Pentecostal Bible Study COURSE

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

THE TABERNACLE

A PROPHETIC VIEW OF HISTORY

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

SALVATION

THE GODHEAD

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Pentecostal Bible Study COURSE

Volume 1

Pentecostal Bible Study Course

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Introduction to the Bible

(7 Lessons)

Lesson 1
The Word of God

I. Purpose of the Word of God

To show the way of eternal life. "These things have I written unto you . . . that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (I John 5:13). The Scriptures alone are the source of such knowledge!

To show Christ's deity. "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

To provide examples of good and evil. Christ is the perfect example (I Peter 2:21; John 13:15). Paul told us we will profit by heeding the warnings of the Word (I Corinthians 10:5-11).

To provide daily food for the soul. As the body lives on natural food, so the soul lives on the Word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3; Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16; I Peter 2:2).

Our chief objective in Bible study is not merely to learn *about* Christ, but to *learn* Christ. John 1:14 states, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Christ, the living Word, came in the flesh. No one can truly say that he knows the written Word without being acquainted with the living Christ who inspired its writings.

Knowing Christ makes the Bible a new book to its readers. A woman was given a copy of a certain book. She found the book boring, so she took it to the attic, where she left it for several months. One day she became acquainted with a well-known author. Later, this man asked whether she had read a certain book he had written. Recognizing the name of the book as the one she had carried to the attic, she went home, took the book from its hiding place, and read it. This time she found the book to be one of the most fascinating she had ever read. What made the difference? She had become acquainted with the author!

II. Methods of Bible Study

Study as an inspiration for worship. As we read the songs of praise and the prayers of those whose hearts reached out after God, we are inspired to worship and to seek God for the blessings they enjoyed.

Study the lives of great Bible characters. Biographical study will prove interesting to those who choose this method. While studying biblical characters, we should notice the preparation they made for the service they rendered, how they overcame obstacles, and their mistakes, so we can avoid them.

Study individual books. In studying a book, it is necessary to note (1) its author, (2) the author's purpose for writing the book, (3) to whom it was written, and (4) the chief subjects covered. "In studying some books it is well to give each chapter names, suggestive of the contents. Practice thinking through an entire book consecutively by chapter names" (Saxe).

Study by subject. Volume 2 of this course explains this method.

III. Scripture Memorization

When studying chapters, memorize the outstanding verse or verses. When studying subjects, memorize several verses of Scripture that link together in a comprehensive manner. Of course, the Holy Spirit is invaluable in bringing "all things to your remembrance" (John 14:26).

Lesson 2
Rules for Studying the Bible

I. Studying by Books

First, note the purpose and the general divisions of a book before focusing on its details. Someone has said it is good to use the telescope first and the microscope afterwards. The details will have more meaning when we relate them to the whole.

Second, read the book carefully before interpreting or applying it. In studying the Scriptures, we must first become familiar with the material. It will not be so difficult to know what the Bible means if we carefully note exactly what it says.

II. The Word Is Divinely Inspired (II Peter 1:21)

The Spirit and the written Word agree, for the Word is a product of the Spirit of God. "The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel . . . and the hand of the LORD was there upon him" (Ezekiel 1:3). (See II Timothy 3:16; Acts 1:16.) In Revelation 14:13, John said, "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write. . . ."

Since God's Word is inspired, the Spirit of God speaks directly to our hearts when we read it. Therefore, an important rule is: accept no so-called revelation that is not in harmony with the Word of God.

Since God's Word is inspired, we do not need to defend it. This principle will help workers to proclaim the Word, not merely to argue the Word. We do not need to defend the Word any more than we would have to defend a lion—we can just turn it loose and it will defend itself!

III. Figurative Language

We should not interpret the Scriptures figuratively unless the context itself indicates that the passage is figurative. We should look to the Bible itself to understand a figure of speech, or an Old Testament type and its fulfillment.

For instance, I Peter 3:20 refers to "the ark . . . wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." The next verse gives the spiritual application, or fulfillment of the type: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us."

Galatians 4:23-24 is another example. Here Paul wrote concerning the bondwoman and the freewoman. He said: "Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants."

Many have found verses in the Bible that illustrate spiritual truths but have not observed this rule of Bible study, have gone to the extreme, and have totally "spiritualized" the verses, even dropping the literal meaning. Through this error, some have eliminated the Lord's Supper and water baptism, and some have ceased to believe that Jesus is literally coming again in the clouds of glory!

IV. Our Attitude toward Learning

No matter how much we may have learned of the Word of God, we should maintain a teachable spirit. To close our minds is to miss truth that may bless the people to whom we minister. The more we study the Word of God, the more we see that there is to learn!

On the other hand, Hebrews 13:9 warns, "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." *Additional truth will never contradict truths already revealed*. A genuine love for the

truth is the greatest stabilizing force in the world. If someone loves anything more than the truth (his own way, human personalities, manifestations or miracles), God may send him a strong delusion that would cause him to be lost in the end.

V. Testing the Truth

The following four questions will help to determine whether a particular teaching is true:

1. Does it glorify Christ? The truth will make Jesus greater to you.

2. Does it make us more like the early church in the Book of Acts? Paul warned in Galatians 1:8, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Hebrews 8:5 exhorts, "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern." Furthermore, Jude 3 says, "Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

3. Does all Scripture harmonize on the subject? I Thessalonians 5:21 states, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." We have not proven any subject until we have harmonized all passages of Scripture relating to it. For instance, we have not demonstrated the truth of baptism in the name of Jesus if we avoid Matthew 28:19; we must harmonize it with the baptismal passages in Acts. Once we have harmonized them, Matthew 28:19 is one of the strongest verses we can use to teach water baptism in the name of Jesus.

4. Does it tend to make us live holy lives? The truth of God will promote holiness in those who heed it. For instance, the truth of the second coming of Christ promotes holiness, for it is a purifying hope (I John 3:2-3).

In contrast, false doctrine tends to cause those who have accepted it to become lukewarm, and false doctrine, of course, is a great weapon in the hands of Satan. For example, if we believe in the doctrine of unconditional eternal security, the enemy of our souls has a weapon to tempt us into careless and unfruitful living.

Lesson 3

The Books of the Bible

I. Is Our Bible Complete?

There are sixty-six books in the Bible. Some people claim that there are several other books that should belong in the Scriptures also, but they are not included in our Bible. These books are called the Apocrypha. It is significant that neither Jesus nor the apostles ever quoted from the Apocrypha.

II. The Old Testament Is Composed of Thirty-nine Books in Five Categories

Law

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

History

1. Joshua
2. Judges
3. Ruth
4. I Samuel
5. II Samuel
6. I Kings
7. II Kings
8. I Chronicles
9. II Chronicles
10. Ezra
11. Nehemiah
12. Esther

Poetry

1. Job
2. Psalms
3. Proverbs
4. Ecclesiastes
5. Song of Solomon

Major Prophets

1. Isaiah
2. Jeremiah
3. Lamentations
4. Ezekiel
5. Daniel

Minor Prophets

1. Hosea

2. Joel
3. Amos
4. Obadiah
5. Jonah
6. Micah
7. Nahum
8. Habakkuk
9. Zephaniah
10. Haggai
11. Zechariah
12. Malachi

III. The New Testament Is Composed of Twenty-seven Books in Four Categories

Gospels

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John

History

Acts

Epistles

1. Romans
2. I Corinthians
3. II Corinthians
4. Galatians
5. Ephesians
6. Philippians
7. Colossians
8. I Thessalonians
9. II Thessalonians
10. I Timothy
11. II Timothy
12. Titus
13. Philemon
14. Hebrews
15. James
16. I Peter
17. II Peter
18. I John
19. II John
20. III John
21. Jude

Prophecy

Revelation

Note: Some people say that the Old Testament is not for us today. In the beginning, however, the Old Testament was the Bible that the early church used! In fact, many sermons and teachings in the Book of Acts and the Epistles are based on Old Testament texts. (See I Corinthians 10:1-11.)

Lesson 4
Seven Ages

I. Human Innocence

This age began at the creation of man and extended until Adam and Eve yielded to the voice of the tempter and sinned (Genesis 3:6). During this time, they were sinless, not even having the knowledge of good and evil.

The age of innocence, like the others, ended in judgment. In this instance, God drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. This judgment included God cursing the ground with thorns and thistles and making people earn their bread by the sweat of their brows (Genesis 3:17-19). Death, which was unheard of before, now entered the world and passed on to all humanity.

II. Conscience

This age extended from the fall of humanity until Noah's flood. God gave humans a conscience, which is an instinctive knowledge of good and evil. Without the written Word of God, people relied primarily on conscience to govern their behavior.

During this period, human wickedness became so great that God "repented . . . that he had made man" and ended this age with the judgment of the great flood.

III. Human Government

This age covered the time between the flood and the building of the Tower of Babel. Since it appears that God did not govern humanity directly through prophets or priests during this time, we can call this period the age of human government.

This age ended when God thwarted the building of the Tower of Babel, confused mankind's languages, and scattered the people across the face of the earth (Genesis 11:7-8).

IV. Promise

During this period, we read of God's promises, by which God led His people. We note especially God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (See Galatians 3:16.)

This age ended when the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites. Canaan was the land of promise, and trouble was inevitable when they left the land God had given them to settle in Egypt. Similarly, we Spirit-filled Christians dwell in the "land of promise," and if we are not continually led by the Spirit, we will be enslaved by Satan.

V. Law

The law covered the time from God giving the law to Moses until the crucifixion of Christ. During this time, Israel was governed by the old covenant.

At the end of this period, judgment fell upon Christ, thus ending the old covenant, or the law. Christ, who knew no sin, became sin for us, taking upon Himself the penalty that belonged to those who had transgressed the law. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). (See Romans 5:6; Hebrews 9:28; I Peter 2:24.)

VI. Grace

We are now living in the age of grace. It extends from the Day of Pentecost, when the new covenant church began and when the full message of grace was first preached, until the second coming of our Lord. We are saved by grace and not by works. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). (See Romans 11:6.)

Judgment will fall on the earth at the close of the church age, or age of grace, during the Tribulation. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matthew 24:21). (See Luke 21:25-28.)

VII. The Kingdom

This is the period of a thousand years called the Millennium that will follow the second coming of the Lord in the clouds (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). (See Revelation 20:5.) During the Millennium, Jesus will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. "The government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isaiah 9:6), and righteousness shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea. "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one" (Zechariah 14:9). (See II Timothy 2:12; Isaiah 65:18-25; Jeremiah 31:34.)

This age shall end with the Great White Throne judgment: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained" (Acts 17:31). "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). (See Revelation 20:12.)

Lesson 5

The Parallel between Israel and the Church

Part 1

When we realize that the Scriptures reveal a parallel between Israel and the church, we have a valuable principle for understanding the Word of God. God gave about two-thirds of the Bible to Israel. Unless some of the same promises apply to the church spiritually, the church would have very little of the Bible left to claim as its own. In Scripture, we find that the church enjoys many promises made to God's chosen people, sometimes even before they are fulfilled in Israel.

The first question to consider is, What people belong to Israel, and what people belong to the church? Israel consists of the natural descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, while the church consists of born-again Jews and Gentiles, the spiritual descendants of Abraham through Christ.

Paul's kinsmen were "Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Romans 9:4). The second question to consider is, If these things belong to Israel, how do they apply to the church? Indeed, how does the church perform the service of God or share in the glory? Importantly, which promises can the church claim?

We find the answer to these questions in realizing that Abraham had both natural and spiritual descendants. God promised Abraham, "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore" (Genesis 22:17). God pictured the offspring of Abraham both as the sands of the sea and as the stars of heaven. This possibly indicates that his offspring would be a heavenly people as well as an earthly people.

Paul said that God gave the glory and the promises to Israel. Yet he also said that Israel rejected the Christ; this sounds as though the plan of God failed! Paul was careful to explain, however: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Romans 9:6). In other words, Jews by birth do not necessarily count as the true seed. No, God's Word did not fail, even though Jesus "came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). The Lord, however, did find a seed that would serve Him. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation" (Psalm 22:30).

Romans 9:7-8 says that the true seed of Abraham are those who have faith in the promise of God (Romans 4:11-16). "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Romans 9:7). Not all the descendants of Abraham were counted as Israel, but only those who came through Isaac, for Isaac was the child of promise.

Romans 9:8 describes the parallel between Israel and the church: "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Furthermore, not all of the descendants of Isaac are called Israel, but only those who came from his second son, Jacob. In this instance, the Lord changed the normal order of things before Esau and Jacob were born, saying, "The elder shall serve the younger" (Romans 9:12). The Lord magnified the second birth over the first birth. The natural seed came through the second child to make the type clear—only those who have been born again can be the spiritual seed, or the church.

The Gentiles are the spiritual children of Abraham through faith: "And he received the sign of

circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised" (Romans 4:11). Abraham was circumcised when he was ninety-nine years old. His circumcision was a seal of the faith he already possessed before he was circumcised. Thus, he is the spiritual father of all believers, whether circumcised or uncircumcised.

Romans 2:28-29 says, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." Those who have cut off the works of the flesh are the spiritual children of Abraham. Galatians 3:7 says, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Moreover, Galatians 3:29 states, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Indeed, in John 8:39, the Lord rebuked those who trusted in their lineage alone: "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our Father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."

Therefore, the church becomes an heir to the promise of Abraham because of their relationship with Christ, who was the seed of Abraham. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Ephesians 2:14-16). The "new man" that was created by the death of Christ is the church, the body of Christ. (See Colossians 1:18, 24.) Therefore, the church has a right to the glory, the service of God, and many of the promises that God originally made to Israel, all because of Christ.

Lesson 6

The Parallel between Israel and the Church

Part 2

God offered the new covenant to Israel: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. . . . For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:8-10).

This covenant will not be fulfilled in Israel as a whole, however, until the earth is in this condition: "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest" (Hebrews 8:11). This verse of Scripture describes the millennial kingdom and shows that Israel will not receive the new covenant promise until the Millennium. Here, the writer of Hebrews took a promise that was originally given to Israel and applied it to the church! The church precedes the majority of Israel and enjoys this new covenant promise now. The writer was well aware that God originally gave the promise to Israel, yet he also knew that the church was the seed of Abraham and therefore this promise was for the church also.

We will trace the promises given to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Christ, and finally the church. God made the promises to Abraham and his seed. The word "seed" here refers supremely to Christ Himself. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Galatians 3:16).

An angel of heaven repeated the promise given to Abraham: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). Christ was to come through Abraham, and through Christ all nations would be blessed.

Moreover, God's promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled through Isaac alone and not his other children: "And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 26:1-4).

In Genesis 28:1-4, God made the same promise to Isaac's son Jacob. From Jacob, the promised seed came through Judah (Genesis 49:10).

God promised David that his seed would always sit upon the throne of Israel: "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne" (Psalm 132:11). In Psalm 132:4-5, David vowed, "I will not give sleep to mine eyes . . . until I find out . . . an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." David saw that the service of the Lord took place in the tentlike Tabernacle, while the people lived in beautiful houses. Therefore, he desired to build a house of worship worthy of the glory of God. He vowed not to sleep until God showed him where this place should be. This sounds, at first, like a rash vow for David to make, since God did not allow him to erect the Temple. However, David prayed, and God showed him where the mighty God of Jacob was really going to dwell. In Psalm 132:6, David said, "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah." Ephratah is Bethlehem. So the Lord showed David that the real dwelling place of God was going to be through the birth of the Savior at Bethlehem. Bethlehem means *house of bread*, and it is rightly named, for out of Bethlehem came the One who was the Bread of Life.

Micah 5:2 proves that Ephratah is Bethlehem and that out of this place would come the ruler of Israel. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel."

Jesus instructed the disciples how to receive the blessing of Abraham, which He called "the promise of the Father." "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Galatians 3:14 identifies the "promise of the Father" with the "blessing of Abraham": "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Paul declared that the blessing of Abraham is fulfilled in the church through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, those who do not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, do not receive the very thing the Lord has planned to bless all nations with. Paul emphasized this in Ephesians 1:13 when he called the Holy Spirit the "holy Spirit of promise." Concerning the Old Testament prophets and patriarchs, Hebrews 11:39-40 says, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." When believers are filled with the Holy Spirit, they have received something better than anything the prophets received.

The prophet Joel also revealed what was to be given to all nations through Abraham's promise: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28). Peter carefully explained on the Day of Pentecost that the experience that the 120 believers received, which came with speaking in other tongues, was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16-18). Later, Peter reminded the Jews that they were the children of Abraham, to whom God promised, ''In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you" (Acts 3:25-26). After the resurrection, the way God sends Him is in the power of the Holy Ghost!

Lesson 7

The Parallel between Israel and the Church

Part 3

1. Israel is God's elect according to race—an earthly people; the church is God's elect according to grace—a heavenly people.

Israel was God's chosen people: "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name" (Isaiah 45:4). "And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there" (Isaiah 65:9). (See Romans 11:28.)

The church is God's elect—God's chosen people according to grace. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). Here, Paul referred to a remnant of Israel who converted to Christ and were now part of the church. (See I Peter 5:13; Luke 18:7; II Peter 1:10.)

2. Those in Israel come from Isaac, who was of a miraculous birth. Those in the church enter it by a miraculous new birth.

The seed of Abraham came through Isaac, for he was the child of promise, being of a miraculous birth. Sarah, Abraham's wife, was barren, but God performed a miracle and gave them a son. (See Romans 9:7-9.)

Paul used this as a figure of the miraculous new-birth experience that believers receive: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Galatians 4:28).

3. The purpose for which God chose Israel is similar to the purpose for which He chose the church.

God chose Israel to be a witness of His power among the idolatrous nations and to be the nation through whom the blessing of God would reach the entire world. (See Genesis 12:3.) Some of the Gentiles accepted Jehovah as the true and living God because of what they saw Him do for His people. Rahab the harlot is a good example.

God chose the church to be a witness of His power among sinners and to be the means by which the gospel is preached to the ends of the earth. Jesus said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14).

4. Many of the promises originally made to Israel also apply spiritually to the church.

God promised to fight for Israel: "Ye shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he shall fight for you" (Deuteronomy 3:22). Israel's wars were in the flesh with carnal weapons. God gave the same promise to the church; however, our weapons are spiritual, not carnal: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (II Corinthians 10:4).

God promised Israel, "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble" (Isaiah 65:23).

God also promises the church, "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

In Isaiah 62:6-7, God told Israel that He would set watchmen on the watchtower of Jerusalem who would not be silent day or night until God made Jerusalem the praise of the earth. God also has watchmen in the church who travail in prayer, so that His people may be the praise of the earth. Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:13-14).

5. Many of the warnings originally given to Israel also apply to the church.

In Leviticus 26:15-17, God warned Israel that if they did not keep His commandments, He would be against them and their enemies would defeat them. Paul warned the church not to be arrogant but to fear, for God would cut them off as He did Israel, unless they continued in His goodness (See Romans 11:20-22).

Paul continued this thought in I Corinthians 10:5-11. Here, Paul used the judgments that fell upon Israel to warn the church not to murmur as they did or to tempt Christ as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents. He summed this up saying, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition"(I Corinthians 10:11).

6. The church is chastened as was Israel.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6). Although chastened, the church has the promise of being "more than conquerors through him that loved us"(Romans 8:37). In spite of the strength of his enemies, Paul was persuaded that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

Questions on Lessons 1-7

Lesson 1

1. Name at least two purposes for the Word of God.
2. What is our chief object in studying the Bible?
3. Give at least three methods of Bible study.
4. What is a good method to use in memory work?

Lesson 2

1. What is a good rule to follow when studying by books?
2. What is the first principle of Bible study?
3. Why do you believe the Word of God to be inspired?
4. When should we interpret a passage of Scripture figuratively?
5. Name three ways of testing the truth.

Lesson 3

1. Why do we believe our Bible to be complete?
2. How many books are there in the Bible? The Old Testament? The New Testament?
3. Name the five divisions of the Old Testament and the books in each.
4. Name the four divisions of the New Testament and the books in each.
5. Why do we believe the Old Testament is for us today?

Lesson 4

1. Name the seven major ages of human history and explain the meaning of each.
2. List the judgment that ended each age.

Lesson 5

1. Who belongs to Israel? Who belongs to the church?
2. To whom were the covenants, the service of God, and the promises first given?
3. How does the church have a right to these promises?
4. How do we become the “children of Abraham”?

Lesson 6

1. What is the new covenant, and to whom was it given?
2. When will the new covenant be fulfilled for Israel as a whole? Give a Scripture reference.
3. Give a verse of Scripture to prove that “the promise of the Spirit” is the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham.
4. Trace this promise through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Christ, and finally to the church.
5. Did the Old Testament saints receive the “promise”?

Lesson 7

1. Who is God’s elect according to race? According to grace?
2. Give a verse of Scripture showing the parallel between the miraculous birth of Isaac and the miraculous birth of those in the church.
3. What is the purpose for which God chose Israel? The church?
4. Are some of the promises made to Israel for the church? Explain.
5. How do the warnings made to Israel affect the church?

Old Testament Studies

(56 Lessons)

Lesson 8

The Book of Esther

Part 1

I. Setting

Many think Mordecai authored this book. During this period of history, he, along with the majority of the Jewish nation, lived in exile in the Persian Empire. This fact, coupled with his intimate knowledge of Esther's actions, would qualify him to describe in minute detail the palace's banquets and customs. He was a righteous man who understood God's dealings with His chosen people.

