

Lesson 12
Sabbath Afternoon, June 13
Share Him

True Christians will have an experience like that of Christ in the wilderness of temptation, especially those who engage in rescuing souls from the snares of Satan. They will meet the assaults of the enemy of all righteousness; and as Christ overcame, so may they overcome through His grace. Christians should not feel that they are abandoned of God because they are subjected to sore temptations. If they remain unshaken by the temptations, Satan will leave them, and angels will minister to them as they did to Jesus. There is no comfort equal to that which Christians enjoy when the tempted soul has patiently suffered and Satan has been vanquished. They have borne witness for Jesus, relying wholly upon the Word of God, "It is written," and thus have resisted every advance of Satan, till they have beaten him back and gained the victory.

Let us in no case depreciate people because they are severely tempted and the billows seem to go over their head. We must remember that Jesus was sorely tempted in all points like as we are, so that He might succor all who should be tempted. . . .

We all have a personal influence. Our words and actions leave an indelible impress. It is our duty to live, not for self but for the good of others; to be controlled not by feelings, but by principle. We should consider that our influence is a power for good or for evil. We are either a light to cheer or a tempest to destroy. . . .

The law of God requires that we love one another as we love ourselves. Then every power and action of the mind must be put forth to that end—to do the greatest amount of good. . . . How pleasing to the Giver for us to hold the royal gifts of the soul so that they shall tell with power upon others! They are the connecting link between God and humans, and reveal the Spirit of Christ and the attributes of heaven. The power of holiness, seen but not boasted of, speaks more eloquently than the most able sermons. It speaks of God and opens to men and women their duty more powerfully than mere words can do. —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 210.

As witnesses for Christ, we are to tell what we know, what we ourselves have seen and heard and felt, If we have been following Jesus step by step, we shall have something right to the point to tell concerning the way in which He has led us. We can tell how we have tested His promise, and found the promise true. We can bear witness to what we have known of the grace of Christ. This is the witness for which our Lord calls, and for want of which the world is perishing. . . .

The true Christian will make God first and last and best in everything. No ambitious motives will chill his love for God; steadily, perseveringly, will he cause honor to redound to his heavenly Father. It is when we are faithful in exalting the name of God that our impulses are under divine supervision, and we are enabled to develop spiritual and intellectual power.

Jesus, the divine Master, ever exalted the name of His heavenly Father. He taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9, A.R.V.) and they were not to forget to acknowledge, "Thine is . . . the glory" (verse 13). —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 105.

Sunday, June 14
Out of the Overflow

It was God's design that through Joseph, Bible religion should be introduced among the Egyptians. This faithful witness was to represent Christ in the court of kings. Through dreams, God communicated with Joseph in his youth, giving him an intimation of the high position he would be called to fill. The brothers of Joseph, to prevent the fulfillment of his dreams, sold him as a slave, but their cruel act resulted in bringing about the very thing the dreams had foretold.

Those who seek to turn aside the purpose of God, and oppose His will, may appear for a time to prosper; but God is at work to fulfill His own purposes, and He will make manifest who is the ruler of the heavens and the earth.

Joseph regarded his being sold into Egypt as the greatest calamity that could have befallen him; but he saw the necessity of trusting in God as he had never done when protected by his father's love. Joseph brought God with him into Egypt, and the fact was made apparent by his cheerful demeanor amid his sorrow. As the ark of God brought rest and prosperity to Israel, so did this God-loving, God-fearing youth bring a blessing to Egypt. This was manifested in so marked a manner that Potiphar, in whose house he served, attributed all his blessings to his purchased slave, and made him a son rather than a servant. It is God's purpose that those who love and honor His name shall be honored also themselves, and that the glory given to God through them shall be reflected upon themselves.

Joseph's character did not change when he was exalted to a position of trust. He was brought where his virtue would shine in distinct light in good works. The blessing of God rested upon him in the house and in the field. All the responsibilities of Potiphar's house were placed upon him. And in all this he manifested steadfast integrity; for he loved and feared God. —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 256.

We are authorized to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ while living in transgression of God's law. There exist in these last days evils similar to those that threatened the prosperity of the early church; and the teachings of the apostle John on these points should be carefully heeded. "You must have charity" is the cry heard everywhere, especially from those who profess sanctification. But true charity is too pure to cover an unconfessed sin. While we are to love the souls for whom Christ died, we are to make no compromise with evil. We are not to unite with the rebellious and call this charity. God requires His people in this age of the world to stand for the right as unflinchingly as did John in opposition to soul-destroying errors. . . . 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. —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 66.

Monday, June 15
Unforced but With Power

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth before the vast multitude, showing themselves unhurt. The presence of their Saviour had guarded them from harm, and only their fetters had been burned. "And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

Forgotten was the great golden image, set up with such pomp. In the presence of the living God, men feared and trembled. "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego," the humbled king was constrained to acknowledge, "who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God."

The experiences of that day led Nebuchadnezzar to issue a decree, "that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." "There is no other god," he urged as the reason for the decree, "that can deliver after this sort."

