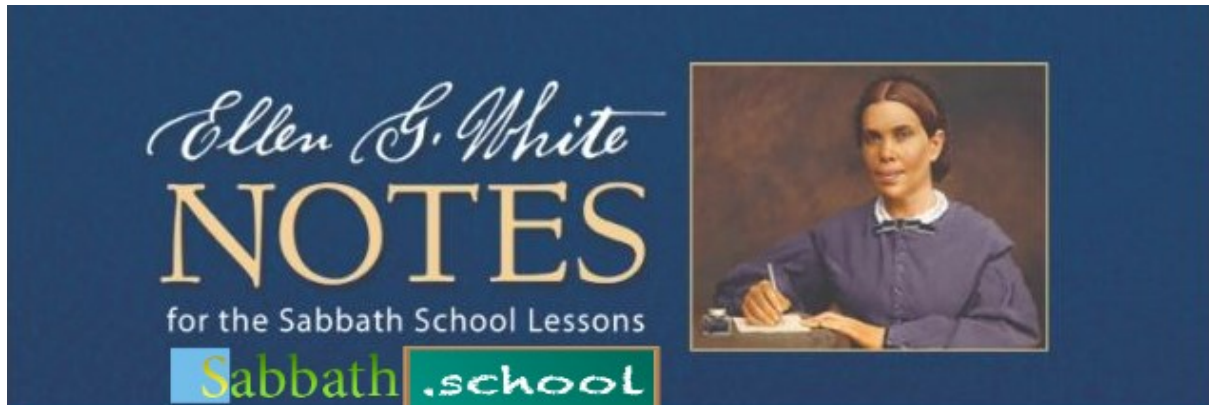


EGW Notes - Lesson 8

Wisdom for Righteous Living



Sabbath Afternoon, February 17

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

Our time belongs to God. Every moment is His, and we are under the most solemn obligation to improve it to His glory. Of no talent He has given will He require a more strict account than of our time.

The value of time is beyond computation. Christ regarded every moment as precious, and it is thus that we should regard it. Life is too short to be trifled away. We have but a few days of probation in which to prepare for eternity. We have no time to waste, no time to devote to selfish pleasure, no time for the indulgence of sin. It is now that we are to form characters for the future, immortal life. It is now that we are to prepare for the

searching judgment.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 158.

I believe we are on the very borders of the eternal world, and I am seeking to keep in constant communion with God. I prize eternal life and nothing shall separate me from the love of God. I want constantly to educate and train my soul to lean on Christ, to draw spiritual strength from Christ. God intends that we shall have an experimental knowledge of Christ, then we can be faithful witnesses for God, testifying of the grace of Christ in words and actions, by conscious and unconscious influence. . . .

When I think of the work that God is doing for fallen man, I am lost in wonder that God will take poor, fallen beings and bring to them moral power, that there will be the internal workings of His grace, transforming the character and making men fit for the mansions God is preparing for them—beings fitted for the presence of God, fitted to be companions with angels, and to hold communion with God. Oh, how my heart yearns to be one who shall walk with Jesus Christ in the earth made new—*This Day With God*, p. 117.

Often the Christian life is beset with dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage and death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly, Go forward. Let us obey the command, even though our sight cannot penetrate the darkness. The obstacles that hinder our progress will never disappear before a halting, doubting spirit. Those who defer obedience till every uncertainty disappears, and there remains no risk of failure or

defeat, will never obey. Faith looks beyond the difficulties, and lays hold of the unseen, even Omnipotence, therefore it cannot be baffled. Faith is the clasping of the hand of Christ in every emergency. . . .

Jesus does not call on us to follow Him, and then forsake us. If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision. Whatever may be our situation, we have a Guide to direct our way.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 262, 263.

Sunday, February 18

Your Word I Have Hidden in My Heart

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Psalm 119:1.

In his own strength the sinner cannot meet the demands of God. He must go for help to the One who paid the ransom for him.

Christ is our hope. Those who trust in Him are cleansed. The grace of Christ and the government of God walk together in perfect harmony. When Jesus became man's substitute, mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. The cross of Calvary bears witness to the high claims of God's law.

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of

happiness in obedience. As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages. To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.—*Our High Calling*, p. 137.

We can keep the law only through making the righteousness of Christ our own. Christ says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” When we receive the heavenly gift, the righteousness of Christ, we shall find that divine grace has been provided for us, and that human resources are powerless. Jesus gives the Holy Spirit in large measure for great emergencies, to help our infirmities, to give us strong consolation, to illuminate our minds, and purify and ennoble our hearts. Christ becomes unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

From the first to the last of the Christian life, not one successful step can be taken without Christ. He has sent His Spirit to be with us constantly, and by confiding in Christ to the uttermost, surrendering our will to Him, we may follow Him whithersoever He goeth.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 103.

The Saviour overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God’s promises, He received power to obey God’s commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, “It is written.” So God has given us His

word wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we “might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4.

Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God’s word. All its strength is ours. “Thy word,” says the psalmist, “have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” Psalm 119:11.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 181.

Monday, February 19

Teach Us to Number Our Days

The human family have scarcely begun to live when they begin to die. The man who appreciates time as his working day will fit himself for a mansion and for a life that is immortal. It is well that he was born. We are admonished to redeem the time. But time squandered can never be recovered. We cannot call back even one moment. The only way in which we can redeem our time is by making the most of that which remains, by being co-workers with God in His great plan of redemption.

Every moment is freighted with eternal consequences. We are to stand as minute men, ready for service at a moment’s notice. The opportunity that is now ours to speak to some needy soul the word of life may never offer again. God may say to that one, “This night thy soul shall be required of thee,” and through our neglect he may not be ready. (Luke 12:20.) In the great judgment day, how shall we render our account to God?—*The*

Faith I Live By, p. 15.