Most scholars think King Ahasuerus was the Persian king Xerxes. Interestingly, French archeologists excavated Xerxes' palace and found that its floor plan matched the details given in the Book of Esther exactly.

The main characters of this book are King Ahasuerus, Queen Vashti, Esther, Mordecai, and Haman. Esther was a Jewish orphan, born during the exile and raised by Mordecai after the death of her parents.

II. Divisions of the Book

There are two main topics in the Book of Esther:

1. The rejection of Queen Vashti and the crowning of Esther in her place.
2. God's providence in delivering His chosen people when they were facing death.

III. Rejection of Queen Vashti (Chapter 1)

Queen Vashti disobeyed the command of King Ahasuerus to flaunt her beauty before his nobles at the feast. Therefore, the king deposed her for her disobedience.

Some see the queen losing her exalted position as a type of the Jewish nation, which was called the "married wife" before God divorced her as a nation. In this view, God then called out the church, consisting of born-again Jews and Gentiles, to be a people for His name.

The parable in Matthew 21:33-41 illustrates this point. The householder planted a vineyard, rented it out to certain farmers, and went into a far country. When harvesttime came, he sent his servants to receive the fruits of the harvest. The farmers beat one servant, killed another, and stoned another. Later, he sent more servants, who met the same fate. Finally, he sent his son, saying, "They will reverence my son." However, they plotted among themselves and killed the son. When Jesus asked the Jewish religious leaders what the lord of the harvest should do to those servants, they answered that he should destroy those men and rent out his vineyard to other farmers who would give him fruit in its season. The Lord first rented out His vineyard to Israel, who killed the prophets and stoned those sent unto them (Matthew 23:37). He then rented out His vineyard to the church, which will give him fruit at harvesttime.

Some see the deposal of Queen Vashti as applicable to the church as well. That is, we will no longer be members of the bridal company if we disobey the heavenly Bridegroom and do not manifest the beauty of Christ before a world drunken with sin. The bride must be without spot: "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee" (Song of Solomon 4:7). (See Ephesians 5:27.) We have no right to call Jesus "Lord," meaning Master, unless we keep His Word. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Some teach that once we have been born again, we cannot lose our salvation. Yet Paul said that unless we continue in God's goodness, we shall be cut off, like the natural branches (Israel) were (Romans 11:22).

IV. The Crowning of Esther (Chapter 2)

The virgins had one year of beauty treatments to prepare them to go before the king—six months they used oil of myrrh, which is bitter, and six months they used perfume, which is sweet odours.

This preparation may typify the bride of Christ, which is purified by both blessings and trials. Daniel 12:10 says, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; . . . and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Here we find that the church is tried and made pure. The wicked often scoff at Christians who are going through trials, for they do not understand that these things are necessary to prepare the bride of Christ to stand before the King.

Paul acknowledged that one of his worst trials, which he called his thorn in the flesh, was not taken from him, "lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations" (II Corinthians 12:7). Therefore, Paul learned "both how to be abased, and . . . how to abound" (Philippians 4:12). Song of Solomon 4:16 indicates that it takes both the cold winds of trouble and the warm winds of blessing to make our lives produce the fruit that the Lord will expect to receive when He comes. (See I Peter 4:12-14.) In Matthew 5:11-12, Jesus said we are blessed when we are persecuted! Yes, trials are blessings in disguise, according to Christ. Trials bless us in two ways: (1) they purify us and keep us ready for His coming; (2) they increase our reward in heaven. (See James 1:12.)

King Ahasuerus chose only one virgin to replace Queen Vashti. Likewise, many aspire to be in the bridal company of Christ, but only those who qualify will be selected. (See Song of Solomon 6:8-9.) Paul compared the Christian life to a race when he said that many run but only one receives the prize (I Corinthians 9:24). Only those who obey the rules will obtain the prize; no matter how swift a person may be, he is disqualified if he breaks the rules. No matter how good a life one may seem to live, if he does not follow God's way, he will not be included in the bridal company when Jesus comes again.

Lesson 9

The Book of Esther

Part 2

I. The King Made a Feast (Chapter 2)

"And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti" (Esther 2:17).

The New Testament bridal company, the church, will be composed of those who have found favor in the eyes of King Jesus. What does it means to obtain the King's favor? Proverbs 16:15 explains, "In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain." Those who obtain favor of the Lord will receive the latter rain, which is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This will prepare them for the marriage feast to come.

"Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king" (Esther 2:18). This feast is similar to the marriage supper of the Lamb, which follows the choosing of the bridal company at the Rapture. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:7-9).

At Esther's feast, two important events are recorded.

1. The king gave gifts, similar to the rewards that the King of kings will give when He returns. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12).

2. The king made a release; that is, he proclaimed a holiday throughout the provinces in order to celebrate the crowning of the new queen. Christ will also give the provinces a release after the crowning of His bride, for the whole world will be released from the power of Satan during the Millennium. "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:2). (See Isaiah 11:6-10; 65:19-25.)

II. Haman Plotted to Destroy the Jews by Bribery and False Accusations (Chapter 3)

Haman, the king's right-hand man, was aroused to anger when Mordecai refused to bow to him. Haman then plotted to destroy all the Jewish people in order to take revenge on Mordecai. Being deceived by Haman, the king gave permission to execute the Jews on March 13. This plot is one example of the many attempts of Satan to destroy the "seed of the woman" and thus thwart God's plan of redemption through the promised Savior (Genesis 3:15). The slaying of righteous Abel was Satan's first attempt to destroy this seed, but God raised up Seth in his place. God later protected the baby Moses, Israel's deliverer, when Pharaoh decreed that all the Hebrew's male babies should be slain.

Even after Christ was born, Herod attempted to destroy Him, who was born King of the Jews, by slaying all the baby boys two years old and under. God, however, warned Joseph in a dream to take Mary and the child to Egypt in order to escape the cruel hand of Herod. God protected the "seed of the woman" from the time He was born until He was sacrificed on Calvary.

We find in Haman's plot two possible parallels regarding end-time events.

1. It is like the nations who will plot to destroy Israel at the close of this age. Zechariah 14:2

says that all nations will be gathered against Jerusalem to battle. (See also Joel 3:2.)

2. It is also a picture of the Antichrist, who will attempt to destroy all of God's people who refuse to take the mark of the beast (Revelation 20:4).

Satan's anger burns against God's people because of their redemption and subsequent reconciliation to God. The Bible says of Christ: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:16-17). When human beings fell, the Lord made provision for their redemption by taking on Himself "the seed of Abraham." In other words, He manifested Himself in human flesh and was sacrificed to satisfy the wrath of God against mankind's sin. But when the angels fell, the Lord "took not on him the nature of angels." He made no provision to redeem them or reinstate them to their former positions.

Satan devises many schemes in order to destroy God's people. We must understand his workings, so that we may be fortified to stand against him. He may appear as an angel of light, a lying spirit, a subtle tempter, or a roaring lion. Regardless, we need not fear the workings of Satan, for God will deliver His people who trust in Him, who wear the whole armor of God, and who resist the devil stedfastly (Ephesians 6:11-17; James 4:7).

Lesson 10

The Book of Esther

Part 3

I. God's Providence in Delivering His People (Chapters 4-9)

Before an emergency arose, God placed Esther in a position where He could use her to deliver the Jews. This is similar to when God placed Joseph in Egypt to be the deliverer of his people. Mordecai recognized God's providential hand in this and pleaded with Esther to intercede before the king: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

Before Esther pleaded with the king, the Lord prepared Ahasuerus's heart. This is a beautiful illustration of how God works on both ends of the line when we place everything on the altar. The king, who was unable to sleep, had the public records read to him and found that Mordecai had earlier thwarted an assassination attempt and saved his life. He asked his servants what had been done to honor Mordecai for this deed. King Ahasuerus's servants told him that he had done nothing for Mordecai. The next morning, as King Ahasuerus thought about what he should do for Mordecai, Haman came to him to ask him to hang Mordecai on gallows he had built for this purpose. Before Haman could make the request, however, the king asked Haman what he should do for a certain man he wished to honor.

Haman, thinking that he was the man the king wanted to honor, suggested: "Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour" (Esther 6:8-9).

This suggestion pleased the king, and he immediately ordered Haman to take the apparel and the horse and do this for Mordecai. He added, "Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken" (Esther 4:10). The humiliation of Haman is a good example of what Jesus meant when He said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased" (Matthew 23:12).

Later, at the second banquet that Esther prepared for the king and Haman, she exposed Haman's wicked plot against the Jews. Outraged, the king condemned Haman to die on the very gallows that Haman had prepared for Mordecai. This story graphically illustrates the law of sowing and reaping. (See Galatians 6:7; Proverbs 28:10.) The Book of Daniel has two other examples of this law, which have a similar end. Those who conspired to throw Daniel into the lion's den were later eaten by the same lions, and those who conspired to cast the three young Hebrew men into the fiery furnace were later burned to death in the same furnace.

Although the king could not revoke his original decree to execute the Jews, he granted the Jews the right to defend themselves against attack. On the appointed day, the Jews destroyed their enemies who attacked them (Esther 9:5).

This is similar to the deliverance that God will give Israel when all the nations of the earth gather to battle against her at the end of the age. "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations" (Zechariah 14:3). (See Joel 2:32; 3:16; Zechariah 2:8; 12:9; Genesis 12:3.) If God's people will walk in His ways, He will fight against their adversaries. Ultimately, those who hate the Lord and His people will submit to Him! (See Psalm 81:13-16.)

God has also promised deliverance to the church. I Corinthians 10:13 contains a promise of deliverance from temptation. Moreover, in Isaiah 54:17, we find that no weapon that is formed against God's people shall prosper. Of course, the church's complete deliverance will take place at the coming of the Lord (I Thessalonians 4:17).

II. The Feast of Purim (Chapter 9)

Mordecai wrote to the Jews "to stablish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies" (Esther 9:21-22).

This feast, which is held annually in memory of the Jews' deliverance from death, is similar to the Lord's Supper. The Lord Himself instituted this as a memorial of His suffering, which delivers the church from the second death. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Corinthians 11:26). (See Hebrews 2:14-15.)

III. Mordecai's Advancement (Chapter 10)

In the final chapter of the Book of Esther, King Ahasuerus promoted Mordecai to a high position in his kingdom. "For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed" (Esther 10:3).

This is a wonderful example of how promotion comes from the Lord. "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:6-7). Genesis 39:5 is another example of God promoting someone who was faithful to Him. Joseph proved to be a faithful slave, and Potiphar promoted him to be overseer of his household. Furthermore, the Lord blessed the whole household for his sake. Because he was a faithful witness in jail after Potiphar's wife falsely accused him, he was promoted to prime minister of Egypt.

It is always those who are "faithful over little things" whom the Lord will make rulers over much (Matthew 25:23). Many Christians let opportunities slip by, while waiting for the Lord to call them into some great field of labor or place them in some position of high responsibility. We must remember that God only calls people to places of greater labor and responsibility after they have been responsible in the smaller duties given them by their pastor and church.

Questions on Lessons 8–10

Lesson 8

1. Name the chief characters in the Book of Esther.
2. What are the two important topics covered in this book?
3. Of what do some think the rejection of Queen Vashti is a type or parallel?
4. Describe the two methods of purification for the virgins.
5. To what can we compare these two methods in the lives of Christians?

Lesson 9

1. Esther was crowned because she obtained the king's favor. What will those who obtain the King's favor receive today?
2. What two important events took place at the marriage feast?
3. Explain how they can illustrate what will occur at Christ's return.
4. Give two instances in which Satan attempted to destroy "the seed of the woman" besides Haman's attempt to destroy the Jews.
5. What comparisons can we make between the Jews' deliverance in Esther and the future of Israel? Between the Jews' deliverance in Esther and the future of the church?
6. How can we explain Satan's anger against God's people?

Lesson 10

1. Explain how the Jews were delivered in Esther's day.
2. How was Haman humiliated?
3. How was the law of sowing and reaping demonstrated in Haman's life?
4. What does the Feast of Purim typify?
5. What was the secret of Mordecai's advancement?

Lesson 11

The Book of Ruth

Part 1

I. Setting

Although the authorship of the Book of Ruth is uncertain, some think Samuel wrote it. The events of the book occurred during the period of the judges, and the principal characters are Naomi, Ruth, Boaz, and Orpah. There are many lessons in the Book of Ruth that we can apply to the Christian life. In each chapter, we find similarities between Ruth's actions and a believer's relationship with Christ. For example, as Ruth followed and worked for Naomi, so we follow and work for Christ. Ruth rested at Boaz's feet, and we rest in Christ. Finally, Ruth was married to Boaz, and we will be married to Christ at the end of the age. Thus, many have found in the story of Ruth a beautiful type of the bride of Christ. Of course, the Book of Ruth is one of the truly great dramas of the Scripture, but more importantly, it provides excellent material for an evangelistic appeal to the lost.

II. Bereavement of Naomi and Her Daughters (Chapter 1)

These three women are examples of three classes of people: Naomi is like a backslider; Orpah is like those who reject the gospel; Ruth is like those who accept the gospel.

While Naomi's family lived in Bethlehem of Judah, there was a famine in the land. Instead of remaining in the land of Canaan, Naomi, her husband, and two sons left for Moab in search of a better living. During their stay in Moab, both sons married Moabite wives, one named Ruth and the other Orpah. Later, both Naomi's husband and sons died, leaving her alone with her daughters-in-law.

God had not promised Israel protection outside of the land of Canaan, and God does not promise us protection and blessing outside of our abiding place in Him. In Genesis 26:2-3, the Lord told Isaac that he did not need to leave Canaan because of famine, for He promised that He would bless Isaac and his descendents in Canaan. Likewise, John 15:4 exhorts us to abide, or dwell, in Christ.

III. Return to the Land of Judah

Naomi's sorrows drove her back to Bethlehem. This is similar to the Tribulation driving Israel back to God. (See Joel 3:2; Jeremiah 30:7-11.)

Naomi is also like a backslider returning to God after much sorrow. There is a parallel here with the parable of the prodigal son. His destitute condition reminded him of the bounty in his father's house, and this caused him to return to his father.

When Naomi returned, Ruth went with her (Ruth 1:14-16). When backsliders return to God they often influence others to turn to God also. No one can live or even die without influencing others in some way (Romans 14:7).

At the end of the age, when Israel returns to God, the whole earth will be blessed. "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" (Romans 11:12). "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Romans 11:15). After the nation of Israel as a whole accepts the Christ, He will establish His millennial kingdom.

Ruth's decision to return with Naomi was important primarily because she accepted the God

of Israel as her God. Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16).

In contrast, Orpah decided not to follow Naomi and turned back at the border. She decided that she could not leave her home and her idols to serve Israel's God (Ruth 1:15). In this decision, she is similar to those who reject Christ. Many turn their back on salvation because of unwillingness to give up the world or fear of being scoffed at by relatives and friends (Matthew 7:26; 10:36).

IV. Ruth's Gleaning in the Field (Chapter 2)

Ruth was not satisfied with merely being one of God's people. She immediately sought the benefit of God's law that commanded farmers to leave the stray stalks of wheat in the field for the poor after harvest (Leviticus 19:10). Likewise, we should not be content with merely having our sins forgiven and being in the family of God; we should immediately take advantage of the promises of the Word. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (II Peter 1:4).

We can compare Ruth's faithful work in the field to a Christian's faithful work in the church. Unfortunately, some who should be working for the Lord are standing idle in the marketplace. They believe that no one has hired them. Yet the hour has grown late, and they are needed more than ever. (See Matthew 20:3-4.)

Boaz noticed Ruth's faithful service and instructed his servants to drop some "handfuls of purpose" so that she would not be empty-handed at the end of the day (Ruth 2:16). Some see Boaz as a type of Christ, who will not allow His faithful workers to go empty-handed. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6). (See I Corinthians 15:58.) Naomi instructed Ruth not to labor in any field other than Boaz's (Ruth 2:22). Similarly, God warns Christians not to have spiritual fellowship with sinners (II Corinthians 6:14-16).

Lesson 12

The Book of Ruth

Part 2

I. Ruth's Rest at the Feet of Boaz (Chapter 3)

Chapter 3 of Ruth begins and ends with rest.

Naomi counseled Ruth to remind Boaz that he was their kinsman and thus could redeem them. Here we find Ruth taking advantage of another of God's laws. In the law that God gave to Israel, if a widow was childless, her dead husband's nearest relative was to marry her to perpetuate the dead husband's name (Deuteronomy 25:5-6).

As Naomi instructed, one evening Ruth lay at the feet of Boaz until morning and he covered her with a portion of his garment. (From Ezekiel 16:8, we infer that this was a token of betrothal according to the custom of the day.) Similarly, we must sit at the feet of Jesus in order to be filled with *truth* (Luke 10:39; John 1:14), and we must be covered with His garments of *grace* to be in the bride of Christ (Isaiah 30:1; 52:1; 61:3; Matthew 22:11).

Boaz told Ruth that in the morning he would redeem her inheritance. Likewise, our bodies are not yet redeemed, but if we tarry at the feet of Jesus through the night hours of this age, they will be redeemed when the Lord comes to catch His people away. This event will usher in the dawn of the millennial day.

If we sit at the feet of Jesus and are covered with the garment of His Spirit, we need not fear, for our inheritance will be redeemed "in the morning." It will pay to be true "until the day break, and the shadows flee away" (Song of Solomon 4:6).

II. The Marriage of Ruth (Chapter 4)

Boaz told Ruth that there was a kinsman closer in relation to them than he, and he needed to have the opportunity to redeem their inheritance (Ruth 3:12-13). According to the law, anyone who had lost his inheritance could have his nearest kinsman redeem it. "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold" (Leviticus 25:25).

The nearest kinsman declined to redeem the inheritance, so Boaz did. Ruth thus became the bride of Boaz, the owner of the field. Likewise, we will be members of the bride of Christ, if we glean in His field and trust Him to redeem our inheritance. (See Romans 8:23.) "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14). "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Corinthians 15:52).

III. Other Lessons in Ruth

Although Ruth was a hated Moabite, God adopted her into the family of God, and she became the mother of Obed. He was the grandfather of the great king David, from whom came the Messiah.

The adoption of a Gentile woman into Christ's Jewish ancestry foreshadows the inclusion of Gentiles in the church and the Gentiles being fellow-heirs of salvation with the Jews. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name"

(Acts 15:14). "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). As Peter declared in Acts 2:39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

God will always reward those who simply trust in His power. No matter how hopeless conditions about us seem to be, God is able to lift us above every one of them. Ruth's confidence in the Lord brought rich returns and is an admirable example to those in the church. Hebrews 10:35 exhorts us, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward."

David testified of how God rewarded him and gave him victory over all his enemies because of his righteousness, which stemmed from trust in God. "He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me" (Psalm 18:19-20).

Our greatest reward will be at the coming of the Lord Jesus in the clouds of heaven. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27).

Lesson 13
The Book of Hosea

Hosea, the author of the Book of Hosea, was one of the prophets to the northern kingdom of Israel. He prophesied over a period of sixty years and was a contemporary of Isaiah and Micah, who prophesied in Judah. Commerce and foreign conquest filled the country with wealth and luxury, and though the outward form of worship continued, the hearts of the people had departed from the Lord. Because of Hosea's experience with his unfaithful wife, he was prepared, as perhaps no other prophet was, to understand God's love for unfaithful Israel and His plea for her to return to Him.

I. Relation of Hosea's Personal Life to Israel's National Life (Hosea 1-3)

God commanded Hosea, "Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms . . . for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD" (Hosea 1:2). Hosea married Gomer, a woman of backslidden Israel who would later become unfaithful to him.

Hosea's experience with his immoral wife, whom he loved dearly, was a drama enacted before the eyes of Israel, depicting their unfaithfulness to God. This experience prepared Hosea, who declared both God's judgment and love to Israel, to understand God's attitude toward backslidden Israel, upon whom He had lavished His love.

Hosea and Gomer had three children. Each of the children's names was symbolic.

1. The Lord said to name the first son Jezreel, for "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu" (Hosea l:4). Although Jehu had previously executed God's judgment, slaying all the house of Ahab and breaking down many altars of Baal (II Kings 10:11, 28), he fell into sin, and judgment came upon his house. Hosea 1:5 says, "I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel." Later, the Assyrian army defeated the Israelites in this valley.

2. God said to name the second child Loruhamah, meaning "no mercy," "for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away" (Hosea 1:6). This name symbolized God taking His mercy from Israel and no longer protecting her from her enemies.

3. God said to name the third child Loammi, meaning "not my people": "For ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" (Hosea 1:9).

Although God punished the Israelites for their disobedience, He also promised to preserve them (Hosea 1:10). For example, the Jews have suffered intense persecution through the centuries, but they exist today in greater numbers than ever. "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hosea 1:10). Paul quoted this passage of Scripture in Romans 9:26 and applied it to the Gentiles who had been admitted into the church.

We read in chapter 2 that Hosea's wife sought other lovers. According to verse 5, she wanted bread, wool, flax, and so on, indicating that she disdained the simple life of the prophet. Her action symbolized Israel forsaking the Lord because of their desire for wealth and luxury, "Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 3:20). The church, which is the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:28-32), is also warned not to allow the cares of life to allure their hearts away from Him. (See James 4:4.)

Instead of finding the lovers she desired, Gomer had to sell herself as a slave, but Hosea bought her back. In spite of her shameful conduct, Hosea still loved her. Likewise, Jehovah still loved Israel in spite of their sin. "Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 31:37).