In these and like words the king of Babylon endeavored to spread abroad before all the peoples of earth his conviction that the power and authority of the God of the Hebrews was worthy of supreme adoration. And God was pleased with the effort of the king to show Him reverence, and to make the royal confession of allegiance as widespread as was the Babylonian realm.

It was right for the king to make public confession, and to seek to exalt the God of heaven above all other gods; but in endeavoring to force his subjects to make a similar confession of faith and to show similar reverence, Nebuchadnezzar was exceeding his right as a temporal sovereign. He had no more right, either civil or moral, to threaten men with death for not worshiping God, than he had to make the decree consigning to the flames all who refused to worship the golden image. God never compels the obedience of man. He leaves all free to choose whom they will serve.

By the deliverance of His faithful servants, the Lord declared that He takes His stand with the oppressed, and rebukes all earthly powers that rebel against the authority of Heaven. The three Hebrews declared to the whole nation of Babylon their faith in Him whom they worshiped. They relied on God. In the hour of their trial they remembered the promise, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isaiah 43:2. And in a marvelous manner their faith in the living Word had been honored in the sight of all. The tidings of their wonderful deliverance were carried to many countries by the representatives of the different nations that had been invited by Nebuchadnezzar to the dedication. Through the faithfulness of His children, God was glorified in all the earth. —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 510.

Tuesday, June 16
Tips for Sharing Jesus

There was but one hope for the human race—that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world.

Christ came to restore this knowledge. He came to set aside the false teaching by which those who claimed to know God had misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness.

Christ came to the world with the accumulated love of eternity. Sweeping away the exactions which had encumbered the law of God, He showed that the law is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the happiness of mankind, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society.

So far from making arbitrary requirements, God's law is given to men as a hedge, a shield. Whoever accepts its principles is preserved from evil. Fidelity to God involves fidelity to man. Thus the law guards the rights, the individuality, of every human being. It restrains the superior from oppression, and the subordinate from disobedience. It ensures man's well-being, both for this world and for the world to come. To the obedient it is the pledge of eternal life, for it expresses the principles that endure forever.

Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the regeneration of humanity. He came to teach how these principles are to be developed and applied.

With the people of that age the value of all things was determined by outward show. As religion had declined in power, it had increased in pomp. The educators of the time sought to command respect by display and ostentation. To all this the life of Jesus presented a marked contrast. His life demonstrated the worthlessness of those things that men regarded as life's great essentials. Born amidst surroundings the rudest, sharing a peasant's home, a peasant's fare, a craftsman's occupation, living a life of obscurity, identifying Himself with the world's unknown toilers,—amidst these conditions and surroundings,—Jesus followed the divine plan of education. The schools of His time, with their magnifying of things small and their belittling of things great, He did not seek. His education was gained directly from the Heaven-appointed sources; from useful work, from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life—God's lesson books, full of instruction to all who bring to them the willing hand, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart. —*Education*, pp. 76, 77.

Wednesday, June 17
A Wandering Child

What think ye of Christ?" What is He to you personally? Is your faith centered in Him as your Redeemer? Do you believe that He saves you from sin, that He imputes to you His righteousness?

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and [men and women] loved darkness rather than light." They will not come to the light for fear that their deeds will be reprov'd. This is the position taken by many. Their names are in the church books. They observe a round of ceremonies, but they do not love the truth. They have been satisfied to stand at the door. They do not press their way into Christ's presence, to share with Him the glory of His royal life. Their characters are not brought into harmony with the truth. They have not the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Evil-speaking, evil-surmising, dishonest actions, cast a dark shadow athwart their pathway. Their faith sinks into this shadow of shame, and they feel that they are separated from Christ. There is a sting in the conscience, a condemnation in the life. They feel a desire to hide away from God. Light has come into the world, but they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. . . .

The time has come when it is for our eternal interest to believe in Christ. . . . He is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. He says, "I will . . . write [My law] in their hearts." He will create in those who come to Him in faith a divine principle of holiness, which shall rule in the soul, enlightening the understanding and captivating the affections. . . .

[Matthew 11:28–30 quoted.] What an invitation! It was this invitation that He gave to Enoch before the world was destroyed by the Flood. . . . Christ was as verily Enoch's Saviour as He is our Saviour, and in His power, notwithstanding the corruption of that degenerate age, Enoch perfected a Christian character.

The voice saying to us, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness," said the same words to Enoch, assuring him that if he followed the Saviour, he would not walk in the darkness of ignorance.

The Lord instructed Enoch and made him His watchman. He was a faithful witness for God. He warned the inhabitants of the old world not to follow the example of the Cain-worshippers, but to serve the living God. —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 52.

Thursday, June 18
Bring Them Back

The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.

The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the "former rain" was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the "latter rain" will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3. "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain." Joel 2:23. "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh." "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:17, 21.

The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are "the times of refreshing" to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus." Acts 3:19, 20.

Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.

The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side. —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 611, 612.

Friday, June 19
For Further Reading

Reflecting Christ, "Christ Lifts Us Through Sorrow," December 16, p. 364.
Conflict and Courage, "Perils Within and Without," December 18, p. 358.