Our lifework now should be to prepare for eternity. We know not how soon our lifework here may close, and how essential that our low, sinful nature should be overcome, and we conform to the image of Christ. We have not one moment's time to squander. We need to be daily preparing for eternity. Our lifetime is granted us to seek the boon of eternal life. God has granted us a probation, and, if we live our threescore years and ten, how short is this period to work out our salvation! Then compare this period with the life that measures with the life of God. The short period of our test and proving may end any time. Then how earnest should we be to secure a clear title to a home in the earth made new.

My anxiety is to do the work the Master has given me to do and let nothing divert me from this work. We must seek to be one with God. His interest must be our interest, His sentiments and designs ours. We know the love of God for sinners and the infinite sacrifice that has been made to save perishing souls; then let us unite with Christ in this great work.—*This Day With God*, p. 117.

Christ will never abandon the soul for whom He has died. The soul may leave Him and be overwhelmed with temptation, but Christ can never turn from one for whom He has paid the ransom of His own life. . . .

Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions

and assaults of Satan. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”
Proverbs 18:10.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*,
p. 119.

Tuesday, February 20

The Lord’s Test

To dwell upon the beauty, goodness, mercy, and love of Jesus is strengthening to the mental and moral powers, and while the mind is kept trained to do the works of Christ, to be obedient children, you will habitually inquire, Is this the way of the Lord? Will Jesus be pleased to have me do this? Will this course be to please myself or to please Jesus?

Then will every soul remember the words of the Lord: Thou hast my secret sins in the light of thy countenance. Many need to make a decided change in the tenor of their thoughts and actions, if they would please Jesus. We can seldom see our sins in the grievous light that God can. Many have habituated themselves to pursue a course of sin, and their hearts harden, under the influence of the power of Satan. And their thoughts are brought into captivity to his evil influences; but when in the strength and grace of God they place their minds against the temptations of Satan, their minds are made clear, their hearts and consciences by being influenced by the Spirit of God are made sensitive, and then sin appears as it is—exceedingly sinful. Then is the time when the secret sins are set in the light of their countenance. They confess their sins to God, and repent

of them and become ashamed of sin. He casts them from the light of His countenance behind His back.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1150.

When Joseph was tempted to deviate from the path of right, to transgress the law of God and prove untrue to his master, he firmly resisted and gave evidence of the elevating power of the fear of God in his answer to his master's wife. . . .

Here is an example to all generations who should live upon the earth. Although they may be exposed to temptations, yet they should ever realize that there is a defense at hand, and it will be their own fault if they are not preserved. God will be a present help, and His Spirit a shield. Although surrounded with the severest temptations, there is a source of strength to which they can apply and resist them. . . .

Joseph suffered because he would not yield his integrity. He had placed his reputation and interest in the hands of God. And although he was suffered to be afflicted for a time, to prepare him to fill an important position, yet God safely guarded that reputation that was blackened by a wicked accuser, and afterward, in His own good time, caused it to shine. God made even the prison the way to his elevation. Virtue will in time bring its own reward. The shield which covered Joseph's heart was the fear of God, which caused him to be faithful and just to his master and true to God.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 102.

Wednesday, February 21

Deceitfulness of the Wicked Way

Angels are engaged night and day in the service of God for the uplifting of man in accordance with the plan of salvation. Man is required to love God supremely, that is, with all his might, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself. This he cannot possibly do unless he shall deny himself. Said Christ: "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." . . .

Search carefully and see whether the truth which you have accepted has become a firm principle with you. Do you take Christ with you when you leave the closet of prayer? Does your religion stand guard at the door of your lips? Is your heart drawn out in sympathy and love for others outside of your own family? Are you diligently seeking a clearer understanding of Scriptural truth, that you may let your light shine forth to others? These questions you may answer to your own souls. Let your speech be seasoned with grace and your demeanor show Christian elevation.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 521.

There are those who are forever making excuses for walking in the counsels of the enemy. Some think that because they have physical infirmities, they are privileged to speak pettish words and to act in an unlovely manner. But has Jesus made no provision for such ones to overcome temptation? Because of trial and affliction, are they to be unthankful and unholy? Are not

the rays of Christ's righteousness bright enough to dispel the shadow of Satan?

The grace of God is declared to be sufficient for all the ills and trials against which human beings have to contend. . . .

O how precious is Jesus to the soul who trusts in Him. But many are walking in darkness because they bury their faith in the shadow of Satan. They have not done that which it was in their power to do through the grace of Jesus. They have not talked faith and hope and courage. Never for a moment should we allow Satan to think that his power to distress and annoy is greater than the power of Christ to uphold and strengthen.—*This Day With God*, p. 177.

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. . . .

Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 60, 61.

Thursday, February 22

Blessings of Righteous Living

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son.

This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God: that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honor exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's heart.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 22.

You are just as dependent upon Christ, in order to live a holy life, as is the branch upon the parent stock for growth and fruitfulness. Apart from Him you have no life. You have no power to resist temptation or to grow in grace and holiness. Abiding in Him, you may flourish. Drawing your life from Him, you will not wither nor be

fruitless. You will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.

Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,—all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,—by abiding in Him,—that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way. David says, "I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Psalm 16:8.—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 68, 69.

God desires man to be happy, and for this reason He gave him the precepts of His Law, that in obeying these he might have joy at home and abroad. While he stands in his moral integrity, true to principle, and having the control of all his powers, he cannot be miserable. With its tendrils twined about God, the heart will be full of peace and joy, and the soul will flourish amid unbelief and depravity.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 305.

Friday, February 23

For Further Reading

God's Amazing Grace, "God's Eternal Pledge," p. 157;

This Day With God, "Without Spot," p. 159.