II. Sin and Its Judgments (Hosea 4-13)

God's controversy with His people. (Hosea 4:1-2.) God rebuked Israel because they lacked mercy and truth and did not desire to know Him. Furthermore, Israel openly disobeyed God's laws regarding swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and adultery.

The daily sacrifices continued, but they were offered from insincere hearts; therefore, God said, "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6). The outward form of religion went on, but corrupt priests performed the service. Israel during this time is an illustration of spiritually dead churches today that have the outward form of Christianity but lack its spiritual power (II Timothy 3:5).

Judgments for sin. The Lord declared that the people, as well as the animals, fowl, and fish, would languish until Israel returned to the Lord and acknowledged their sin (Hosea 4:3; 5:15). (See Romans 8:21-23.) Israel did not repent, however, so God judged them and dispersed them among the nations (Hosea 8:8; 9:17).

Plea for Israel's repentance (Hosea 10:12). The prophet described Israel as an empty vine. In Psalm 80:8-14, David described Israel as a vine that the Lord had brought out of Egypt. He was distressed, however, because the vine, which had once filled the land, was being plucked by others and destroyed by wild animals. Thus, he prayed, "Return . . . O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine" (Psalm 80:14).

This passage of Scripture also parallels the history of the church. For example, the apostles' doctrine was nearly lost over the centuries; however, in these latter days, the Lord has restored the apostolic doctrine and experience. He is powerfully visiting His people again, whom He has brought out of sin. In Hosea 10:12, God exhorted Israel to break up their fallow ground. Similarly, God wants the church to maintain a broken and contrite spirit. (See James 4:10; Isaiah 66:2.)

III. Promise of Restoration (Hosea 13-14 and 6:1-3)

"After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight" (Hosea 6:2). For nearly two thousand years, the Jews were scattered throughout the world, until in 1948, the nation of Israel was reestablished in the land of Palestine. Many commentators believe that Hosea 6:2 speaks of Israel's complete reconciliation with God during the Millennium. Some of them conclude that "two days" represent two thousand years, thus showing that this prophecy is close to fulfillment.

When the kingdom is restored, God promises to be Israel's King (Hosea 13:10). (See Revelation 19:16; Daniel 2:44.) By receiving the Holy Spirit, we can become subjects of this kingdom before it is physically established on earth. (See Romans 14:17; James 2:5.) God is now training those in His spiritual kingdom to rule with Him in the earthly, millennial kingdom (Matthew 25:21; Revelation 2:26-27; 5:10; 20:6).

Lesson 14
The Book of Genesis

Moses is the author of the book of Genesis. The first eleven chapters in this book cover a period of approximately two thousand years from Adam to Abraham. This period also includes the ages of innocence, conscience, and human government. The word *genesis* means "beginning"; thus Genesis is the book of beginnings. We find the foundation for all Bible doctrines in the Book of Genesis. Here are the "seed truths" from which the rest of the Bible grows. The New Testament is the full blossom of God's original plan as recorded in Genesis.

Here are some of the important beginnings in this book:

1. The beginning of creation (Genesis 1:1).
2. The beginning of the human race (Genesis 1:27).
3. The beginning of marriage (Genesis 2:22-24).
4. The beginning of sin (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6).
5. The beginning of God's redemptive work (Genesis 3:21).
6. The beginning of prophecy (Genesis 3:15).
7. The beginning of Israel (Genesis 12:1-3).

Progressive Revelation

The Book of Genesis, as well as the entire Bible, is a book of progressive revelation. This term signifies the gradual unfolding of the attributes and plan of God. The main events in this book gradually unfold the attributes of God:

1. Creation reveals to us both the *power* and the *wisdom* of God. Ephesians 3:9 says that God made all things by Christ Jesus, and I Corinthians 1:24 states that Christ is the power and wisdom of God; thus it is clear that God created all things by His power and wisdom. To create something out of nothing requires power, while wisdom is required to bring order to the creation—an order that has remained through the ages. If we read no more than the first two chapters of Genesis, we would at least know that there is a Supreme Being, the God of the universe, who is all-wise and all-powerful.

2. God's first redemptive act was providing a covering of animal skins for Adam and Eve after they had sinned. This shedding of blood reveals God's *love* and *mercy* toward sinners. Because of God's great love for the world, He did not cast humanity off completely when Adam disobeyed His command. Many have asked why God even allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve, since being omniscient, He knew that they would fail. We can understand why God allowed this temptation when we remember that God created human beings so that He could have a relationship with them. This relationship's foundation is love, not coercion. In other words, a relationship between a person and God will only develop when a person desires it, for God will not impose Himself on anyone or force anyone to love Him. Therefore, God gave human beings a free will, whereby they could choose to accept Him or reject Him. We see, then, that God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve to test their love for Him and their obedience to His Word.

3. The Flood reveals the *justice* of God, or His wrath toward unrepented sin. Since God is holy, sin must be punished when His offer of salvation is rejected. The people of Noah's day had a chance to repent after Noah preached to them; however, they rejected this opportunity.

4. The life of Abraham reveals the *faithfulness* of God. The events of Abraham's life centered on God promising him a son, through whom all nations would be blessed. Circumstances were all to the contrary, and years passed without any evidence of the fulfillment, but still God

proved His faithfulness to every promise He had made to Abraham. Knowing this attribute of God has caused many saints to remain hopeful of deliverance in the face of adverse circumstances, knowing that "he is faithful that promised" (Hebrews 10:23).

5. The life of Jacob reveals God's grace, which is His unmerited favor. There was nothing in Jacob's character that deserved God's blessing. From his early life, he displayed deceit and trickery; concerning his birth, he had no right to the blessing or the birthright. The blessings that God showered upon Jacob were certainly unmerited. This is an excellent illustration of God's favor toward His children today who once "walked according to the course of this world" (Ephesians 2:2). Jacob's life is an example of the truth that Paul emphasized in Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

6. The life of Joseph is a wonderful example of God's *providence,* or God's way of deliverance planned ahead of time. The realization of God's providence causes the saints to rejoice in the midst of the greatest of difficulties, knowing that God causes "all things [to] work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). God permitted Joseph to be sold as a slave into Egypt and later thrown into prison so that he would be in the right place at the right time to deliver the people from starvation during the seven years of famine. Joseph acknowledged God's providence when he said to his brethren who had cruelly treated him, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth" (Genesis 45:7).

Another example of God's providence is when King Ahasuerus chose Esther to be the new queen of the Persian Empire. Mordecai recognized God's providence and asked, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14). Later, she was the instrument God used to deliver the Jews from death.

Paul impressed this important truth upon the New Testament saints on several occasions. Surely, the saints wondered why Paul was in prison so often. He steadfastly held to his confidence that the hand of the Lord was revealed even in prison. He assured the saints of God's providence when he told them that all things that had happened unto him had "fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Philippians 1:12).

The first three chapters of the Book of Genesis introduce the primary theme of the Bible, which is God's *redemption* of humanity. Throughout the rest of Scripture, we see this theme unfold until it culminates in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we need to understand the Book of Genesis thoroughly in order to understand the Bible's message.

Lesson 15

The New Birth Prefigured in Creation

God's purpose from the beginning has been to perfect a group of people who will be like Christ. Every incident recorded in the Old Testament is written "for our admonition" (I Corinthians 10:11). Therefore, we find that the Book of Genesis contains several types of Christ, the Savior of the world. Someone has given us a very good definition for *type*: a type is a divinely purposed illustration of some truth. It is no wonder, therefore, that we find Christ in the first verse of the Bible and the new birth prefigured in the story of Creation.

Jesus, the Creator

Jesus said the Scriptures testified of Him (John 5:39). We cannot read the first five words of Genesis without reading words that testify of Him. The first five words are, "In the beginning God created." The apostle John introduced Jesus as the Word made flesh in the first chapter of his Gospel (John 1:1, 14). Moreover, John said, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). Jesus is the God-man, i.e., He is both divine and human. As God, He spoke the creation into existence. In Isaiah 44:24, Jehovah claimed to have stretched "forth the heavens alone." Yet, John 1:10 states that Jesus was in the world, "and the world was made by him," but the world did not know Him. This shows that Jesus of the New Testament is Jehovah of the Old Testament incarnate.

Two Creative Words

In the first chapter of Genesis, there are two acts of creation, which illustrate the first and second births mentioned in the New Testament. It uses two words for creation. "In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The word *create* is translated from a root word meaning "to create out of nothing." "And God *made* the firmament" (Genesis l:7). The word *made* is translated from a root word meaning "to form out of a substance already created." God's first creative act gave Him the raw material to use, and in His second creative act He fashioned this raw material into the earth, sky, seas, and everything in them. For example, He divided the dry land from the waters and caused light to shine out of darkness.

First Act of Creation

Now let us note what condition the earth was in after God's first creative act. Genesis 1:2 says, "And the earth was without form, and void." If God had stopped here, the world would have been of no use to Him and certainly not to humans, for in this condition no human could live upon the earth. Some see this as a type of the new birth. A person who has been born only once is spiritually unregenerated and is simply a mass of corruption. He is alive in a sense, but he is of no use to God or anyone else until the Lord takes this unregenerated person, recreates him and makes him into a person who will walk with God.

Jeremiah 17:9 describes the person who has not been born again: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Romans 3:10-18 also vividly describes the sinful condition of a person who has been born, or created, only after the flesh. After the first act of creation, "darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2). An unregenerate person is in darkness, for Jesus is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9).

Something else happened before God's second creative act: "And the Spirit of God moved

upon the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). Similarly, the Spirit of God moves (or brings conviction upon) the unsaved soul. Without this conviction, no one could be saved, for Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . draw him" (John 6:44).

Second Act of Creation

II Corinthians 4:6 gives us the authority to view the Creation account as a type of the new birth: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

God's second act of creation was to divide the water from the land, the light from the darkness, and to bring perfect order out of chaos. God, who brought order out of chaos, can also calm a troubled lost soul. Paul said that the same God who *caused light to shine out of the darkness* when He created the world, has caused the light of the glorious gospel to *shine into our darkened hearts*! Thus Paul declared, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or new creation]" (II Corinthians 5:17). Like the potter who breaks a piece of clay, melts it, and shapes it into an entirely different vessel, so God makes us into a new creation through the new birth.

"For we are his workmanship, *created* in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10, emphasis added). We are His workmanship, or in other words, we are the ones God is working on and fashioning into a people who will be like Christ. Paul said that we are *created in Christ*. Therefore, when we are placed into the body of Christ, we are placed there by an act of creation—not the first act of creation, for in Adam (the first creation) all die, but in Christ (the beginning of this new creation) all shall be made alive (I Corinthians 15:22). Yes, Christ was the beginning of this new order of creation: "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, *the beginning of the creation of God*" (Revelation 3:14, emphasis added). Christ was the first seed planted, which shall bring forth a harvest of recreated beings.

When we preach the message of the new birth in light of the creation account as Paul did, a sinner cannot go away simply hoping to do better in order to earn salvation. For they will see that, since they have not been born again, they are still in their sinful state, a shapeless mass, of no use to God or anyone else. They will see their need of the new birth whereby God makes them into an entirely new person, an instrument suitable "for the master's use" (II Timothy 2:21). This message makes salvation more than trying to do better—it shows salvation to be an act of creation as mighty and miraculous as God creating the planets in the beginning.

Lesson 16

The Creation of Humanity

(Genesis 1)

The six days of Creation, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, are as follows:

1. First day—God divided the light from the darkness.
2. Second day—God formed the firmament, i.e., the sky.
3. Third day—God caused the dry land to appear, and the earth brought forth fruit trees, grass, and herbs, producing after their kind.
4. Fourth day—God created the sun, moon, and stars.
5. Fifth day—God made the fish and fowl.
6. Sixth day—God created human beings.

On the sixth day of Creation, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). This verse has been the subject of much controversy and confusion and has been interpreted various ways, but its meaning is clear when we compare it with the entire Word of God. In the first chapter of Genesis, we have God's outline of Creation. As we read the Word, we see that God's plan of creation regarding human beings was not completed on the sixth day. Therefore, as we have already explained, many believe that the Creation narrative is a type of the new birth experience, which is revealed in the New Testament.

Genesis 1:26 is controversial because it uses the word "us," a plural pronoun for God, who is numerically one (Deuteronomy 6:4; Galatians 3:20). The Jews traditionally explain that God spoke to the angels and informed them of His plan to create human beings. Some have suggested that God counseled with His own will before creating Adam and Eve (Ephesians 1:11). Still others say that this plural pronoun is a literary or majestic plural; that is, writers or speakers often use the plural "we" in reference to themselves, especially if they are of royalty. (See Daniel 2:36.) Finally, we can understand God's use of a plural pronoun when speaking, if we compare it to the most common word for "God" in the Old Testament, which is *Elohim. Elohim* is the plural form of *El*. The use of the plural here does not imply a plurality of persons in the Godhead, but according to the Hebrew usage it denotes the majesty and multiple attributes of God. Therefore, the plural pronoun is possibly used because it agrees with the plural noun form.

Next, what does it mean to be created in the image of God? It means that God created humans in His likeness. In other words, we share certain attributes with God—of course, in a diminished state due to the Fall—including our spiritual, moral, and emotional natures and our reasoning and creative abilities.

The Scriptures declare that Jesus "is the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15) and "the express image of his [God's] person" (Hebrews 1:3). Again, an image is a resemblance or likeness of something or someone, so Jesus, the human person, reveals and expresses all that God is. All human beings are created in the image of God; nevertheless, only those who become like Jesus truly reflect God's character to this world. By analogy, a child often resembles his parents. It is common to hear someone exclaim upon seeing a child for the first time, "Why, he is the very image of his father!'' There is a resemblance because the child has been born into that family. If we wish to bear the image of our heavenly Father, we must be born into His family! The children of God bear His image.

Paul was clear in his instructions on how to reflect the likeness of God. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). The Weymouth translation says, "And clothe yourselves with that new and better self, which has been created to resemble God." The new person is created to resemble God. Therefore, Paul

commanded us to put on our new and better selves in order to resemble God and reflect His image. Colossians 3:10 emphasizes the same thought: "And have put on the new man, which is . . . after the image of him that created him." (See also Galatians 3:27.) A careful reading of I Corinthians 15:45-49 shows that the first Adam was only an earthly being, but the second Adam (Jesus) was a heavenly being. Verse 49 shows that sinners bear the image of the first Adam, while saints shall "bear the image of the heavenly."

We have seen that spiritually we are created in His image when we put on the new man. However, human beings consist of both body *and* spirit. At Christ's second coming, He will change our bodies into glorified and immortal bodies like His. Philippians 3:21 says that Jesus "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Again, I Corinthians 15:51-54 states, "This corruptible [body] must put on incorruption, and this mortal [body] must put on immortality." John explained, "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). Finally, David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). In the end, we shall be like Him both in body and in spirit.

Furthermore, God has given us the ministry of reconciliation, which is working together with Him to fashion people into the likeness of Christ. II Corinthians 5:17-20 declares, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. . . . Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Paul began by describing the new creation, which is formed after the image of the One who created him. Then he said that God has given us the ministry of beseeching men and women to be reconciled to God, that they might become a part of this new creation. We see, then, that God has included His children in the work of perfecting a group of people who will be like Him. Moreover, God has placed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the church to perfect or train the saints for ministry until we all come "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

In conclusion, we find that Adam was the beginning of the natural order, while Christ was the beginning of the spiritual order. He is the exact image of God, and when we are born again, we will reflect God's image and His glory to a lost world.

Lesson 17
Genesis 2

I. God's Rest Day

The seventh day was God's day of rest. At the close of the sixth day of Creation, the day of rest, or Sabbath, began. At the second coming of the Lord, He will find a body of believers, who are finished and who reflect His likeness. This event will usher in the thousand-year day, or *Millennium*, of rest from the oppression of Satan. II Peter 3:8-10 describes the "day of the Lord." This day will arrive unexpectedly, for the Lord will come like "a thief in the night"(II Peter 3:10; Revelation 3:3). The New Testament commands us repeatedly to watch and pray lest "that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

Isaiah 11:6-10 describes the Millennium as God's rest. During this time, the animals will mingle together, and a little child shall lead them. Isaiah ends this discourse by saying, "His rest shall be glorious" (Isaiah 11:10)! God's rest will mean the release of the whole creation from the curse that God placed upon it: "The whole earth is at rest" (Isaiah 14:7).

Later, God instituted the Sabbath day for people to keep, as a type of this rest day yet to come. (See Colossians 2:16-17.) It is also a type of the rest we find in the Holy Ghost. (See Hebrews 4:10; Matthew 11:28.) Interestingly, Isaiah said that this rest would come with stammering lips and another tongue (Isaiah 28:11-12). (See Acts 2:4.)

God cannot rest with the earth filled with sorrow, pain, and death; but in the day of God's rest, sorrow and sighing shall flee away, for the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 35:10; Habakkuk 2:14).

II. The Creation of Adam

Genesis 2:7 gives a simple account of the creation of the first man: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (See also Ecclesiastes 12:7.) Some teach that God *gives* humans a preexistent immortal soul at birth, i.e., a soul that existed before humans were created; this verse, however, does not teach this. It says that Adam *became* a living soul, which means that God created Adam's soul at the moment when He breathed life into him.

III. The Creation of Eve

God made Eve from a rib taken from Adam's side, while Adam was in a deep sleep. "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. . . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:23-24).

There are many similarities between Adam and Jesus, the last Adam. For example, as God gave Eve to Adam, so God is preparing a bride for Jesus. As Adam was in a deep sleep, so the last Adam was in a deep sleep, so to speak, while He lay in the tomb. New life came from Adam's side, and spiritual new life is possible by the blood that flowed from Christ's wounded side.

Ephesians 5:23-33 uses the husband-and-wife relationship to illustrate the union between Christ and His church. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30)—the same thing Adam said of his wife. We become part of the bridal company of Christ when we are born again of the water and the spirit (John 3:5). "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one" (I John 5:8). The water, the blood, and the Spirit agree in us when we repent, are baptized in the name of Jesus, and are filled with the Spirit as evidenced by speaking in other tongues (Acts 2:38; 2:4).

Lesson 18

The Fall of Humanity

(Genesis 3)

We must understand the different methods that Satan used to cause Adam and Eve to fall, for Jesus admonished, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). If we understand Satan's methods for ensnaring souls, we will be more likely to triumph over him.

1. Satan's first method was to cause Eve to question the authority and truth of God's Word by asking her, "Hath God said?" Today, Satan is working diligently to get men and women to doubt God's Word through the secular media, colleges and universities, and various humanistic and atheistic societies. A Christian cannot overcome unless he has faith in God's Word even in the face of opposition.

2. Eve was the victim of a threefold temptation: "For all that is in the world, [1] the lust of the flesh, [2] and the lust of the eyes, [3] and the pride of life, is not of the Father" (I John 2:16). When Eve saw that the fruit was "good for food," she was tempted through the *lust of the flesh*. When she saw that it was "pleasant to the eyes," she was tempted through the *lust of the eyes*. When she pondered that it would "make one wise," she was tempted through the *pride of life*. James 1:14 reminds us, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

3. The threefold temptation of Eve throws light on how Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15). In the temptation of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 4:1-10, Satan tempted Jesus on the same three points as Eve was. When Satan asked Him to turn the stones into bread, He was tempted by an appeal to the *lust of the flesh*. When Satan asked Him to cast Himself down from the pinnacle, He was tempted by an appeal to the *pride of life*. When Satan showed Him the glory of all the kingdoms of the world, He was tempted by an appeal to the *lust of the eye*. Similarly, Satan suggested that God's Word might not be true by saying, "If thou be the Son of God," even after God had earlier said, "This is my beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17).

4. Satan's methods are especially insidious because they mix truth with falsehood. For example, when he said that Adam and Eve would know good and evil, he told the truth; however, when he said, "Ye shall not surely die," he told the first lie recorded in the Bible. Likewise, most false doctrines today consist of both truth and error; there is enough truth to appear correct but enough error to deceive and keep followers from the inheritance that God planned for them.

There is no greater lie than a half-truth, for it carries with it more power to deceive. Satan told Eve that she would know good, but he did not tell her that she would not have the power to perform it. He told her that she would know evil but did not explain that she would not have power to resist it. When Satan tempts people to sin, they are often blinded to the sorrows that are sure to follow its commission; therefore, God has given us His Holy Spirit and the ministry to cause sin to appear "exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:13).

Lesson 19

Results of the Fall

(Genesis 3)

I. Their Eyes Were Opened

After eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve realized that they were naked, and they fled for cover. This event marks the end of the age of innocence and the beginning of the age of conscience.

For the first time, humans attempted to hide from God. After we sin, our sinful nature generally seeks to hide from God rather than to seek God for deliverance. Adam did not call on God to solve his problem, but rather God sought Adam. We are saved because He sought us, not because we sought Him. (See I John 4:19; Romans 5:8.) Jesus came to the world, not because sinners were seeking Him, but "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

God questioned Adam, "Where art thou?" God did not ask this question because He did not know where Adam was, but He wanted Adam to consider his sinful condition before God. Similarly, God calls ministers to tell sinners where they stand before Him because, for people to be saved, they must first realize that they are lost and in need of a Savior. Then, the Word will be a lamp unto their feet: it will show them the dangerous ground on which they are standing, and they will see that they are the ones whom Jesus came to seek and to save.

