and accustomed to command; yet on seeing these strangers he “ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.” . . . With his own hands he brought water that they might wash the dust of travel from their feet. He himself selected their food; while they were at rest under the cooling shade, Sarah his wife made ready for their entertainment, and Abraham stood respectfully beside them while they partook of his hospitality. This kindness he showed them simply as wayfarers, passing strangers, who might never come his way again.—

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 341.

There are many . . . to whom we might make our homes a blessing. Our social entertainments should not be governed by the dictates of worldly custom, but by the Spirit of Christ and the teaching of His word. The Israelites, in all their festivities, included the poor, the stranger, and the Levite, who was both the assistant of the priest in the sanctuary, and a religious teacher and missionary. These were regarded as the guests of the people, to share their hospitality on all occasions of social and religious rejoicing, and to be tenderly cared for in sickness or in need. It is such as these whom we should make welcome to our homes. How much such a welcome might do to cheer and encourage the missionary nurse or the teacher, the care-burdened, hard-working mother, or the feeble and aged, so often without a home, and struggling with poverty and many discouragements. . . .

Our time here is short. We can pass through this world but once; as we pass along, let us make the most of life. The work to which we are called does not require wealth or social position or great ability. It requires a kindly, self-sacrificing spirit and a steadfast purpose. A lamp, however small, if kept steadily burning, may be the means of lighting many other lamps. Our sphere of influence may seem narrow, our ability small, our opportunities few, our acquirements limited; yet wonderful possibilities are ours through a faithful use of the opportunities of our own homes. If we will open our hearts and homes to the divine principles of life we shall

become channels for currents of life-giving power.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 352, 355.

Monday, October 23

Abraham's Love for Everyone

In the hearts of His professed followers there is need of the tender sympathy of Christ—a deeper love for those whom He has so valued as to give His own life for their salvation. These souls are precious, infinitely more precious than any other offering we can bring to God. To bend every energy toward some apparently great work, while we neglect the needy or turn the stranger from his right, is not a service that will meet His approval. . . .

Love is the basis of godliness. Whatever the profession, no man has pure love to God unless he has unselfish love for his brother. But we can never come into possession of this spirit by trying to love others. What is needed is the love of Christ in the heart. When self is merged in Christ, love springs forth spontaneously. The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within—when the sunshine of heaven fills the heart and is revealed in the countenance.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 383, 384.

[Abraham,] man of faith, pleaded for the inhabitants of Sodom. Once he had saved them by his sword, now he endeavored to save them by prayer. With deep reverence and humility he urged his plea. Himself a sinner, he pleaded in the sinner's behalf. Such a spirit all

who approach God should possess. Yet Abraham manifested the confidence of a child pleading with a loved father. He came close to the heavenly Messenger, and fervently urged his petition. . . .

Love for perishing souls inspired Abraham's prayer. While he loathed the sins of that corrupt city, he desired that the sinners might be saved. His deep interest for Sodom shows the anxiety that we should feel for the impenitent. We should cherish hatred of sin, but pity and love for the sinner.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 51.

In order to convince others of the power of Christ's grace, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is it possible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. If we would draw sinners out of the swift-running current, our own feet must be firmly set upon the Rock, Christ Jesus.

The badge of Christianity is not an outward sign, not the wearing of a cross or a crown, but it is that which reveals the union of man with God. By the power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer. No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian.—*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 469, 470.

Tuesday, October 24

Abraham's Spirit of Prayer

Are you gaining in the knowledge of the truth? Have you a living connection with Jesus Christ? You see Abraham had, and he talked with angels, and he could ask a favor of them. . . .

We have not earnestness enough in our faith or in our experience. . . . Just as long as there is a soul to save in all the world you want to press yourselves to the Source of all light and power that you may save these souls. You do not care to have an earthly, worldly mold upon your experience. You have souls to save or to lose and you want a great deal more of Jesus brought into your lives, into your character, and into your experience. You can be a help and blessing to one another by being true in every position where you are, by feeling that you are God's representative upon the earth.—*This Day With God*, p. 95.

Christ's lessons in regard to prayer should be carefully considered. There is a divine science in prayer, and His illustration brings to view principles that all need to understand. He shows what is the true spirit of prayer, He teaches the necessity of perseverance in presenting our requests to God, and assures us of His willingness to hear and answer prayer.

Our prayers are not to be a selfish asking, merely for our own benefit. We are to ask that we may give. The principle of Christ's life must be the principle of our lives. . . . The same devotion, the same self-sacrifice, the

same subjection to the claims of the word of God, that were manifest in Christ, must be seen in His servants. Our mission to the world is not to serve or please ourselves; we are to glorify God by co-operating with Him to save sinners. We are to ask blessings from God that we may communicate to others. The capacity for receiving is preserved only by imparting. We cannot continue to receive heavenly treasure without communicating to those around us.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 142.