II. Their Own Covering Was Rejected

Genesis 3:7 reveals that Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness. However, God rejected this covering, since manmade coverings will never satisfy God. The sinful nature attempts to cover up sin rather than to confess and forsake it. The aprons of fig leaves illustrate humanity's vain attempt to justify itself before God by good works. Isaiah 64:6 describes humans' covering, or righteousness by works, as a filthy rag. God says some are covered with a covering, but not with His Spirit (Isaiah 30:1). Our salvation is not based upon good works, lest anyone should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16).

III. God's Redemption Plan

God revealed His mercy toward Adam and Eve by promising them a redeemer before He mentioned the consequences of their sin. Genesis 3:15 records the first promise of the Messiah: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed of the woman is Jesus, for He was born of a virgin. Satan bruised his heel when Jesus was severely beaten and crucified. However, He arose triumphant over death; thus, Christ bruised the serpent's head in redeeming humanity from the bondage of Satan.

Genesis 3:21 says that the Lord made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. But how did He do this? God killed an animal or animals to obtain the skins. This act foreshadowed the sacrificial death of Christ, the Lamb of God who was slain for the sins of the world. As the innocent animal died to clothe Adam and Eve, so Jesus, who knew no sin, died in order to clothe guilty sinners with a robe of righteousness (Isaiah 53:7; 61:10).

IV. The Earth Is Cursed

God cursed humanity and the earth because of Adam and Eve's sin. For example, women would henceforth experience pain and sorrow in childbirth. The ground was cursed for man's sake, and man must henceforth earn his living by the sweat of his face. Finally, at death, all people must return to the dust from whence they came (Genesis 3:16-19).

V. Driven from the Garden

The Lord drove Adam and Eve out of the garden lest they "take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" in their sinful state (Genesis 3:22). The Lord guarded Eden and the Tree of Life with a cherub holding a flaming sword "which turned every way." This account illustrates that it is contrary to God's plan for human beings to have eternal life outside of Christ. At the end of time, God will reverse what happened in Eden and will give us free access to the Tree of Life in the New Jerusalem.

The Scripture declares that God alone has immortality (I Timothy 6:16) and that eternal life is a gift that comes from Him. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life" (Romans 6:23). Some say that a person can possess eternal life outside of Jesus, but the Scriptures refute this. Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Moreover, John described those who do and do not possess eternal life: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:10-12).

We seek eternal life through perseverance in well doing (Romans 2:7) and obedience to the Word of God. Through the Word and Spirit, we die out to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Indeed, we must die to the world, for to be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God (James 4:4; I John 2:15-17). Galatians 2:20 says that we must be crucified with Christ. "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him" (II Timothy 2:11). (See Romans 6:8.)

There is such a contrast between the earth as God made it and the earth as it is now, which is full of sorrow and trouble because of sin. There is the same difference between a heart yielded to God and one that persists in going its own way. The stubborn heart is filled with turmoil and chaos, while the blood-washed heart overflows with the peace of God, "which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

Lesson 20

Cain and Abel Or The Two Offerings

(Genesis 4)

The two offerings of Genesis 4 introduce us to two classes of people who have always existed—those who trust in the blood for their atonement and those who trust in their own works.

Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground, while Abel brought "firstlings of his flock" (Genesis 4:4). Some consider this an experiment to see what kind of offering would please God; however, the Scripture indicates that God had previously instructed humanity in acceptable offerings.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4). Abel offered his sacrifice *by faith*, indicating that he knew the word of the Lord concerning offerings, for faith consists of trusting in and obeying God's word.

God had already instructed humans that the penalty for sin is death, and He had already given the promise that the seed of the woman would be bruised (or meet death) in their stead. Furthermore, the Lord had already demonstrated that a blood offering was necessary to atone for sin, when He slew the animals to obtain skins to clothe Adam and Eve. In spite of this, Cain brought the fruit of the ground as an offering.

God favored Abel because of *the type of sacrifice* that he offered, not because he was a better man than his brother. It was his "excellent sacrifice" that caused God to declare him righteous. God's acceptance of us does not depend on the kind of lives we lived before we came to Christ, but on *the kind of sacrifice* we offer to Him by faith. When we realize this, Satan cannot cheat us out of a relationship with God by telling us we are not worthy, for our relationship with God is based strictly on our faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Since God accepted the offering of Christ, if we put our faith in it, then we are counted as righteous in Christ.

How do Christians *know* that God accepted Christ's blood offering? In the old covenant, if God did not accept the high priest's blood offering, God would kill the priest, and Israel's sins were not atoned. However, if the priest came out alive, the people knew that God had accepted the offering and that their sins were forgiven. Similarly, Jesus offered His own blood on the cross, and afterward He arose and ascended to heaven. We know that He is alive and thus that His offering was acceptable, because on the Day of Pentecost He sent His Spirit to the believers. Those who received Him knew He was alive. (See John 14:18.) This event proves that the offering we bring before God, namely the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, is acceptable.

Abel offered a "firstling of the flock." His offering pointed to Christ, the Lamb of God, whose blood was shed for the remission of the sins of the whole world. (See John 1:29; Isaiah 53:7; Hebrews 9:22.) God accepted Abel's offering because it was a blood sacrifice. This blood offering, then, revealed that Abel knew he was a sinner deserving of death, that he desired a relationship with God, and that he knew that blood sacrifices were the proper way to approach God. An elderly preacher, on his deathbed, was asked what was the basis for his hope of heaven. The people expected him to tell of his years of faithful service, but instead, he laid his finger on I John 1:7 and

read, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." He belonged to the righteous seed of Abel, for he depended on the blood alone.

God did not reject Cain because he refused to take part in the worship ceremony but because he conducted it his own way. He attended the worship hour but was rejected for his self-will. Many people faithfully attend religious services but will be rejected by God in the end. II Timothy 3:4-5 describes these people as "heady" or self-willed like Cain, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

The vegetables or fruit that Cain offered were the fruits of his own labor. This is similar to persons who present their good works to the Lord. (See Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 4:10.) Those who desire to enter the rest that God gives must cease from trusting in their works to make them worthy in God's sight, for the Bible is replete with verses that teach we cannot be saved by our good works. Moreover, Cain's bloodless offering showed his unwillingness to admit his guilt and his need of atonement.

If Jesus came to earth simply to show us what a holy life was like, we would have been worse off after He left. The contrast between the holy God and sinful humans would have been greater and more obvious—the gulf between them magnified, with no way to bridge it! Modernism teaches people to follow Christ's example without trusting in His blood; this leaves humans without a way to approach God. This was Cain's problem.

God revealed His longsuffering as He patiently reasoned with Cain and gave him another opportunity to do right. He told Cain that if he would "do well," he would be accepted. He further told Cain, "Sin lieth at the door" (Genesis 4:7). In Hebrew the same word is used for "sin" and "sin offering." Several passages of Scripture have double meanings; this is possibly one of them. If so, God was not only pointing out Cain's sin but was also saying, "A sin offering is close by. You may yet offer a lamb and be accepted." The same Holy Spirit who uncovers sin in the heart makes a way of escape, for where sin abounds, grace much more abounds (Romans 5:20). Cain willfully turned down God's proffered mercy, however, and later murdered his brother.

Questions on Lessons 11-20

Lesson 11

1. Name the principal characters in the Book of Ruth.
2. Why did Naomi and her family suffer for leaving Bethlehem?
3. What does her return illustrate in Israel and in the church?
4. What group of people could Naomi represent ? Orpah and Ruth?
5. Explain how Ruth's actions are similar to a believer's relationship with Christ.
6. What lesson do we learn from Ruth's gleaning in the field?
7. Why did Boaz instruct his servants to drop some "handfuls of purpose"? How should this encourage us today?

Lesson 12

1. What scriptural claim did Ruth have upon Boaz?
2. Boaz promised to redeem Ruth's inheritance "in the morning." What does this illustrate?
3. The nearest kinsman could not redeem Ruth's inheritance. What does this illustrate?
4. How was Ruth rewarded? How is this similar to our reward?
5. Why did the Lord allow a Gentile woman to enter the royal line?

Lesson 13

1. To whom did Hosea prophesy?
2. Why are the details of Hosea's domestic life given in his book?
3. Of whom is Gomer a type?
4. Give the names of Hosea's three children and their meanings.
5. What prophecy was connected with each?
6. What are some of the sins that God warned Israel about?
7. How does Hosea's plea for repentance compare with David's prayer for Israel in Psalm 80?
8. Give a Scripture reference where God promised to restore the kingdom of Israel.
9. Who will be the King in the restored kingdom?
10. How do we become subjects of this kingdom?

Lesson 14

1. Who is the author of the Book of Genesis?
2. What does the word "genesis" mean?
3. Name five important subjects that this book introduces.
4. Why is Genesis a book of "progressive revelation?"
5. What do we learn about God in His work of creation?
6. What further do we learn in His redemptive work?
7. What side of God's character does the Flood reveal?
8. What attributes of God do we see in the lives of Abraham and of Jacob?
9. What do we learn about God in His dealings with Joseph?
10. What does Genesis teach us is the general design and purpose of the Bible?

Lesson 15

1. Give a definition of the word "type."
2. Explain the difference between the two words for creation in Genesis 1.
3. What did God do in His first act of creation?
4. In what condition was the world at this point? Describe the similarity between it and our lives without God.

5. What did God's second act of creation accomplish? Explain what this can represent in our lives.

Lesson 16

1. Describe briefly the six days of creation.
2. Why did God use the word "us" when He said, "Let us make man in our image"?
3. We can view the creation narrative as a type of what experience today?
4. How can we truly bear the spiritual image of our heavenly Father?
5. When will we physically bear the image of the glorified Christ?
6. What role does the ministry play in molding us into God's spiritual image?

Lesson 17

1. What period is God's day of rest?
2. Of what is the institution of the Sabbath a type?
3. Tell in your own words the story of the creation of Adam.
4. What statement does the Scripture make regarding the soul of humans?
5. How did God create Eve? What does this illustrate?

Lesson 18

1. What was the first method that Satan used in causing Eve to sin?
2. In what three ways was Eve tempted? Explain each temptation.
3. In what three ways was Jesus tempted? Explain each temptation.
4. What is the importance of understanding Satan's methods?

Lesson 19

1. Name three direct results of the Fall.
2. What age ended with the Fall, and which one began?
3. Why did God ask Adam, "Where art thou?" How can the minister use this question today?
4. What do the aprons of fig leaves represent?
5. How did God cover Adam and Eve? What did this covering signify?
6. What verse of Scripture gives the first promise of a redeemer?
7. Explain the meaning of this prophecy.
8. Why did God guard the Tree of Life?
9. How may we partake of this tree?

Lesson 20

1. Does Scripture indicate that God had previously instructed Cain and Abel regarding proper offerings? Explain.
2. What kind of offering did Abel bring? Why was it accepted?
3. What kind of offering did Cain bring? Why was it rejected?
4. How do we know that Christ's blood offering was accepted?

Lesson 21

The Results of Cain's Sin

I. The First Murder (Genesis 4)

Instead of sacrificing the sin offering that lay close by and thereby receiving God's proffered mercy and acceptance, Cain became angry with God and jealous of his brother. This jealousy caused him to commit the first murder. He then sinned again, for when the Lord questioned him, "Where is Abel thy brother?" he lied to God, saying, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9).

The Lord replied, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Hebrews 12:24 refers to this incident: "And to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The blood of Abel cried out for vengeance. In contrast, the blood of Jesus cries out for forgiveness. It is by the blood that Jesus constantly makes intercession for us; in that His sacrifice is always before God, crying out for mercy for those who seek God's pardon.

II. Cain's Punishment

Cain became a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. Furthermore, he was unable to raise good crops as before (Genesis 4:12). "And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear" (Genesis 4:13). We should note that the results of God's discipline of a saint are far different from the results of God's punishment of a sinner. The chastisement of saints, if patiently endured, "yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11). The punishment of sinners in the end, however, will simply be "more than they can bear," for it only yields sorrow, despair, and death.

Cain's punishment included his separation from the "presence of the LORD" (Genesis 4:16). Likewise, those who reject Christ shall be separated eternally from the presence of God. Those who "obey not the gospel . . . shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (II Thessalonians 1:8-9). After God declared Cain's punishment, Cain moved to the land of Nod. The word "Nod" means *flight*. This is similar to sinners who try to hide from God and justify their sin. They are, figuratively speaking, dwelling in the land of Nod.

III. God Provides a Substitute for Abel

The murder of Abel was Satan's first attempt to destroy the "seed of the woman." Scripture records many attempts by Satan to destroy this righteous seed, from which the Savior came. However, Satan could not thwart God's plan, for God raised up Seth in Abel's place. The name "Seth" means *appointed*, and God appointed him to be the progenitor of the Messianic line. So in spite of Satan's attempts, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son" (Galatians 4:4).

Lesson 22

The Godly Line of Seth

(Genesis 5)

This chapter lists human genealogy from Seth to Noah. It records ten generations from Adam to Noah, covering approximately two thousand years. If we assume that this genealogy is complete, then Adam lived until Noah's father was fifty-six years old! In this case, Adam saw at least seven generations of the "seed of the woman."

Many have asked where Cain's wife came from. The Scripture says Adam lived 930 years and "begat sons and daughters." Since Cain's sisters and brothers intermarried and had children and grandchildren, it appears Cain's wife was either his sister or cousin.

This chapter emphasizes the fall of humanity when, at the end of each man's record, the Scripture says, "And he died." Death was the result of sin entering the world: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12). Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was an exception to this general rule, however. The Scripture declares that Enoch was a righteous man who walked with God. Furthermore, he did not "see death," for God translated, i.e., took him. Similarly, the bride of Christ will be "caught up together . . . in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thessalonians 4:17). (See also I Corinthians 15:51-55.)

Many Bible students agree that, in Scripture, seven is the number of completeness. It is significant, therefore, that God translated Enoch, the seventh from Adam through Seth, for this is similar to the Rapture, when God takes the church out of the world.

We can call Seth's lineage the royal line since Christ came from it. This is quite in contrast to Cain's lineage. In Genesis 4, we find that Lamech was the seventh from Adam through Cain. Lamech was an unrepentant murderer who was proud and boastful in spite of his sin—a perfect example of those who follow in the footsteps of Cain, who rejected the blood offering. (See Genesis 4:23-24.)

Hebrews 11:5 reveals why Enoch was translated: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." His translation was by faith, and the result of his faith is that he pleased God. Genesis 5:24 says, "Enoch walked with God." Likewise, if we truly have faith in God, we will daily walk with Him.

I John 3:21-22 is a good recipe for obtaining faith: "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." Those who keep His commandments and walk with Him, as Enoch did, will easily have "confidence toward God," which is faith in His Word. Interestingly, examples of the miraculous or spectacular are conspicuously absent from the account of Enoch's life; we are simply told that he daily walked with God. In like manner, we do not have to exercise special gifts of the Spirit to be among those who are caught up to meet the Lord. We must, however, keep our garments unspotted from anything in this world (James 1:27).

Enoch's life illustrates the rapture of the church, in that God took him out of the world before God sent the waters of judgment upon the wicked. God will also take the church out of the world before His wrath falls upon it. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

The Lord will hide His church while the Great Tribulation rages upon the earth. Nevertheless, Jesus warned us to watch and pray, so that we would be worthy to "escape all these things" and

to stand before the Son of man (Luke 21:36). The Lord promised that if we keep His Word, He will keep us from the "hour of temptation" (Great Tribulation) that shall try everyone (Revelation 3:10.)

The Mount of Transfiguration illustrates the Rapture also. Although there were many people at the foot of the mountain, Jesus allowed only a select few, i.e., three men, to witness this scene. While Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James, and John, Elijah and Moses appeared with Him, and the glory of God shone all around them. A cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him" (Mark 9:1-9). Peter referred to this scene and used it as his authority to preach the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus" (II Peter 1:16-18). Peter was bold in teaching about the glory of the Lord's return, since he was an eyewitness of the glory that surrounded Christ on the mountain.

Furthermore, Elijah and Moses represent the two kinds of Christians who shall be caught up in the air to meet the Lord when He comes again. Elijah, like Enoch, was translated to heaven before he died; he represents those who are alive at Christ's coming. Moses, however, died and then went to paradise; he represents those who will rise from their graves at Christ's coming.

Lesson 23

The Flood

(Genesis 6)

Methuselah, the oldest man who ever lived, died at age 969, just before the flood began. Although several people lived to be eight and nine hundred years old and over, no one ever lived to be a thousand years old.

The Sons of God

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Genesis 6:2). Some think the "sons of God" were angelic creatures who married the daughters of humans and produced "giants" in the earth. The Scripture refutes such teaching, for the angels neither marry nor are given in marriage (Mark 12:25). We must study the context of this passage to know who the "sons of God" are. Chapter 4 gives Cain's genealogy, while chapter 5 gives Seth's genealogy, through whom Messiah was to come. Chapter 6 describes how these two lines began to intermarry. It was God's purpose to keep these two lines, the godly and the ungodly, separate.

Earlier, Satan attempted to block God's plan when Cain murdered the chosen seed, Abel. Satan's attempt failed in the end because God replaced Abel with Seth. Satan then tried to corrupt the chosen seed by the intermarriage of the godly line of Seth (Genesis 4:26) with the godless line of Cain. God's wrath against this union reminds and warns us that Christians should not marry sinners. (See II Corinthians 6:14.)

Conditions in the Earth

We are especially interested in the conditions that existed in the earth during this time, for the Scriptures compare Noah's days with the "last days." "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37-39). Thus the "day that Noah entered into the ark" is a type of the "coming of the Son of man." (See II Peter 3:4-6.)

The giants in the earth, the "men of renown," may have caused the people to believe that the world was getting better and better, but God did not see it that way. Many intellectual giants fill the earth today—giants of science, technology, and learning. They tell us the world is steadily improving, but the Lord says that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" (II Timothy 3:13). God's justice and great wrath against sin were revealed when He sent destruction because "the wickedness of man was great in the earth" (Genesis 6:5). The wickedness of Noah's day is equaled today by the awful waves of crime sweeping through our country—one more sign that heralds the soon coming of our Lord.

Lesson 24

The Ark

(Genesis 6–7)

Noah's Faith

Noah, a just man who walked with God, found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Genesis 6:8-9). In the midst of a wicked world, there was one man who still had faith in God: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Hebrews 11:7). Noah *acted*. Faith *acts* on the warnings and promises of God. God told Noah that He would destroy all flesh with a flood and instructed him to build an ark. Noah's faithfulness in building the ark was, in itself, a witness against those who refused to heed this warning.

In many ways, the ark is a beautiful illustration of our relationship with Christ:

The Ark's Construction

There was only one door in the ark. Christ is the door to a relationship with God (John 10:7, 9). As Noah and family entered the "ark of safety" through one door, so everyone must enter through one door to be saved. The window was in the top of the ark. After coming to God through the door, we no longer rely on our own abilities, but we "look up," for our "help cometh from the LORD" (Psalm 121:2). Since there were no windows in the side, Noah and his family could not look out and see the suffering and destruction of those who failed to heed the warning. Likewise, believers will not watch the lost in the lake of fire.

Noah made the ark waterproof with pitch (Genesis 6:14). If Noah had not pitched the ark within and without, water would have poured in, and he and his family would have perished with the rest. Interestingly, the same word translated as "pitch" here is translated as "atonement" in Leviticus 17:11. Thus, we find a parallel between the ark saving Noah and his family and Christ's blood covering our sins.

Entrance into the Ark

Noah did not wait until he felt raindrops before he entered the ark, but he and his family entered it *seven days* before it began to rain. Some people are waiting for a great calamity to warn them of the Lord's second coming before they get ready. The Scripture, however, warns believers to watch, i.e., to be ready for the Lord's coming, because He will come "as a thief in the night" (II Peter 3:10) We are not to *get* ready in the future for His coming, we are to *be* ready now. On the day that it began to rain, there were not any black clouds, thunder, or lightning to warn Noah and his house that the day had come; everything went on as usual. People went about their business, little children played in the streets, and cattle and sheep grazed on the hillsides. Similarly, when the Lord comes for His bride, most people will be unsuspecting: adults will be working, children will be playing, and the sun may be shining as brightly as ever. The attitude of those in Noah's day is similar to those today who say, "All things continue as they were from the beginning" (II Peter 3:4).

The ark may have seemed ridiculous a few days before the rain came, but after the fountains of the deep were broken up (Genesis 7:11), many people would have gladly given all their possessions for just one seat in the ark. In like manner, those who reject Christ today do not see His value—indeed, He may even appear ridiculous to them. However, after it is too late, they too will

gladly give all their possessions for another chance, which, unfortunately, will not be granted.

The Ark in the Storm

Although the waters of judgment beat furiously upon the ark, Noah and his family were safe inside. The waves of divine judgment swept over Christ on Calvary. In Psalm 42:7 we read the prophetic utterance, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Those who are in Christ are safe from God's judgment, for Jesus received it in our stead.

In a prairie fire, a small family wondered how they would escape the flames hurrying toward them. Someone suggested that they set a match to the grass around them and carefully tend the fire until a large patch had been burnt down. When this was done, the family stood on the ground that had been burnt. When the fire came, though it raged around them, they were unhurt. Likewise, the fires of God's wrath descended upon Christ at Calvary. This territory has been "burned over." Therefore, if we take our stand as repentant sinners at the foot of the cross, the fire of God's wrath may rage around us but it will not touch us.

The Door Was Shut

God shut the door of the ark (Genesis 7:16). The same door that shut Noah's household in the ark, shut the other people out. In this sense, the gospel will mean death to some and life to others. "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?" (II Corinthians 2:15-16). When the Lord catches away His bride, He will again shut the door. (See Matthew 25:10-12.)

God saved Noah and his whole household. Likewise, God wants us to claim our whole households for God. In Acts 16:31, Paul told the jailer that he would be saved and his house. One writer suggested that Noah put all his possessions in the ark. The only thing a Christian saves is what he gives to God.

Water Baptism

Peter used the Flood as a type of water baptism: "Wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:20-21).

We should note that this passage mentions the resurrection of Jesus in connection with water baptism, as does Romans 6:5: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Baptism is our open acknowledgment of our death with Christ. However, to be buried in water without dying to self and the world would not save anyone. Moreover, the death and burial points to a resurrection in the Spirit. Thus, water baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are closely connected.

Many converts who have been so instructed have received the Holy Spirit, which is resurrection power, as they came out of the water. This is God's plan, for there is only one baptism (Ephesians 4:5), consisting of two elements: water and Spirit (John 3:5).

Lesson 25
The Spirits in Prison

I Peter 3:18-20 refers to the "spirits in prison" that Jesus preached to by the Spirit God. This is one of the truly controversial passages in the Bible and, as such, has generated several interpretations. Before considering the different interpretations, let us first carefully read I Peter 3:18-20. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

Some use this passage to teach that those who perished in the Flood had another chance after death to repent of sin. Of course, if these souls had another chance after death to be saved, others should be entitled to a second chance as well. Others think while Jesus was in the grave, He preached to the spirits in prison and proclaimed His victory and their doom. Nevertheless, there is no solid scriptural support for these interpretations.

We should note that Peter said Jesus was put to death in the flesh and raised from the dead by the Spirit. Moreover, through the Spirit, He preached to the spirits in prison. The most scriptural interpretation, then, is that while Noah built the ark, the Spirit of Christ preached, through Noah, to the unbelievers of his day. (See I Peter 1:11.) These unbelievers are now in hades waiting for the final judgment.

Furthermore, the Scripture reveals how many were saved when the "spirits in prison" heard Noah's preaching: eight souls were saved from the Flood in the ark, not by a second chance after death.

I Peter 4:6 also describes the gospel being preached to the dead: "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Here Peter referred to those who "were dead in trespasses and sin" (Ephesians 2:1), not to those who were physically dead.

Furthermore, John 5:25 refers to the "dead" who respond to the preaching of the gospel: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." (See also John 11:25-26.) Those who disobey the gospel and live in pleasure are dead while they live (I Timothy 5:6). Moreover, Satan captures these prisoners, for II Timothy 2:26 refers to those caught in "the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Finally, Isaiah 61:1 says, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek . . . to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." After Jesus read this verse in the synagogue, He said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:17-21). From this statement we see that Jesus came to preach to those imprisoned on the earth, not to those imprisoned in the grave.

Lesson 26

Clean and Unclean Foods

A new age began when Noah and his family stepped out of the ark onto the renovated earth, for several changes had occurred. Similarly, when the church returns to earth after the Tribulation, they will also come back to a renewed earth, and a new age will begin. After the Flood, God made a covenant with Noah never to destroy the earth again by a flood, and He gave the rainbow as a token of this covenant (Genesis 9:13-15). In addition, from then on murderers were to be punished by the shedding of their own blood (Genesis 9:6). Up to this time, this was not so (Genesis 4:15). Furthermore, God permitted humans to eat animals for food, whereas herbs and fruits had been their food up to this time (Genesis 1:29; 9:3).

Chapter 7 introduces "clean" and "unclean" animals. God had evidently told Noah earlier which animals were clean or unclean, for God told him to take seven of every clean beast and two of every unclean beast with him in the ark. He also knew to sacrifice only clean animals, for in Genesis 8:20 he "took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." However, in Genesis 9:3, the Lord instructed Noah that he and his family could eat both clean and unclean animals: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." This was before God gave the law of Moses to Israel regarding clean and unclean foods. We are still, however, brought face to face with the question of whether "every moving thing" is food for us today.

There are three questions that we should answer scripturally regarding the law of clean and unclean foods: (1) To whom did God give this law? (2) For what reason did He give it? (3) How long was it in effect?

First, God gave this law, by Moses to Israel. It was never given to the Gentiles or to the church. (See Leviticus 11:1-2.) Second, there are many opinions about why God gave this law to Israel. A popular one is that it was to protect the health of God's people. Yet Scripture does not explicitly say this. Leviticus 20:22-26, however, does state God's reason for giving this law to Israel. The first twenty-one verses describe the sins that the Gentile nations committed. The Lord then said, "Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out. And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land. . . . I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean. . . . And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine." God commanded Israel to remain separate from the Gentiles, and as a reminder He told them to put a difference between clean and unclean animals.

Some people wonder why the Lord gave Peter a vision of all sorts of animals to show him he must go to the Gentiles. God had to deal with Peter concerning the law of clean and unclean foods before He could get him to go to the Gentiles to preach the gospel. As long as he continued to separate the "clean" from the "unclean," he would keep himself separate from the Gentiles. Peter still clung to this law for several years after Pentecost, for when the Lord showed him the unclean animals, Peter emphatically declared that he had never eaten anything that was unclean (Acts 10:11-17). God told Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (Acts 10:15). Later, Peter explained the lesson he learned from this vision to the Gentile, Cornelius, and his family: "And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me [through the cleans-

ing of unclean animals] that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). We see, then, that Peter himself connected the separation of Jew and Gentile with the law of clean and unclean foods.

After Peter learned his lesson, he gladly went to the house of Cornelius to preach the gospel to him and his family. When he returned to Jerusalem, however, the Jewish Christians there, who did not yet know the truth on the matter, vehemently criticized Peter for going into a Gentile's house. After Peter recounted his vision and how God had confirmed the truth by giving the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles, the Jewish Christians received the truth and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

This leads to the third question: How long was this law in effect? This is best answered with another question: When was the enmity broken down between Jews and Gentiles? Ephesians 2:13-16 declares that it was broken down at the Cross. Thus, this law was in effect only until Christ's crucifixion. (See Hebrews 9:10.)

In the early church, contentious debates raged regarding the law of Moses and Gentile converts until a council was held at Jerusalem to determine which laws Gentile Christians had to keep (Acts 15). At the end of the council, James rendered the decision: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you [Gentiles] no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (Acts 15:28-29).

Lesson 27

The Modern Tower of Babel

As the Lord brought an end to the first Babylonian tower, so He will bring an end to the modern Tower of Babel, i.e., the one-world government now in the making. One cannot possibly study the books of Daniel and Revelation without seeing that the final government is to be a beastly thing, fiercer than all governments that have gone before it. This government will be a masterpiece of Satan, ruled by the Antichrist. Nations will join, being deceived into thinking that this is the only road to peace. The Antichrist, or Beast, will control the armies of so many nations that the cry will be, "Who is able to make war with the Beast?"

One American president recommended in a nationwide radio broadcast that the United States relinquish its sovereignty and turn the power of the military over to the United Nations as an example for other nations to follow. To make the UN so strong militarily that no nation or people would dare make war with it was, in his opinion, the only hope of maintaining peace in the world. To many Christians, instantly, the passage from Revelation came to mind: "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" (Revelation 13:4).

The many agencies of the UN and other multinational organizations—past and present—give us some idea of the various phases of our national life that an international despot could gain control over. Here are examples:

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The stated purpose of this organization is the promotion of the peaceful use of atomic energy. Could it be used, however, to obtain nuclear secrets from nuclear powers?

International Labor Organization (ILO). Its purpose is to "coordinate labor demands throughout the world." Worldwide control of labor will be necessary for the success of the Beast's plans.

Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). This agency sets standards for the quality of foods on an international basis.

The **International Monetary Fund** (IMF) was formed to expand and regulate international trade. Together with the FAO it could provide the machinery necessary for the one-world ruler to decree that no one can buy or sell unless he receives the mark of the Beast.

The **World Bank,** or International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It seeks to internationalize money standards. It also controls the IFC, *International Finance Corporation*.

The IDA, the **International Development Association,** seeks to regulate natural resources worldwide, while UNESCO promotes education for all peoples and races. Other agencies are the UPU, *Universal Postal Union*, which could censor communications and the ITU, *International Telecommunications Union*, which could set up international regulations for radio, telegraph, telephone, and television. Then, there are the *International Civil Aviation Organization*, the *World Meteorological Association*, the *Intergovernmental Maritime Consultive Organization*, the *World Health Organization*, the *International Trade Organization* and the *General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades*. When fully developed, organizations such as these could be instruments by which the Antichrist rules the world.

Lesson 28

The Ancient Tower of Babel

(Genesis 11)

Noah died at the age of 950 years, and from his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the "nations were divided in the earth" after the flood. Shem was the son chosen to continue the Messianic line; through him and his posterity came the "seed of the woman."

Babylon. In Genesis 10 is a character named Nimrod. He was a mighty one in the earth, and "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" (Babylon). (See Genesis 10:8-10.) The Scripture mentions Babylon repeatedly until it is finally destroyed in Revelation 18.

The name Babylon does not always refer to the city, however. As long as God worked exclusively through the chosen nation of Israel, Babylon assumed the form of a city. Now that God works through the New Testament church, Babylon symbolically represents a great religious system, which is Satan's attempt to counterfeit the workings of the Lord to deceive many people. When Israel refused to obey the Lord, the Babylonians conquered them and carried them away captive into Babylon. Likewise, if saints today are carnal, they will be carried away with Babylonian customs and doctrines.

Revelation 17:5-9 says the headquarters for Babylon, the mother of harlots, is a city having seven hills. Some commentators think this description identifies the Roman Catholic Church, for its headquarters is Rome, which is known as the city of seven hills. In this body, as in many others, we find several counterfeits of God's plan for the church. For instance, the confession booth takes the place of genuine repentance. The pope claims to be the mediator between God and humans, whereas our real high priest is Jesus Christ. The holy water is supposed to sanctify, which, of course, is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Scattering of the People. Originally all the people of the earth were "of one language, and of one speech" (Genesis 11:1). In the land of Shinar, they decided to build a city and tower "whose top may reach unto heaven" (Genesis 11:4). Thus they became an example for all time of someone "who climbeth up some other way" (John 10:1). Their ambition was to make a name for themselves. In contrast, God's people are busy publishing the name of the Lord. The craze for personal fame is found all over the earth today. As R. Bullock stated, "This mania will reach a terrible climax in the person of the Antichrist, who will demand that all men be branded with his name or number." (See Revelation 13:16-18.)

The people who built the Tower of Babel used "brick for stone, and slime . . . for morter" (Genesis 11:3). God's true building is made up of "lively stones" perfectly joined together with the tempered mortar of the love of the Holy Ghost. (See I Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:20-22; Romans 5:5.) In this unity there is strength. Contrariwise, we find Satan's counterfeit in great religious, political, and commercial mergers, which are cemented together with "untempered mortar," man-made organization. (See Ezekiel 13:11-15.) These people think they are strong in their man-made tower, while ignoring God's true tower of safety. "The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10).

God came down and confounded the languages at the Tower of Babel so that the people could not understand each other. This, of course, caused such confusion that their work was left unfinished, and God scattered them over the face of the earth. Thus the name that people gave to the city was Babel, which means "confusion." This is a good example of the ultimate end of all enterprises that leave God out of their program.

Lesson 29

Abraham

(Genesis 12)

The life of Abraham introduces the history of God's chosen nation, Israel, through whom the promised Redeemer came. Abraham was called out of a polytheistic culture to serve and to be a witness of the one true God, Jehovah. (See Deuteronomy 6:4.) Through Abraham's obedience to God's call, he was destined to become the father of all who believe. Since we are to do the "works of Abraham" (John 8:39), it is important that we study his life in detail. Although he made mistakes we should avoid, the central theme of his life was obedience to the call of God and faith in His promises. Hebrews 11:8 declares, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." Thus, the age of promise began. During this age, God's people were primarily led by the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Abram's Call. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee" (Genesis 12:1). Although Abram answered this call, he delayed in doing so. (See Acts 7:2-4.) God gave this call to Abram while he was in Mesopotamia; from there he journeyed toward Canaan. However, Genesis 11:31 reveals that he settled in Haran until the death of his father. Evidently home ties kept him from immediately answering the call, until God stepped in and took his father home.

There are many cases of chosen vessels who hesitated to fulfill the divine commission until drastic measures caused the flesh to be willing to go. The quintessential example of this is Jonah and the great fish: he suffered torment in the belly of the great fish for three days before he answered the call to go to Nineveh.

God is able to remove whatever stands in our way from fulfilling His call. For example, one missionary complained to the Lord because his children were hindering his going to India. The Lord said, "If they are standing in your road, I can take them out of your way!" This man's wife hesitated to answer the call because she loved her mother and did not want to leave her. Without forewarning, the mother became ill and died! However, if we voluntarily die to our own will, God does not need to take a loved one home to have His way in our lives. Death to self is the Christian worker's first requirement, for this allows the Spirit's resurrection power to fill our lives. (See Romans 6:8; Galatians 2:20.)

Moses hesitated to fulfill the call of God, complaining that he was "slow of speech" (Exodus 4:10-14). Acts 7:22 says, however, that he did not have trouble with his speech in Egypt—indeed, he was "mighty in words and in deeds." After Moses gave his excuse, God said, "I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say"(Exodus 4:12). This meant he would have had real eloquence!

The separation of Abram from his native country and his kindred parallels the separation of the repentant sinner from his old habits and friends. It is only after this separation that God will reveal Himself and make the sinner a partaker of the promises. Thus salvation sometimes divides relatives. "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:35-37). Those who put family ties ahead of the Lord are not worthy of the kingdom. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him" (Psalm 45:10-11).

God's Covenant with Abram. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2-3). This was the great covenant God made with Abraham while he was yet in Mesopotamia. God made it more specific later, as Abram obeyed God.

God appeared to Abram many times but not once in Haran, because he was not fulfilling His command. Many wonder why God does not give them greater insight into His truth. Often, the answer is they are not following the truth already revealed. The secret of a fresh illumination of His Word is obedience to what God has already made plain. (See John 7:17.) In other words, we must do what we know, and then we will know what to do!

This is our first introduction to the "blessing of Abraham," which is given to Gentiles through faith. (See Galatians 3:14, 29.) This covenant shows that God chose Abraham in order to bless "all families of the earth" (Genesis 12:3). It was not simply an act of partiality; it was God's method to bless both Jews and Gentiles. This aspect of the covenant was not fulfilled until Pentecost, however, for only through the new birth can all nations be blessed alike. Peter said the promise was "unto you [the Jews] . . . and to all that are afar off [the Gentiles]" (Acts 2:39). Peter reminded the Jews that God gave the promise to them first: "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you" (Acts 3:25-26). After the resurrection God sent Him in the form of the Holy Ghost! Jesus Christ is thus the fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham. That is, He is the seed through whom all nations are blessed. We receive the blessing of Abraham by faith when we believe in and receive Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:14).

Trial and Blessing. We experience both trials and blessings (frequently in this order) when we obey the call of the Lord. For example, when Abram reached the plain of Moreh, the Canaanites, his enemies, were in that area. Nevertheless—and more importantly—the Lord was there, and He appeared to Abram and comforted him (Genesis 12:6-7). Likewise, we need not fear our enemies, since God is always with us (Hebrews 13:5).

Abram Goes into Egypt. Genesis 12:10 says Abram went down to Egypt, for there was a severe famine in Canaan. He should have stayed in the place God called him to and depended on God's provision, but like many new converts, he failed the first test of his faith. It is better to endure hardship in God's will than to prosper and lose our relationship with God.

Lesson 30

Abraham and Lot

(Genesis 13-14)

I. Return to Bethel

Genesis 13:1-4 records that God led Abram back to the place He wanted him, Bethel, and there Abram "called on the name of the LORD." If we depart from the Lord, we must go back to the place where we left Him and call on His name. If we do not return voluntarily, troubles may force us back as they did Abram.

II. Separation

Abram faced a worse trial than the famine. Strife arose between Abram and Lot's herdsmen, compelling them to separate from each other. After God *called* Abram, He *separated* him—first from Egypt, then from Lot. Likewise, we also must experience a separation, or setting apart of ourselves from everything that hinders our fulfilling the call of God (II Timothy 2:21). God had instructed Abram to leave his relatives. He took Lot along with him, however, so it is not surprising that trouble arose. Similarly, whatever a Christian refuses to lay on the altar will always be a source of misery for him. God told Israel to drive out all the heathen nations in Canaan. Nevertheless, Israel allowed some of the nations to remain in the land; these nations proved to be a constant source of trouble and grief for Israel.

III. Avoiding Strife

Abram's determination to avoid conflict with Lot was commendable. All of God's people should follow Abram's example in this. Although the first choice was rightfully his, he gave Lot the first choice of what part of Canaan he would settle in. In any church, unity in the body of Christ should always be placed above one's own desires. It is selfish to sacrifice the church's unity to gratify a mere whim! Paul said, "Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" (I Corinthians 6:7).

There is a remarkable contrast between Abram and Lot: Abram was a man of faith; Lot was a man of sight. Abram let God choose for him; Lot chose for himself. Lot chose the well-watered plains of Jordan and pitched his tent toward Sodom. Abram lost nothing, though, for after the separation, God gave Abram more real estate than Lot ever possessed during his life (Genesis 13:14-17).

IV. Lot's Worldliness

Lot first "pitched his tent toward Sodom" (Genesis 13:12). Later, he moved to Sodom. Originally, he probably did not intend to move into such a wicked city, but backsliding is neither premeditated nor accomplished at once. No one wakes up one morning and decides to backslide. The process is often subtle; the changes often go unnoticed or, if felt, are only sensed as a vague uneasiness that "I'm not doing so well." One thing leads to another until the believer loses out entirely with God. This process may begin when people simply let down a little in their prayer lives or neglect to study the Word of God, or maybe their zeal for the house of God has cooled. Regardless, Satan has accomplished his purpose.

V. Abram's Compassion

Although Lot had taken undue advantage of Abram, Abram immediately went to his rescue when he was carried away captive. He was, indeed, returning good for evil. Similarly, David, at times, prayed for his enemies as if they were his friends. (See Psalm 35:13-14.)

VI. Abram Refused the Goods of Sodom

Melchizedek, the king and priest of Salem, blessed Abram when he returned from battle; Abram then paid tithes on the spoils taken from the enemy. Next, the king of Sodom offered him a reward for his service. Abram, however, refused to take so much as a shoelace from the king. He did not want anyone but God to get the credit for making him rich. Since Abram already knew the bounty of the Lord, the "goods of Sodom" (material things of this world) looked paltry in comparison to God's riches!

Questions on Lessons 21–30

Lesson 21

1. Compare and contrast the blood of Abel with the blood of Christ.
2. What was the nature of Cain's punishment?
3. How did God thwart Satan's attempt to destroy the seed of the woman?

Lesson 22

1. How many generations were there from Adam to Noah?
2. How can we prove that Adam had other children besides Cain and Seth?
3. What is the general rule in Genesis 5?
4. What exception do we find to this rule?
5. Enoch's life is similar to what? Why?
6. Why is it significant that Enoch was the seventh from Adam through the line of Seth?
7. What type of person was the seventh from Adam through Cain?
8. What was the result of Enoch's faith?
9. Enoch was translated before the waters of judgment were sent upon the earth. What future event is this similar to?
10. What was the purpose of the Transfiguration?

Lesson 23

1. Explain how Adam died the day he sinned.
2. Who were the sons of God who married the daughters of men?
3. Why did this provoke God's wrath?
4. Describe the conditions that existed on the earth just before the flood.
5. How are these conditions similar to our day?
6. The "day that Noah entered into the ark" is a type of what event? Give Scripture.

Lesson 24

1. What kind of faith did Noah have?
2. Explain the construction of the ark and what it illustrates.
3. What is the significance of the pitch?
4. How many days were Noah and his family in the ark before rain came?
5. What does this illustrate?

Lesson 25

1. Did Jesus preach to anyone while in the grave?
2. Who were the "spirits in prison" that the Spirit of the Lord preached to?
3. When did this take place?
4. How many were saved and how?
5. Give Scripture to show why the gospel is preached "to them that are dead." Who are the "dead"?

Lesson 26

1. Name some of the changes God made after the flood.
2. To whom was the law of clean and unclean foods given?
3. Why did God give this law?
4. How long was this law in effect?
5. Explain why God gave Peter a vision of unclean animals.
6. What does the New Testament teach that the church must not eat?

Lesson 27

1. This lesson compares the ancient Tower of Babel to what development in the end time?
2. What modern organization could foreshadow the coming world government?

Lesson 28

1. Through which of Noah's sons did the Messianic line continue?
2. Who was Nimrod?
3. What evidences do we have that "Babylon" is in the earth today?
4. Those who tried to build a tower to heaven are an example of what class of people?
5. Describe God's true building, which will actually reach heaven.
6. How is it cemented together?
7. What is Satan's counterfeit for God's method of unity?
8. What is the meaning of the word *Babel*?

Lesson 29

1. What is the importance of studying the life of Abraham?
2. What did God tell him to do? Where was he when he received this call? Did he immediately obey?
3. What lesson do we learn from Moses' hesitation to fulfill his call?
4. What was God's covenant with Abram?
5. Why did God not appear to Abram while he was in Haran? What lesson does this teach us today?
6. What is the blessing of Abraham? When was it fulfilled?
7. What mistake did Abram make by going into Egypt?
8. Of what is Egypt a type?