[Christ] is today standing at the altar of incense, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help.

The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Romans 8:33, 34.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

Wednesday, October 25

Abraham's Mission

In sparing the life of Cain the murderer, God gave the world an example of what would be the result of permitting the sinner to live to continue a course of unbridled iniquity. Through the influence of Cain's teaching and example, multitudes of his descendants were led into sin, until "the wickedness of man was great in the earth" and "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Genesis 6:5, 11.

In mercy to the world, God blotted out its wicked inhabitants in Noah's time. In mercy He destroyed the corrupt dwellers in Sodom. Through the deceptive power of Satan the workers of iniquity obtain sympathy and admiration, and are thus constantly leading others to rebellion. It was so in Cain's and in Noah's day, and in the time of Abraham and Lot; it is so in our time. It is in mercy to the universe that God will finally destroy the rejecters of His grace.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 543.

"The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar." The bright rays of the morning seemed to speak only prosperity and peace to the cities of the plain. The stir of active life began in the streets; men were going their various ways, intent on the business or the pleasures of the day. The sons-in-law of Lot were making merry at the fears and warnings of the weak-minded old man. Suddenly and unexpectedly as would

be a thunder peal from an unclouded sky, the tempest broke. The Lord rained brimstone and fire out of heaven upon the cities and the fruitful plain; its palaces and temples, costly dwellings, gardens and vineyards, and the gay, pleasure-seeking throngs that only the night before had insulted the messengers of heaven—all were consumed. . . .

We are taught the fearful and solemn lesson that while God's mercy bears long with the transgressor, there is a limit beyond which men may not go on in sin. When that limit is reached, then the offers of mercy are withdrawn, and the ministration of judgment begins.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 162.

Everyone who professes the name of Christ is to be an earnest, disinterested worker, ready to defend the principles of righteousness. Every soul should take an active part in advancing the cause of God. Whatever our calling, as Christians we have a work to do in making Christ known to the world. We are to be missionaries, having for our chief aim the winning of souls to Christ.

To His church God has committed the work of diffusing light and bearing the message of His love. Our work is not to condemn, not to denounce, but to draw with Christ, beseeching men to be reconciled to God. We are to encourage souls, to attract them, and thus win them to the Saviour.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 427.

Thursday, October 26

Submission to God's Will

The Lord in His providence had brought [trials] upon Abraham to teach him lessons of submission, patience, and faith—lessons that were to be placed on record for the benefit of all who should afterward be called to endure affliction. God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him. He permitted affliction to come upon Job, but He did not forsake him. He allowed the beloved John to be exiled to lonely Patmos, but the Son of God met him there, and his vision was filled with scenes of immortal glory.

God permits trials to assail His people, that by their constancy and obedience they themselves may be spiritually enriched, and that their example may be a source of strength to others. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil." Jeremiah 29:11. The very trials that task our faith most severely and make it seem that God has forsaken us, are to lead us closer to Christ, that we may lay all our burdens at His feet and experience the peace which He will give us in exchange.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 129.

We are daily to cherish a spirit of childlike submission, and pray that our eyes may be anointed with the heavenly eyesalve in order that we may discern the indications of the divine will, lest we become confused in our ideas, because our will seems to be all-controlling.

With the eye of faith, with childlike submission as obedient children, we must look to God, to follow His guidance, and difficulties will clear away. The promise is, “I will instruct thee and teach thee . . . : I will guide thee with mine eye” (Psalm 32:8).

If we come to God in a humble and teachable spirit, not with our plans all formed before we ask Him, and shaped according to our own will, but in submission, in willingness to be taught, in faith, it is our privilege to claim the promise every hour of the day. We may distrust ourselves, and we need to guard against our own inclinations and strong tendencies lest we shall follow our mind and plans and think it is the way of the Lord.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 249.

Christ has urged that His people pray without ceasing. This does not mean that we should always be upon our knees, but that prayer is to be as the breath of the soul. Our silent requests, wherever we may be, are to be ascending unto God, and Jesus our Advocate pleads in our behalf, bearing up with the incense of His righteousness our requests to the Father.

The Lord Jesus loves His people, and when they put their trust in Him, depending wholly upon Him, He strengthens them. He will live through them, giving them the inspiration of His sanctifying Spirit, imparting to the soul a vital transfusion of Himself.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 78.

Friday, October 27

For Further Reading

Lift Him Up, “Love—The Evidence of Discipleship,” p. 298;

The Upward Look, “Courage in the Lord,” p. 266.