Lesson 30

1. Was Abram right in taking Lot with him? Why?
2. What commendable thing in the life of Abram was displayed as he separated from Lot?
3. What lesson can we apply in the church from this example?
4. What lesson do we learn from Lot first pitching his tent toward Sodom and later moving into Sodom?
5. What worthy example did Abram set when he rescued Lot?
6. Why did Abram refuse to take a reward from the king of Sodom?

Lesson 31

Melchizedek

(Genesis 14)

I. Purpose: To Typify the Priesthood of Christ

Genesis 14:18-20 introduces Melchizedek the king and priest of Salem (Jerusalem). He was a priest of the most high God, and his ministry was a type of the priesthood of Christ. It was necessary for someone to prefigure Christ's priestly office. The Levitical priests, however, could not typify Christ's priesthood, since their priesthood was fundamentally different from His. Let us note some of the contrasts between the Levites and Christ:

1. Christ came from the tribe of Judah, not the tribe of Levi. "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Hebrews 7:14).

2. The Levites died, whereas our high priest will never die. "There ariseth another priest, who is made . . . after the power of an endless life" (Hebrews 7:15-16).

3. The Levites ceased to be priests at their death, whereas Christ continued as a priest after His death. "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man [Christ], because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood" (Hebrews 7:23-24).

4. The Levites were priests on earth, while Christ is a priest in heaven. "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1; see Hebrews 9:24).

5. The Levites offered blood first for their own sins, but Christ was without sin. "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners . . . who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's" (Hebrews 7:26-27).

Because of these differences God declared, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 7:21).

Melchizedek brought forth *bread* and *wine* and gave them to Abram when he returned from battle. This demonstrated how long Christ would do the work of high priest. It is during this age of grace that we partake of the bread and the wine. I Corinthians 11:26 reveals how long this period will last: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." At Christ's death He became a high priest and will minister as such until He comes again.

II. Who Was Melchizedek?

The writer of Hebrews said of Melchizedek, "Consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils" (Hebrews 7:4). Some teach that he was simply an earthly king whose parentage, children, birth, and death were not recorded in Genesis. Melchizedek was greater than Abraham, for Hebrews 7:7 says, "Without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." Abram was a great man, but Melchizedek was greater than he was.

Hebrews 7:3 says Melchizedek was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life." If this refers to immortality, then, this describes God, for He alone is without beginning and without end. Therefore, some conclude that Melchizedek was a theophany—a temporary, visible manifestation of God.

Melchizedek was called a king as well as a priest: "first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace" (Hebrews 7:2). Our high

priest will reign as King of kings when He appears the second time. He will rule the world in righteousness. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3). Moreover, the world shall not know peace until the King of peace comes. Then shall they "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

Jesus inherited the throne of David by *birthright*. Through His human lineage, he was born a king. In Matthew 2:2, the wise men inquired of Jesus, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" Micah 5:2 says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." In His humanity, He has a right to sit on the throne of David, ruling over the earthly kingdom. In His deity, He has a right to sit on the throne of our hearts, ruling over our lives.

III. Tithing

Since Melchizedek foreshadowed the age of grace in which we live, it is significant that Abram paid tithes of all he had to this priest. Some question whether tithing is required in this age of grace, but in this instance, it is clearly endorsed. The writer of Hebrews reminded believers that Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek. "Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils" (Hebrews 7:4). Christ is now our Melchizedek, and we, the children of Abraham, are commanded to do the works of Abraham, the father of all who believe (Romans 4:11).

Furthermore, Hebrews 7:8 clearly shows that the believers in the apostolic age paid tithes to their ministers: "And here men that die receive tithes." (See also Matthew 23:23.) This does not exempt the ministry from paying tithes, however. "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him" (Hebrews 7:9-10).

Jacob understood the blessing of tithing to the Lord, for when God appeared to him at Bethel he vowed, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Malachi 3 concerns this age of grace also, for it contains prophecies of both the first and second coming of the Lord. The chapter begins with prophecy of John the Baptist and the Lord suddenly coming to His temple; it ends with God making up His jewels at the Rapture. During this age the Lord says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse" (Malachi 3:10).

Lesson 32

Sonship

(Genesis 15)

I. God's Reward

Since Abram refused the king of Sodom's reward, the Lord appeared in a vision to him and gave him a precious promise: "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Genesis 15:1). No one ever loses by giving up this world's goods for the cause of Christ. He is our portion forever!

II. Sonship Depends on Resurrection Power

When Abram reminded the Lord that he was still childless, God promised him a son of his own, through whom his descendants would become as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15:2-5). "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Now, let us consider the kind of faith Abram had. Since Abram's body was as good as dead, being about one hundred years old, this promise (sonship) depended on God giving life to what was dead. Likewise, our sonship depends on the resurrection power of God to give life to us who are dead in trespasses and in sin. Salvation is not simply reforming oneself! (See Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:13.)

III. Sonship Comes through Faith

Paul used Abram's faith to show that our sonship in Christ depends on faith and not works. Paul emphasized that it was not Abraham's good works that caused God to give him a son: "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory. . . . For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Romans 4:2-3).

God has ordained faith as the condition for receiving the promise, for a definite purpose: He wants His children to attribute their salvation to the grace of God alone. Romans 4:4 declares, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." In other words, if we can earn our salvation by works, we will not think of our salvation as a gift but as a payment we have earned. Thus Romans 4:16 says, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace." (See Ephesians 2:8-9.)

"But to him that worketh not [does not depend upon good works for salvation], but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5). Working on a dead body will never bring it to life. You may massage a dead man's hands, you may pump air into his lungs, you may dress him up in the finest clothes, but he is still dead. Likewise, those who soothe their consciences by "turning over a new leaf" without being saved by the power of God are simply dressing up a dead man. No matter how respectable they look to people, they are still dead to God. A sinner is utterly helpless to make himself righteous in the sight of God by works.

Sonship, as in Abram's case, depends on the power of God to raise from the dead. "(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead" (Romans 4:17). Abram believed God was able to do this, for "being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead . . . neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb . . . but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Romans 4:19-20). Abram did not focus on the deadness of his body but on the faithfulness of God. These things concerning Abram were written so that we might have the kind of faith he had and be saved. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, . . . but for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Romans 4:23-24).

Lesson 33

Abram's Vision

(Genesis 15)

I. Promise of Inheritance

God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abram. "And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (Genesis 15:7). Then Abram asked for a confirmation of this covenant, whereupon God instructed him to prepare a sacrifice consisting of a heifer, a female goat, a ram, a turtledove, and a pigeon.

II. Driving Away the Fowls

After Abram prepared the sacrifice and laid the pieces upon the altar, he stood guard by his sacrifice until evening, waiting for God to appear to him. While he waited for the Lord, "the fowls came down upon the carcases, [and] Abram drove them away" (Genesis 15:11). Had he not done so, the fowl would have devoured the sacrifice before God appeared to him with His revelation of Abram's future. Similarly, when a child of God consecrates his life to God and lays everything on the altar, the enemy will harass him with temptations, doubts, and fears. If he resists them, however, God will reveal Himself in a more precious way than ever. Often, when we kneel to pray, we must drive away thoughts concerning the cares of this life before we can pray to a place where God can speak. (See James 4:7.)

III. Prophecy

As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep (Genesis 15:12). Abram was under the power of God, for he received a wonderful vision and a threefold prophecy of the future:

1. Bondage in Egypt. "An horror of great darkness fell upon him." The great darkness that descended upon Abram pointed to the darkness that would befall his posterity when the Egyptians enslaved them. "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years" (Genesis 15:13).

2. The Exodus. The Lord revealed the Israelite's exodus from Egypt: "Afterward shall they come out with great substance" (Genesis 15:14).

3. Possession of Canaan. "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again" (Genesis 15:16). God revealed several hundred years of history concerning Abram's posterity before he had a child!

IV. Abram's Vision

"And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces" (Genesis 15:17). Here we have two figures that describe the path by which the Lord led Abram's posterity.

1. A Smoking Furnace. This part of Abram's vision prefigured the sufferings and trials though which the Lord would lead Israel. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10). The first great affliction they passed through was the Egyptian bondage. "But the LORD hath . . . brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 4:20). They later suffered captivity in Babylon and were dispersed among the nations.

2. A Burning Lamp. Through all these trials, God promised to be with them as a burning lamp to comfort and to deliver them. When Nebuchadnezzar cast the three young Hebrew men

into the fiery furnace, the onlookers saw someone else beside them in the angry flames—they saw someone who looked like the "Son of God."

This verse is an example for the church. Those who will be heirs of God must have fellowship with Christ in His suffering. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Philippians 1:29). Nevertheless, we can rejoice in these trials, knowing He will never abandon us (Hebrews 13:5). Through trials, God purifies His people and prepares them for His appearing. "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried . . . and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12:10). Furthermore, Romans 8:17-18 says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Our faith must be "tried with fire" (I Peter 1:7). Moreover, Peter exhorted us, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (I Peter 4:12). "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17).

Again, the church, like Israel, need not fear the fiery furnace, for God has promised to be very near—yes, to dwell with those who suffer for Him. (See Hebrews 13:5-6.) The Holy Ghost will dwell within the Spirit-filled believer as fire, consuming all the dross in him (Matthew 3:11). It is the indwelling fire of God's Holy Spirit that enables the child of God to pass through the furnace of affliction unharmed and without the slightest smell of smoke on his garments. God's intention is to soften and melt our hearts, but without this burning lamp within our hearts, these same experiences, which were intended to draw us near our Savior, will harden us instead.

Lesson 34

Abram's Attempt to Fulfill God's Promise

(Genesis 16-17)

I. The Birth of Ishmael

We should consider Ishmael's birth from two viewpoints: the practical lesson for the individual life and the doctrinal types introduced by his birth.

Sarai's Faith Tried. After ten years elapsed without the appearance of a son, Sarai suggested that Abram take her handmaid, Hagar, and have a child through her. Natural reason conquered Sarai's faith.

God's promises are based on His supernatural power and cannot, therefore, be reasoned out by the natural mind. When we leave the realm of faith for the realm of reason, the promises of God often cease to be powerful and real to the soul, because human reasoning often (but, of course, not always) leaves God out of the picture.

Satan often uses *time* to destroy the faith of God's children. He points to the number of years we may have waited without an answer to our prayer. We must not conclude, however, that a significant delay in God's answering our prayer means He has denied the request. Impatience is an enemy to faith: "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Hebrews 10:36).

Abram's Faith Tried. Abram made two serious mistakes. First, he followed Sarai's suggestion without consulting the Lord first. Those who trust God for an answer should not be surprised when Satan attacks or tempts them. When this happens, they will receive strength to resist Satan, if they call out to the Lord in prayer. God was just as able to reassure Abram of the promise at this point as He was able to speak plainly when He first gave the promise to Abram.

Second, Abram tried to work out God's plan *his own way*. God's work, however, must be done His way, or it will not be accepted. Abram's attempt to fulfill God's promise himself brought only trouble and strife to his household, which up to this time had been well-ordered and happy. Jealousy now existed between the two women and, later, between the two sons. Even today, the Arabs, descendants of Ishmael, and the Israelis, descendants of Isaac, are still causing each other grief. (See Genesis 16:12.)

II. A Type of Two Covenants

Sarai and Hagar are types of two covenants (Galatians 4:22-31). Hagar was a bondwoman, whereas Sarai was a free woman. Hence, Hagar is a type of the old covenant given on Mount Sinai. Galatians 4:24 declares that the law gives birth to children who are slaves. The law could not bring freedom in that it was "weak through the flesh" (Romans 8:3). Ishmael could not inherit the promise made to Abram, for Ishmael was "born after the flesh" (Galatians 4:23).

Isaac, the son of the free woman, typifies the "children of promise," i.e., those who are born after the Spirit: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Galatians 4:28).

III. Circumcision

Abram was ninety years old when he received the sign of circumcision. God gave Abram circumcision as the "token of the covenant" between them (Genesis 17:11). This word "token" is the same as the word "seal" in Romans 4:11: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." In the new covenant, the seal

of our faith is the Holy Ghost. (See Ephesians 1:13; 4:30.) Our circumcision is one "made without hands"; through water baptism and the resurrection power of the Spirit, Christ cuts away the sin from our lives (Colossians 2:11-13). (See also Romans 2:29.)

Lesson 35

Abraham's Relationship with God

(Genesis 18)

God changed Abram's name to Abraham (Genesis 17:4-5), which means "father of a great multitude," and He changed Sarai's name to Sarah, meaning "princess." After Abraham received the seal of his faith, circumcision, several important events took place in his life. Similar events will occur today in those who have received the seal of their faith, the Holy Ghost.

1. The desire of his heart was fulfilled. One day three "men" appeared to Abraham. One was a manifestation of the Lord Himself. (See Genesis 18:1.) The Lord told Abraham that within a year he would have his promised son (Genesis 18:10).

2. God whispered His secrets to Abraham. The Lord showed Abraham future events, for he was a friend of God. (See Genesis 18:17-18.) The Lord revealed to Abraham the coming destruction of Sodom. Likewise, if we become friends of God by obeying His commands, the Lord will also show us things to come. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:14-15).

3. He became an intercessor. Abraham pleaded with God to spare the city for the sake of the righteous people in it. Abraham was not only a man of faith, but he was also a mighty man of prayer. It might appear that God did not answer his prayer, because, shortly thereafter, He destroyed the city. However, God did spare Lot and his daughters from the destruction because of Abraham's intercession.

God answered Abraham's prayers for several reasons:

1. He was righteous. "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment" (Genesis 18:19). Too many times people live careless lives and wonder why their prayers are unanswered. David said that if he regarded iniquity in his heart the Lord would not hear him (Psalm 66:18).

2. He was humble. Let us notice how Abraham approached the Lord: "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes" (Genesis 18:27). Similarly, the centurion who came to Jesus joined humility with his faith, and Jesus answered his prayer for his sick servant. He told the Lord he was not worthy for Jesus to come under his roof. However, he was confident that if Jesus spoke the word only, his servant would be healed (Luke 7:2-10).

3. He was close to God. Abraham "stood before the Lord," and he "drew near" to God (Genesis 18:22-23). The soul closest to God will plead most for others. Intercession is a mighty ministry.

Lesson 36

Lot Delivered from Sodom

(Genesis 19)

I. Illustration of the End Times

Lot's deliverance from Sodom is another illustration of the Rapture. It is notable that there are several illustrations of this event in the first book of the Bible. First, God translated Enoch before He sent the waters of judgment on the world. Then, God carried Noah and his household above the waters of judgment in the ark. Later, God hurried Lot and his household out of Sodom just before He poured fire and brimstone on the city. In like manner, God will take His church out of this wicked world before He pours out His great wrath on it.

Jesus used Sodom's destruction to illustrate the end times and His second coming: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:28-30).

Because the cup of the world's iniquity is almost full, great destruction awaits this earth as it awaited Sodom. But God in His mercy has promised to spare the church from its fury. "And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Malachi 3:17). When the Lord catches away His "jewels," it will be to spare them from the tribulation to follow. (See Zephaniah 1:14-18; Isaiah 26:20-21; Revelation 3:10; Luke 21:34-36.)

As long as Lot was in the city, God held back Sodom's destruction. The angel said to Lot, "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither" (Genesis 19:22). The presence of God's elect in the earth is what holds back the world's destruction. Revelation 12:5-12 says as soon as the "man child" is caught up to the throne, God will cast Satan and his forces down to earth. Satan's wrath will flare up, for he will know that he has only a short time remaining. Some think the man child is the church, for verse 5 says the man child will rule the nations with a rod of iron, and Revelation 2:26-27 says the overcomers shall rule the nations with a rod of iron.

II. Practical Lessons

Genesis 19:29 gives the main theme of the account of Sodom's destruction: "God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt." God remembered Abraham and delivered Lot. Abraham's prayers for Lot were not in vain, for the Lord sent angels to rescue Lot and his family.

It is not enough for us simply to get ready for the coming of the Lord in order to escape the judgment to follow. God has given us the ministry of laboring with Him and of praying for other people to escape the judgment with us. He has promised that our ministry, like Abraham's, shall not be in vain. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6). (See also I Corinthians 15:58.) If we have been faithful in the ministry of intercession, God will remember us and deliver others in that day.

Lot's example is a sober warning to parents. In contrast to Lot, we must keep our families separated from worldliness. If Lot would have done this, all of his children undoubtedly would have escaped the flames of destruction. Unfortunately, his sons-in-law rejected his warnings; indeed, they thought he was only joking (Genesis 19:14).

Again, we find a contrast between Noah and Lot. Noah constantly preached righteousness in the face of all opposition and lived such a consistent life that his children and their wives were convinced of the validity of his warnings concerning the Flood. Hence, God spared his entire household. Although the wickedness of Sodom vexed Lot's righteous soul, we have no record of him publicly voicing his opposition to the sin. He was so entangled in the affairs of Sodom that his children married into wicked families. When Lot suddenly began to warn his sons-in-law of judgment, they thought he was mocking or perhaps insane; consequently, they were destroyed. This illustrates that those who live inconsistent lives cannot hope to influence others toward salvation.

Although Lot knew the city was doomed to destruction, he lingered there instead of hastening away from it (Genesis 19:16). Every Christian knows this world is also doomed, but some linger as Lot did. They loathe separating themselves from all harmful influences. Some who have severed companionship with their wicked friends hesitate to take a bold stand in front of their relatives. Why should we cling to something that will only bring temporary comfort in this life, knowing God is preparing to punish the sinful inhabitants of the world? God spared Abraham because he "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). His *love* for heavenly things compelled him to follow God, while it was Lot's *fear* of the consequences of disobedience that compelled him. God's plan is that His goodness will lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Love for God and the attraction of heaven have caused many to serve the Lord, thus sparing them from harsh chastisement. Unfortunately, others have not recognized their need of God until they have gone through the sorrows of earth.

Although the angels commanded Lot to escape to the mountains, he pleaded with them to allow him to flee to the small city of Zoar. Are we holding on to petty desires or a worldly ambition that we should place on the altar? Have we failed to purge ourselves from some fault, pleading, as Lot did, that it is only "a little one" (Genesis 19:20)? If so, we are missing the mountaintop experiences that the Lord has in store for us!

In disobedience to the angel's command, Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Jesus said, "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). God warned her, but she perished. She was nearly saved, but she perished. "Mercy drew her, but she grieved Mercy, and Destruction seized her" (*Evangel Tract* 283).

Lesson 37

Birth of Isaac

(Genesis 20–21)

I. Abraham in Gerar (Genesis 20)

Deception. Abraham made the mistake of trying to protect himself by deceiving others concerning his wife, Sarah, saying she was his sister. While Sarah was in Abimelech's house, God struck the women with barrenness because of Abraham's sin (Genesis 20:18). Our own disobedience often causes much suffering for others. Moreover, our sin will be uncovered in time, as was Abraham's deception, for God appeared to Abimelech in a dream explaining the situation. After Abraham confessed his sin, the Lord healed the women of Abimelech's household (Genesis 20:17).

Spiritual barrenness. Hidden sin is often the reason some assemblies, or "households of faith," become spiritually barren and cease to give birth to spiritual children. The Lord will reveal the cause as He did in this case. When earnest confession is made, the Lord will lift the curse of barrenness and again cause His people to be fruitful. It is God's will for the mother church to bear sons and daughters; if this does not occur, there is a cause.

But there is also a remedy. In some assemblies where there has not been a soul saved for years, the members will often say it is because "this is a hard place," or the city is an especially wicked one. In reality, the cause goes deeper than this, for nothing outside the church can retard its progress. Such difficulties come from within. (See Isaiah 59:1-2.) The Lord has declared that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against the church (Matthew 16:18). The strong walls of Jericho could not stand against God's people moving in obedience to God's command; however, Achan's sin later caused their defeat at Ai. II Chronicles 7:14 gives the remedy for unfruitfulness: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

II. Birth of Isaac (Genesis 21)

Waiting on God. Twenty-five years of waiting on God had not been in vain, for God visited Sarah, and she gave birth to the promised son. Thus, the faithfulness of God is revealed in God's dealings with Abraham. It is easy to wait on God when we realize that the answer depends on the faithfulness of the One in whom we place our trust. Those who have prayed earnestly and have patiently waited on God can add their testimony to Abraham's that God never fails! Though the fulfillment of our vision may be delayed, we must "wait for it; because it will surely come" (Habakkuk 2:3).

The writer of Hebrews told us what to do while waiting: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Hebrews 10:35-36). We are also reminded of David's determination: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him" (Psalm 62:5). The Lord's answer to such determination is this: "Thy expectation shall not be cut off" (Proverbs 24:14).

Isaac typifies the spiritual birth. God refused to use Ishmael to bring about the promised blessing, for Ishmael, born by the will of the flesh, represents those who serve the desires of their flesh. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:8). Isaac, however, was of miraculous birth, and God used him to fulfill His plan. God uses those who have miraculously

been born again and are following the Spirit, not the flesh. (See I Corinthians 2:14.)

For a time, Abraham and Sarah rejoiced over the miracle God had performed. Sarah gave vent to holy laughter, saying, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me" (Genesis 21:6). This was very different from her laughter of unbelief in Genesis 18:12. The great rejoicing at the birth of Isaac is similar to the joy that comes to believer's hearts when they have been miraculously born of the Spirit.

The bondwoman cast out. Rejoicing over Isaac ceased when Ishmael, now thirteen years old, mocked Isaac in the home. Sarah, aroused to anger, asked Abraham to cast out the bondwoman with her son, because he "shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac" (Genesis 21:10). Although it caused Abraham much grief, the Lord told him to cast Hagar and Ishmael out of his home. Just as Ishmael could not inherit his father's estate, being the son of a bondwoman, so we cannot inherit eternal life if we are children of Satan (I John 3:10). Heretofore, we have not read of Ishmael causing any trouble in Abraham's home, but the birth of Isaac brought out Ishmael's true character. This, of course, was in Ishmael's makeup from the beginning, but it took the appearance of Isaac to bring it out.

Many times a certain family will seem to cherish each other and things will run smoothly in that household until one member is miraculously born into the family of God. Then those who have had the appearance of a good nature will begin to show that they are still "born after the flesh." "As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now" (Galatians 4:29).

Water in the desert. There is a practical lesson to learn in Hagar's experience in the wilderness. When the water supply of Hagar and Ishmael was exhausted, and it seemed that death was close at hand, it looked as though they had been forsaken by God and man. In despair, Hagar wept over their sad plight. God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. Since God "heard the voice of the lad" (Genesis 21:17) and showed Hagar a well of water, we can trust that no matter what wilderness experience we are called to endure, God will sustain us with the water of His Spirit (Isaiah 12:3; 44:3-4; John 4:10; 7:38-39).

The water had probably been there all the time, but Hagar's discouragement caused her to stop just before she reached it. We do not read that God created a well of water for the occasion, but "God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water." How often has our discouragement caused us to stop looking to God just before the victory came? How marvelous when God opens our eyes to see the blessing hidden in our severe test! "The LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw" (Numbers 22:31). Elisha prayed for his discouraged servant: "And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw" horses and chariots of fire surrounding them (II Kings 6:17)!

God has a well of water, the Holy Ghost (John 7:37-39), for every Christian, but many do not see or recognize it. Similarly, the eyes of the two on the way to Emmaus did not recognize the risen Savior until "their eyes were opened, and they knew him" (Luke 24:31). Let us pray that Jesus will anoint our eyes with eye salve to see the refreshing well that awaits all who will come to Him and drink (Revelation 3:18; John 4:14).

Lesson 38

Isaac the Sacrifice

(Genesis 22)

I. Testing Abraham's Faith

God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. "God did tempt Abraham" (Genesis 22:1). The word *tempt* in this case means "test" or "prove." Hebrews 11:17 confirms this: "By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac."

To some, this command seemed to contradict God's promise, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Hebrews 11:18), but Abraham did not have this attitude. He not only heard the voice of the Lord, but he obeyed it. "By faith Abraham . . . offered up Isaac . . . accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead" (Hebrews 11:17,19). Abraham firmly believed that God would resurrect his son after he sacrificed him and fulfill His promise. He demonstrated his faith in God's resurrection power when he told his servants who accompanied them most of the way, "Abide ye here . . . and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Genesis 22:5). He was confident they would both return. Just as the trial of Abraham's faith reveals a precious truth, so the Lord says to His church that the trial of our faith is more precious than gold (I Peter 1:7).

Separation. Let us notice the steps of consecration that God called Abraham to take in order to become a blessing to the whole world.

1. He had to separate from his home, his native country, and his relatives (Genesis 12:1). (See Matthew 10:37-38.)
2. He had to separate from Lot (Genesis 13:1-18).
3. He had to cast out his son Ishmael, whom he loved (Genesis 21:12).
4. He had to offer up Isaac, his only son of promise.

Since Abraham's life was one of continual separation, surely his spiritual seed must likewise be a separated people. This is supported by II Corinthians 6:17: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord . . . and I will receive you." This separation is not only from the sinful things, but God may call us to surrender even legitimate things for the gospel's sake. A home, for example, is a legitimate thing, but God may call us to leave our home to preach the gospel (Luke 14:26-27). The Lord could make Abraham a blessing to all nations because he was willing to give up his dearest treasure, if need be, to obey God (Genesis 22:16-18).

II. The Sacrifices of Isaac and Christ Compared

Hebrews 11:17-19 states, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Abraham received Isaac back from the dead, figuratively speaking, when God provided a sacrificial ram in Isaac's place. This scene is a type of the substitutionary death of Christ and His subsequent resurrection from the dead. In the mind of Abraham, Isaac was slain before they ever left home. Likewise, Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). God chose Mount Moriah as the place of Abraham's sacrifice. Later, the Temple of Jerusalem, where the priests offered innumerable sacrifices, was built on this same location. The religious leaders condemned Jesus to die in this place as well.

"Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son" (Genesis 22:6). As Abraham made Isaac carry the wood upon which he was to be offered, so the Roman soldiers

made Jesus carry His own cross up Golgotha's hill until His strength was gone.

When Isaac questioned his father saying, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb." We must remember that Abraham was a prophet (Genesis 20:7), and God often caused the prophets to speak things that they themselves did not wholly comprehend the significance of. Abraham, no doubt, said this, being hesitant to let Isaac know until the last moment that he was the sacrifice, but in doing so, he gave a prophetic utterance, which Jesus fulfilled on Calvary. Yes, God did provide Himself a Lamb, of which the ram caught in the thicket was only a shadow. (See Hebrews 10:5-10.) As we picture Isaac bound upon the altar, yielding to the directions of his father, we see that Isaac typifies Christ, who "being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death" (Philippians 2:8).

Jehovah-jireh. After Abraham offered the ram in Isaac's place, he called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh. Some have used this name while teaching that the Lord will supply our needs, but this is not the meaning in this instance. Jehovah had just provided a sacrifice as a substitute for Isaac. So this name reveals the truth of the Atonement. There are two meanings in this name: "The Lord will see" and "The Lord will provide." As the Lord saw Isaac's pitiful state—bound, with Abraham's knife raised to take his life—so the Lord saw the sin-sick world and the sentence of death hanging over it. But He provided a spotless Lamb, who made salvation possible to those who trust in Him (John 3:16). (See Acts 2:38.)

III. Isaac, a Type of One Born of the Spirit

Galatians 4:29 says, "As then he that was born after the flesh [Ishmael] persecuted him that was born after the Spirit [Isaac], even so it is now." In our last lesson, we considered how the birth of Isaac, being miraculous, is similar to our being born into the family of God. Now we shall consider how the life of Isaac illustrates the life of a child of God.

Isaac was as willing to die on Mount Moriah as Abraham was to offer him. His yielding to his father teaches us to die to self-will. Christ admonished the church, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). Later, Isaac's marriage involved the renunciation of his will, for the Lord, through Abraham's servant, chose his bride. Furthermore, when the Philistines filled his wells with dirt, he meekly yielded and went to another place until he found peace. At the close of his life, he gave up his personal preference for his eldest son and saw Jacob take his place.

Since we are not our own but are bought with a price, we must deny ourselves and yield our entire lives to the will of God. Moreover, if we follow the Spirit, we must expect persecution even as Ishmael persecuted Isaac (John 15:20; I Corinthians 4:12; II Timothy 3:12).

Lesson 39

Rebekah

(Genesis 23–24)

I. Death of Sarah

Genesis 23 recounts the death and burial of Sarah. Abraham confessed that he was a stranger and sojourner in the land (Hebrews 11:13), having no place even to bury his wife, so he purchased the cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite. Ephron offered the cave to Abraham as a gift, but he refused it for the same reason that he turned down the king of Sodom's gifts.

II. Choosing Isaac's Bride

Abraham commissioned Isaac's servant to find Isaac's bride. We now encounter the beautiful story of the choosing of Isaac's bride. Again, there are several similarities between Isaac and Christ. Abraham offered Isaac on the altar of sacrifice, before Isaac married his bride. Likewise, Christ's crucifixion and resurrection had to be accomplished before the New Testament church, His bride, could come into being. Moreover, Abraham instructed Isaac's servant to seek a bride among Abraham's kindred, not from among the foreigners where they lived. Likewise, only believers are eligible for the bridal company.

The servant found the bride at a well of water. The servant took ten camels and went to the city of Nahor. He stopped by a well of water in the evening time. We are now living in the evening time of this day of grace, and the Lord is seeking those who will be faithful even in the water test!

When the Lord selected "Gideon's band," the last test was the water test. (See Judges 7:1-7.) Three hundred men lapped water with their tongue like a dog, and God used them to win the battle.

The tongue had something to do with this test. Since death and life are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21), and the tongue is the most unruly member of the body (James 3:8), it is no wonder that the Lord wants complete control over it. Those who entered the New Testament church not only were instructed to receive the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in other tongues, but they were commanded to be baptized in water in the name of Jesus. Many who have received the Holy Spirit have not yet passed the latter test, however. The reason is often a lack of instruction or a lack of illumination of God's plan, and sometimes it is a reluctance to take the persecution that goes with the name of Jesus. Isaiah 66:5 describes what has occurred in these last days: "Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

Proving God's will. The servant prayed, "The damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac" (Genesis 24:14). Rebekah, the daughter of Abraham's nephew, Bethuel, fulfilled this prayer by hastily drawing water for the servant and all his camels. The servant's request implied that Isaac wanted a hard-working, energetic woman. Likewise, the Lord will choose those who are on fire for Him, but He will spit out the lukewarm. Jesus told the church at Laodicea, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16).

The servant presented Rebekah with precious gifts. Similarly, the Holy Spirit sends gifts to the

church to prepare it as His bride. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (I Corinthians 12:7-10).

These gifts are all imparted by the Spirit and distributed as "He wills." God did not give them for entertainment but "to profit withal." The scriptural operation of the gifts is an integral part of God's program to perfect the saints for the day when He shall present "to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle" (Ephesians 5:27). As Rebekah was called out from among her people, so the church is "called out" to be a separated people. The word *church* comes from the Greek *ekklesia*, meaning the "called-out ones." Professing Christians who adopt the world's values and lifestyle cannot claim to be in the church, for when they unite with the world, they separate themselves from the church.

As Rebekah's mother begged her to stay a few days longer, so the people of the world often hinder the progress of God's people. We must have the attitude expressed below:

Though many would my progress stay,
And bid me not to watch and pray,
I dare not listen to their cry;
I seek a glorious home on high.

The journey home. Rebekah's journey toward Isaac riding a camel was rough, and the road was beset with many perils, especially from robber bands; however, they safely completed their journey. Similarly, the believer's path will be strewn with many trials, but the Lord has promised protection and guidance. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). (See Acts 14:22; Romans 8:17, 35.)

Rebekah met Isaac. The servant asked Rebekah to become the bride of a man she had never seen. We have never seen Jesus, but we have already consented to become His bride. The Lord said to Thomas, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

As the servant and Rebekah neared the end of their journey, they saw Isaac coming to meet them in the field. Likewise, Christ will meet His bride in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Lesson 40

Jacob and Esau

(Genesis 25)

I. Abraham Marries Keturah

After Sarah's death and Isaac and Rebekah's marriage, Abraham married Keturah and fathered six sons; however, "Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac" (Genesis 25:5). Some see an indication here that after the church is caught away, the Lord will continue His dealings with the natural seed of Abraham; nevertheless, Jesus and His bride possess all power and authority. (See Matthew 28:18; John 16:15; Romans 8:17; Revelation 21:7.)

II. Birth of Jacob and Esau

Although Rebekah was barren, Isaac entreated the Lord for her, and Jacob and Esau, twin brothers, were born. But even before their birth, the Lord spoke to Rebekah and gave her a twofold prophecy concerning His plan for their lives. "And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Genesis 25:23). First, Jacob and Esau would be fathers of two nations. This prophecy concerned their natural descendants—Jacob becoming the father of the Israelites and Esau the father of the Edomites (Genesis 36:43). Second, they also foreshadowed two types of people. Esau, the firstborn, is like an earthly person who has been born only once, whereas Jacob is like a spiritual person who has been born again.

God reversed the usual order in this startling prophecy that the elder would serve the younger. The immediate fulfillment was that Jacob inherited the blessing and the birthright that normally went to the older son, and his descendants became the chosen people of God.

Jacob and Esau also illustrate God's plan that a believer's new spiritual nature should rule over his sinful nature. (See Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10.) Although we still have to contend with our natural selves, if Jesus is truly our Lord (master or ruler), He will rule over our natural selves. Paul realized that the Christian still had this "mortal body" to cope with and, therefore, instructed the saints: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Romans 6:12). Through the power of the Spirit, we crucify, rather than obey, the demands of our sinful natures (Romans 6:6, 13-14). Paul also explained that if we live after the Spirit, we shall be able to mortify, or kill, the deeds of the body (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:13).

Romans 9:11-13 says of the two brothers, "(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Weymouth's translation says God's decision was "based, not on their actions, but on the will of Him who called them." The Lord did not show unfair partiality with regard to the individuals, but He had a divine purpose for the two nations before their founders were born. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" means that He chose Israel to be the people of promise and not Edom (Malachi 1:2-3). Moreover, God hates what Esau represented and loves what Jacob foreshadowed. Namely, He hates the works of the flesh but loves the fruit of the Spirit.

Romans 9:11-13 explains that the reason the order was changed *before* the birth of these two sons was "that the purpose of God according to election might stand." God wished to portray His purpose concerning the elect. He wanted to show clearly that only the second-born (those expe-

riencing the new birth) would be included in the elect. Romans 11:5-7 reveals what the "election" is. Only a few in Israel were elected and the rest were blinded. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. . . . What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." The "election" are those who follow Christ. In the Romans 11 the "election" are the *remnant of Israel* who become partakers of God's grace and follow Christ. They are elected into the body of Christ, the church, along with believing Gentiles.

Israel was God's *firstborn* (Exodus 4:22). The normal order, then, would have been for Israel to be the chosen company; however, because they as a whole despised their birthright by turning down the "blessing of Abraham" (see Galatians 3:14), God has given the church (those born again, both Jews and Gentiles) the blessing He originally intended for all Israel.

The Old Testament impresses upon us many times the principle of the elder serving the younger. In the first Adam, all die; in the second Adam (Christ), all are made alive (I Corinthians 15:22, 45). God rejected the offering of the firstborn, Cain, while He accepted the offering of the second-born, Abel. God told Abraham to accept Sarah's desire to cast out Ishmael, while God blessed Isaac. When Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, he gave the chief blessing to Ephraim, the second-born, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. In this principle, we can see a typological truth that we need to be born a second time and subject the old nature (flesh) to the new nature (Spirit).

Questions on Lessons 31–40

Lesson 31

1. Why was it necessary for Melchizedek to appear on the scene?
2. Name three ways in which the priesthood of Christ differs from that of the Levites.
3. What was the significance of the bread and wine?
4. How great a person was Melchizedek?
5. Why did Abram pay tithes to Melchizedek?
6. Is tithing for us today? Give a reason for your answer.

Lesson 32

1. What did sonship depend upon in Abram's case? That is, what had to take place before Abram could have a son?
2. Upon what does our sonship depend? That is, how do we become sons of God?
3. How does Paul's discourse in Romans use Abram's example to prove that our sonship depends upon faith and not works?
4. Why did the Lord cause salvation to depend upon faith and not works?

Lesson 33

1. What did God promise Abram as his inheritance?
2. Explain the significance of Abram driving away the fowl from his sacrifice.
3. What future event was possibly signified the "horror of great darkness" that descended upon him?
4. What two other prophecies did God give Abram concerning his posterity?
5. Describe Abram's vision.
6. Give the possible meaning of each symbol—for Israel and for the church.

Lesson 34

1. What practical lesson in faith do we learn from Sarah's failure to trust God completely for a son?
2. What mistakes did Abram make?
3. What lessons do we learn from his mistakes?
4. What does Sarai represent in the Word of God?
5. Who are Isaac and Ishmael similar to?
6. Why did God institute circumcision?
7. What is the seal of our faith?

Lesson 35

1. What is the meaning of the name Abraham? of the name Sarah?
2. Who were the three men who appeared to Abraham?
3. What three events followed the sealing of Abraham's faith?
4. Give three reasons why God answered Abraham's prayers.
5. Was Abraham's intercession a failure? Why or why not?

Lesson 36

1. Name three illustrations of the Rapture in Genesis 1-19.
2. Could the angels destroy the city before Lot got out? What is this similar to?
3. According to Scripture, why did God deliver Lot?
4. What warning to parents do we find in Lot's life?
5. What contrast do we find between Lot and Noah?

6. What happened to Lot's wife? What warning do we find here?

Lesson 37

1. What mistake did Abraham make in Gerar, and what judgment followed?
2. What is the cause and cure of spiritual barrenness?
3. How long did Abraham have to wait for the promised son?
4. What does Isaac's birth typify?
5. Why did Abraham cast out the bondwoman?
6. Explain the significance to us of Hagar's experience in the wilderness.

Lesson 38

1. How did God try Abraham's faith?
2. How do we know that Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead?
3. Name four steps in Abraham's separation.
4. How is Isaac like Christ?
5. What is the significance of the name Jehovah-jireh?
6. What quality in the life of Isaac should be manifested in the lives of those born of the Spirit?

Lesson 39

1. What lesson do we learn in Abraham's instructions not to seek a bride among foreigners but rather among his kindred?
2. Where did the servant find a bride? What lesson does this teach?
3. What virtue did she possess that must be found in Christ's bride?
4. What is the meaning of the word *church*?
5. How can we be separated from the church?
6. What sort of journey did Rebekah have? What does this illustrate?
7. Describe Isaac and Rebekah's meeting and its relevance to us.

Lesson 40

1. After Sarah's death, who did Abraham marry? How many sons were born to the marriage?
2. To which son did he give his possessions, and why?
3. What promise did the Lord give Rebekah concerning her children?
4. Give both the immediate fulfillments of the promise.
5. What classes of people do Jacob and Esau represent?
6. Why was the usual order changed before their birth?
7. Who are "the election" in Romans 9:11-13?
8. What was Israel's birthright? How did they despise it, and who received it in their place?

Lesson 41

Esau Sells His Birthright

(Genesis 25)

A Message to Sinners

The story of Esau selling his birthright contains a message both to saints and to sinners. We shall first consider the message it brings to sinners.

Among the Hebrews, the birthright denoted the privileges belonging to the firstborn. These privileges had both spiritual and natural advantages. Prior to God establishing the Levitical priesthood, the firstborn son was the priest of the family—provided he had no physical defect or blemish. The firstborn also received a double portion of his father's property. Furthermore, he succeeded his father in his official capacity. For example, if his father were a king, he inherited the throne.

Without doubt, Isaac had carefully taught his two sons concerning the family birthright, but their attitudes toward this inheritance were very different. (See Genesis 25:27-34.) Esau had little concern about the spiritual welfare of the family, but Jacob greatly desired this position. One day Esau came in from the field, faint and hungry. Jacob had prepared a fine dish of pottage, which Esau begged Jacob to give him. Jacob offered to give it to him on the condition that Esau sell his birthright to him. Esau agreed to this, ate his meal, and went on his way. "Thus Esau despised his birthright" (Genesis 25:34).

Esau, instead of looking forward to the rich things that God had in store for him, was concerned entirely with the present. He bartered his future hope for the gratification of his present appetite. What a true picture this is of the careless sinner who has heard the Word of God but has failed to heed it. He would rather have his fleshly desires of the present fulfilled than to make sure that his name is written in heaven. Esau sold his hope of a future home in heaven and sold the position he could have had as a king and priest unto God (Revelation 5:10), all for the fleeting pleasures of this world—a very small mess of pottage at that! (See I Timothy 5:6.) Once he had sold his birthright, he could not buy it back. Likewise, after the door of God's mercy is closed, many will call on God. Tears will be shed, but they will have come too late. (See Proverbs 1:23-30; Revelation 6:15-17.)

A Message to Saints

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" (Hebrews 12:14-17).

This illustration serves as a warning to the saints. This passage of Scripture refutes the doctrine of eternal security, for it plainly states that the saints should diligently live for God, lest they fall from His grace. The saints are heirs to a place on the throne (Revelation 3:21), but a "root of bitterness," if allowed to stay in the heart, will cause us to lose our birthright (Revelation 3:11).

Lesson 42

Jacob Receives the Blessing

(Genesis 27)

Isaac, at the twilight of his life, desired to give his blessing to Esau, his firstborn and favorite son. By this time his hair was white, and his eyes were dim. He instructed Esau to bring in venison and make him savory meat, that he might eat thereof and bless Esau before he died.

Rebekah overheard their conversation, and being determined that her favorite son, Jacob, receive the blessing, advised Jacob to deceive his father and receive the blessing for himself. She told Jacob to bring in two young goats quickly, which she prepared for Isaac's feast. To deceive Isaac, she put Esau's garments on Jacob and the goats' skins upon his hands and neck to impersonate Esau, who was a hairy man.

Though Isaac doubted because of Jacob's voice, these things convinced Isaac that it was truly Esau, and he pronounced the blessing upon him. "Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee" (Genesis 27:28-29). (See Genesis 12:3; 28:4.)

This ceremony meant more than a father simply praying for God to bless his son. It was a Spirit-inspired prophecy concerning his son's future destiny in connection with the plan of God. While the birthright gave him the place of leadership in his family, the blessing transferred to him the covenant promises made to Abraham, with all the privileges, both natural and spiritual, belonging to it, by which his descendants were to be distinguished as God's chosen people.

There are two other outstanding examples like this in the Bible: Jacob blessing his twelve sons (Genesis 49), and Moses blessing the twelve tribes of Israel (Deuteronomy 33). God moved upon the patriarchs, giving them a prophetic vision of the future. God backed up these prophecies, fulfilling each one in minute detail. The blessings pronounced by Jacob and Moses, however, focused mainly on the descendants of those being addressed, not on those being addressed. Consequently, we can only correctly interpret these prophecies after tracing the subsequent history of these groups.

No sooner had Jacob left the presence of his father than Esau came in with the venison. Isaac trembled, and Esau cried out bitterly, but it was fruitless, for Isaac said, "I . . . have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed" (Genesis 27:33). God had spoken through Isaac, and he knew it could not be altered. However, Isaac promised Esau, "It shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" (Genesis 27:40). The prophecy was fulfilled when the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, revolted from Judah and chose a king of their own (II Kings 8:20).

Esau became so bitter that he planned to slay his brother Jacob (Genesis 27:41). When the news reached Rebekah, she warned her favorite son of Esau's intentions and advised him to leave home until Esau's wrath abated. As an excuse for sending him away, Rebekah told Isaac she was afraid that Jacob would choose a wife from the daughters of Heth, as Esau had (Genesis 26:34-35). Without looking further into the life of Jacob, we see that he fully lived up to his name, which means supplanter or deceiver. As Esau said, "Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing" (Genesis 27:36).

Lesson 43

Jacob at Bethel

(Genesis 28)

The character of Jacob was such that we know it was not his human merit which caused him to inherit the blessing of God. The very deceitfulness of his nature, however, magnifies the grace of God, who bestows unmerited favor upon His unworthy children. If God were merely a just God, without being merciful, no one would be saved, for as David said, "If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" (Psalm 130:3).

Of one thing we are sure, however. Jacob was taught concerning the promises made to Abraham, and he realized their value and desired them. If Rebekah had wholly trusted God to fulfill His promise made to her that the elder would serve the younger, she and Jacob would not have needed to resort to methods of deceit and trickery in "helping God" to fulfill His Word. Psalm 37:3, 5 exhorts us, "Trust in the LORD . . . and he shall bring it to pass." Rebekah paid dearly for not waiting on God for divine instructions, for, seeing Esau's intention to kill Jacob, she had to send him away and never saw her favorite son again, as far as we see in the Scriptures. Before Jacob left, Isaac pronounced over him the Abrahamic blessing in full (Genesis 28:3-4), whereupon he started for Padan-aram to visit Laban, his uncle.

Out in the wilderness alone and weary, Jacob lay down with only a stone for a pillow. In Jacob's position of helplessness and need, God appeared to him. Similarly, only when a sinner realizes that he is lost is he in a condition for God to reveal to him the way to heaven. God visited Jacob in a dream, showing him a ladder set up on the earth, the top of which reached to heaven. Angels ascended and descended on it. Apart from God's grace, Jacob would have been cut off from the presence of the Lord because of his sin, but here God revealed Himself in His mediatorial office, which grace alone provided. The ladder was the means of bridging the gulf from earth to heaven. Therefore it is a picture of Christ, the Redeemer, who through His death bridges the gulf from earth to heaven for everyone who will call on Him for the grace He freely offers. (See John 1:51.)

Also in this vision the Lord confirmed to Jacob the Abrahamic blessing (Genesis 28:13-14). Jacob was afraid when he woke out of his sleep, saying, "Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. . . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:16-17). He called the place Bethel, meaning "The house of God." As God revealed Himself to Jacob at Bethel, so the Lord reveals Himself to us through Jesus, who is the true dwelling place of God, or the gateway to heaven. (See II Corinthians 5:19; John 1:1, 14; 10:1, 9; 14:6, 9.) Jacob took the stone he had used for a pillow and poured oil upon it. Jesus, the true foundation stone (Ephesians 2:20), was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows (Hebrews 1:9).

Jacob vowed that if the Lord would truly be with him and care for him, bringing him again to his father's house in peace, he would give a tenth of all his possessions unto the Lord. We should remember that Jacob was living by faith and was under grace. We who live under grace also pay tithes. (See Malachi 3:8-11; Matthew 23:23; I Corinthians 16:2; Hebrews 7:8.)

One writer said, "The scene of Jacob being forced to leave home, speaks of Israel the nation, cast out of the Land of promise, because of evil-doing there, but holding the promise of restoration and blessing." (See Genesis 28:15; Deuteronomy 30:1-10.)

Lesson 44

Jacob at Haran

(Genesis 29–31)

C. I. Scofield wrote:

Jacob at Haran is a striking illustration, if not a type, of Israel in its present dispersion. Like Israel he was (1) out of the place of blessing (Genesis 26:3), (2) without an altar (Hosea 3:4-5), (3) he gained an evil name (Genesis 31:1; Romans 2:17-24), (4) but was under the Covenant care of Jehovah (Genesis 28:13-14, Romans 11:1, 25-31), (5) was ultimately brought back (Genesis 31:3; 35:1-4; Ezekiel 37:21-23).

Haran was the place of reaping for Jacob. He had deceived his father, and Laban deceived him. After having worked seven years for Rachel, whom he loved, he was deceived into marrying Leah, her sister. However, the Lord compensated Leah, the unloved wife, by making her the mother of Judah, through whom Christ came.

Jacob stayed at Haran for twenty years or more. He found a match for his trickery in the bargain-making Laban. When Jacob began to get the advantage in regard to the flocks and herds, Laban changed his wages. This happened ten times. In spite of all this, Jacob became wealthy. Also twelve sons and one daughter were born to him. These sons, in the order of their birth, are Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. The latter was born after Jacob left Haran. (See Genesis 35:18-19.)

After the birth of Joseph, Jacob decided to leave, but Laban begged him to stay, saying, "I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake" (Genesis 30:27). Jacob agreed to stay on the condition that he get all the cattle, sheep, and goats that were spotted or streaked. Within a few years, Jacob's flocks and herds exceeded Laban's, causing jealousy in his uncle's household. The Lord then appeared to Jacob, saying, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee" (Genesis 31:3).

In spite of Jacob's dealings, God blessed him and multiplied his possessions because of the vow that Jacob had made at Bethel—to give a tenth of all his possessions to the Lord (Genesis 31:12-13). While Laban was away shearing his sheep, Jacob took his wives, children, and all their possessions and started for Canaan (Genesis 31:16-18). Laban was very angry upon returning and finding that Jacob had fled, giving him no opportunity to bid his children farewell. He pursued Jacob and overtook him in the mountains of Gilead (Genesis 31:19-23). He, no doubt, meant harm to Jacob, but the Lord warned him in a dream not to do Jacob harm. They settled their quarrel and made a covenant with each other at Mizpah (meaning watchtower), saying, "The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another" (Genesis 31:49).

Jacob had been so prosperous that he felt quite strong in himself and had not yet learned the lesson of utter dependence upon the Lord. No matter what God sees in our nature that needs to be conquered, He knows just what circumstances in which to place us to teach us the needed lesson.

We shall find in our next lesson that the prospective meeting with Esau, the brother who had once threatened to kill him, was just what Jacob needed to teach him to throw himself in utter helplessness upon the mercy of God.

Lesson 45

Jacob at Peniel

(Genesis 32–36)

Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to Esau, his brother, wishing to find grace in his sight. These messengers returned, saying that Esau was coming to meet Jacob with four hundred men. This message struck fear in Jacob's heart, for he imagined that Esau intended to carry out his former threat to kill him. This was just what Jacob needed to make him realize his need of God's help.

Jacob cried mightily to the Lord, giving us an example of prayer, but he still made the mistake of arranging a plan of his own. He divided the people and his possessions in two bands, saying, "If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape" (Genesis 32:8). God can answer prayer without any scheming on our part. Along with our supplication to God, we are to commit our ways unto Him. In this model prayer we find adoration in verse 9, confession in verse 10, supplication in verse 11, and faith in verse 12.

However, it is one thing to pray and another thing to "pray through." He still had not reached a place of victory, for he sent several droves of animals on before him in making further attempts to appease Esau's wrath. However, when he sent his family on ahead and stayed alone to pray, he really prayed to a place of complete dependence on God. One can pretend to be consecrated before others, but when face to face with God it is a different thing. Our secret thoughts, our innermost being is then laid bare before Him.

Genesis 32:24 says, "There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." It does not say that Jacob wrestled with the angel. No, *the angel had to wrestle with him* until Jacob saw himself as God saw him. The angel touched Jacob's thigh, throwing it out of joint. The shrinking of Jacob's thigh illustrates the crucifixion of self-life. It is the vessel thoroughly emptied of self that can be filled with God. When our own strength is gone, there is no other resource but God. Jacob was then in a place where he could move God in prayer. At this point, *he began to wrestle with the angel*, saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

"What is thy name?" the angel questioned. When he answered, "Jacob," he confessed in a word that he was the supplanter, the deceiver. After Jacob confessed his name, the Lord changed his name to Israel, meaning "a prince of God," for "as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Genesis 32:28). Self-renunciation has always been a great factor in prevailing prayer. (See Matthew 15:24-28; Mark 9:28-29; Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8; Acts 12:5; II Corinthians 12:9.)

Jacob had a peaceful meeting with Esau in Genesis 33. Jacob then made the mistake of dwelling in Shechem, whereas God's appointed place for him was at Bethel. His sorrows there caused him to return to Bethel. In Genesis 35:2 he cleansed his house from idols, went to Bethel, and from there to Hebron, where he and Esau buried their father, Isaac (Genesis 35:29).

Chapter 36 tells us of Esau's going to Mount Seir to dwell there. After recording his descendants, the chapter closes by telling us that Esau is the father of the Edomites.

Lesson 46

Joseph

Part 1 – (Genesis 37)

The life of Joseph is the clearest type of Christ in the Book of Genesis and is one of the finest in the Word of God. We are not only interested in the life of Joseph because of the way his life points forward to Christ but also for the practical example of the virtues he displays. We see the providential hand of God throughout his entire life, showing that God can arrange a whole chain of circumstances to bring about His plan.

We find a contrast between Jacob and Joseph. While Jacob suffered much for his own folly and lack of trust in God, Joseph suffered being innocent. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:19-21). Many people in sad circumstances have claimed to be suffering for Christ, when in reality they were only reaping the consequences of taking an unscriptural stand or of making some unwise move.

We first see Joseph as a shepherd boy of seventeen, feeding his father's sheep. There are four primary ways in which Joseph prefigures Christ:

1. He was the well-loved son of his father. (Compare Genesis 37:3 with Matthew 3:17; John 3:35; 5:20.)

2. When the brothers saw their father's preference for Joseph, they hated Joseph. Their hatred and jealousy became all the more severe as God began to deal with Joseph through dreams, which spoke clearly of the entire family bowing down to Joseph. Jesus' brethren also hated Him. (See John 15:24-25; Matthew 21:37-39; I Peter 3:18.)

3. When Jacob sent Joseph to find out about his brothers' welfare, they despised and mistreated him. Likewise, Jesus was sent to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," seeking their redemption, but was rejected and nailed to the cross. (See Matthew 15:24; John 1:11; Acts 13:46; Zechariah 13:6.)

4. In one of Joseph's dreams, he and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field when his brothers' sheaves bowed down to his sheaf. The interpretation must have been plain enough to them, for they said, "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" The Israelites also ridiculed Jesus for being called "The King of the Jews." Like Joseph, Jesus will one day rule over His brethren, the Jews, in the Millennium. (See Matthew 2:2; Micah 5:2; Revelation 19:16.)

Lesson 47

The Vesture Dipped in Blood

(Genesis 37)

As Joseph approached in the distance, his brothers said, "Let us slay him, and cast him into some pit . . . and we shall see what will become of his dreams" (Genesis 37:20). When Joseph arrived, they stripped him of his coat and cast him into a pit. This is similar to the plot against Christ and His burial. Joseph being lifted again out of the pit is typical of Christ's resurrection. (See Isaiah 53:9; I Corinthians 15:20.)

Joseph was sold for money, as was Jesus. When the Midianite merchantmen came by with their camels on their way to Egypt, they gave twenty pieces of silver for Joseph. When the merchantmen in turn sold Joseph as a slave to Potiphar, they no doubt made some profit on the transaction. Since thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32), this is probably the amount Joseph was sold for at the time, even as Judas sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. (See Genesis 37:28 with Matthew 26:15; 27:9.)

After selling Joseph to the merchantmen, the brothers killed a goat and dipped Joseph's coat in the blood. They took it to their father, who, when he saw it, assumed that some wild beast had devoured Joseph (Genesis 37:31-34). Likewise, John saw a vision of Jesus in which "he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood" (Revelation 19:13).

This vision is symbolic of the judgments of God, especially during the Great Tribulation, for Isaiah 63:1-6 records a similar vision: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? . . . Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?" Isaiah saw the Lord of glory, the one who speaks "in righteousness, mighty to save" (Isaiah 63:1) clothed in garments so bespattered with red stains that He had the appearance of one who had been treading juice out of the grapes in an Oriental winepress.

The Lord explained to Isaiah that the stains on His raiment were prophetic of the time when His wrath will be poured out upon the earth and when the blood of the wicked will be spilled. God's answer to Isaiah's question is found in verses 3-6: "I have trodden the winepress alone . . . for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Verse 6 makes plain that the grapes are the people who in rejecting Christ have made themselves subject to God's wrath.

This harmonizes with Revelation 19:15, which says that the winepress is the wrath of God: "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Then the angel will call the fowls of the air to gather themselves to the supper of the great God (Revelation 19:17-18), where they will eat the flesh of kings, of captains, of mighty men, and of men both free and bond, both small and great. What a contrast between the "supper of the great God" and the "marriage supper of the Lamb"! "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19-20). If we belong to the true Vine (John 15:5) and drink the wine of His Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), we will not drink the wine of God's wrath. (See Psalm 75:8; Jeremiah 25:15-33.)

Lesson 48

Joseph

Part 2 – (Genesis 37–39)

I. Jacob's Grief

Sowing and reaping. Joseph's blood-stained coat convinced Jacob that a wild beast had killed his favorite son. Jacob was overcome with grief and refused to be comforted. Here we see the law of sowing and reaping. (See Galatians 6:7.) Jacob caused his father much grief by deceiving him into thinking he was Esau, and now he himself comes to grief because of his own sons' deception.

We might also add here that Isaac was deceived by his *feelings*, whereas Jacob was deceived by his *sight*. If we are not on our guard, Satan can deceive us by these two methods.

Unbelief. Another source of Jacob's grief was unbelief, for had he believed the Word of the Lord by the mouth of Joseph, he would have known that Joseph was somewhere in God's care. God had spoken through Joseph, declaring that at some point his brethren would be in subjection to him. Likewise, the disciples would not have given in to hopeless grief when Jesus was in the tomb if they had believed Jesus when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). When the Lord stepped into the ship and said, "Let us pass over unto the other side" (Mark 4:35), the disciples would not have been afraid that the ship would sink if they had believed the words of Jesus. Paul did not fear death at sea even amid shipwreck, for the Lord had said, "Thou must bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11).

II. Joseph in the House of Potiphar (Chapter 39)

The household blessed. Although Joseph was a slave in Egypt, God blessed the whole house of Potiphar for Joseph's sake. All that he did prospered to such an extent that his master made him overseer over all his property. The Lord also blesses a household of an unsaved family because of the prayers of one member who loves the Lord. (See I Corinthians 7:14.)

Further types. In the house of Potiphar, Joseph is a type of Christ in two ways: (1) He resisted temptation. (Compare Genesis 39:7-9 with Luke 4:2-13; Hebrews 4:15.) (2) He suffered wrongfully. (See I Peter 2:22; Matthew 27:15-23.) Being wrongfully accused, Joseph was cast into prison, where the king's prisoners were kept. There he gained the favor of the keeper of the prison. It is plain that God allowed all these things for a definite purpose. Joseph was sold as a slave, but "the LORD was with Joseph" (Genesis 39:2). He was sent to prison, "but the LORD was with Joseph" (39:21). This should encourage every believer that no matter what the trial, the Lord will neither leave nor forsake those who trust Him (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5).

God's providence. Although they did not realize it, Joseph's enemies were only helping him toward his final destination: the king's palace! God can cause our enemies to escort us to the very place where He can use us best.

If we are thoroughly consecrated and completely given over into the hands of the Lord, and if we believe He is working out all things for our good, what could ever make us despair?

Lesson 49

Joseph

Part 3 – (Genesis 40-41)

I. Joseph in Prison (Chapter 40)

While Joseph was in prison, the king cast his chief butler and chief baker into prison, where they were put in Joseph's charge. One morning he found them both in a sad state of mind and inquired about the reason. Joseph set forth an ideal example in this situation, for although he was deeply in trouble himself, he did all he could to comfort others. Instead of soliciting their sympathy, he pointed them to God as the solution to their trouble. We are reminded of the words of the songwriter concerning Jesus: "He had no tears for his own grief, but shed drops of blood for mine." The overcoming Christian finds his joy in comforting others. Let us bear "one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

The Lord gave Joseph the interpretation of the two dreams. (See Genesis 40:9-13, 16-19.) True to his interpretation, the butler was restored to the king's palace, and the baker was slain. This incident also has a parallel in the life of Christ, for He, too, was "numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). Jesus was crucified between two thieves, the one being saved, and the other lost (Mark 15:27-28).

II. Joseph's Exaltation (Chapter 41)

Although the butler forgot Joseph, God did not forget him. He arranged for Joseph's deliverance by giving two dreams to Pharaoh, for which he found no interpretation. The search for an interpreter reminded the butler of Joseph, and he told the king of the two interpretations that were fulfilled exactly as Joseph had predicted. Joseph was hastily brought up out of the dungeon. He assured Pharaoh that *God* would give him an answer. Joseph claimed no credit whatever for the gift he possessed. This proves that God could use Joseph in spectacular ways and still receive all the honor and the credit. God would no doubt impart more spiritual gifts to His children if He could trust them to give Him the glory.

In the king's first dream, seven lean cattle ate up seven fat cattle. In the second dream, seven thin ears of corn ate up seven full ears. Joseph interpreted the dream to mean that there would be seven years of plentiful crops followed by seven years of severe famine. He advised Pharaoh to appoint a wise man to store the excess corn during the seven plentiful years to be used in time of famine. Pharaoh chose Joseph for this work, for he recognized that the Spirit of the Lord dwelt in him. Would to God that the officials of our country were chosen on these grounds!

Pharaoh exalted Joseph to the position of governor over all the land of Egypt. Weary years of waiting in humility were at last rewarded. He who humbles himself under the mighty hand of God will be exalted (Proverbs 18:12; James 4:10; I Peter 5:5, 10). The things that people design for our hurt, God can use for our good. (See Romans 8:28, 31.)

Joseph's faithfulness in the prison and his keeping in touch with God while in the midst of trial are the things that God used later for his deliverance. Our *future advancement* depends upon our living close to God in the *present testing times*. The Lord can use our most trying circumstances for our betterment and for the blessing of others. God in His wise providence can order even the small details of our lives.

Joseph, in pointing others to God as their true source of help, is characteristic of Christ, who was continually turning the attention of the people away from the flesh and to the Spirit of God. "I can of my own self do nothing" (John 5:30), He said, and again, "The Father that dwelleth in

me, he doeth the works" (John 14:10). (See also John 6:63.)

Man's treatment of Joseph was much different than God's treatment of him. Man sold him into slavery and put an innocent man in a dungeon. God delivered him from prison and lifted him to a position of honor. This same contrast is revealed in the life of Christ. Man disbelieved Him, mocked Him, and crucified Him. But God raised Him from the dead, exalted Him, and one day will cause every knee to bow before Him (Philippians 2:10). Thus Joseph's sufferings and later deliverance depict "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:11).

What a striking contrast in Joseph—a slave and a prisoner and later a ruler over all the land of Egypt! And what a contrast in the two appearances of Christ—He was first crucified and later He will rule the world in righteousness. Joseph's life is described in detail that we might get a perfect picture of the exaltation of the One who was despised and rejected of men.

III. Joseph's Bride

A most remarkable fact is that during the time of rejection by his brethren Joseph took *a Gentile bride*, Asenath, the daughter of a priest of On. After the Jews rejected Christ, He turned to the church, which is primarily Gentile, for a bridal company. (See Acts 15:14; 28:25-28.) Two sons were born to Joseph and Asenath: Ephraim and Manasseh.

IV. The Famine Strikes

A grievous famine spread over the land, and multitudes of people began to come for corn, but they could not buy directly from the king. They had to buy all their supplies *through Joseph*. Similarly, we can receive nothing except *through Christ*. (See John 5:39-40; 14:6, Philippians 4:19.) The Jews today who adhere to the teachings of the rabbis are continually seeking God, but because they refuse to seek Him *in Jesus*, they do not find Him.

Joseph is also a type of Christ in that he saved the world from physical death by supplying them with bread. Jesus became the Savior of the world from the second death, being Himself the "bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die" (John 6:48-51). The bread that Christ gave was *His flesh*, which He gave for the life of the world. Just as He broke the bread before He fed the five thousand, so the body of Christ had to be broken before it could give life. (See John 6:54-56; Luke 9:16; Hebrews 10:5,10.)

Joseph gathered so much corn that he could not count it all, "For it was without number" (Genesis 41:49). God's supplies for our needs, both physical and spiritual, are limitless!

Lesson 50

Joseph

Part 4 – (Genesis 42–50)

I. First Visit of Joseph's Brothers

When the famine became severe in the land of Canaan, Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt and sent ten of his sons to get a supply for the family. Benjamin, evidently now Jacob's favorite son, was kept at home "lest peradventure mischief befall him" (Genesis 42:1-4). The first time the brothers appeared before Joseph, they did not recognize him as the one whom they had sold as a slave, but they bowed before him as the ruler of the land. "And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him" (Genesis 42:8). Although Joseph recognized them and was deeply moved by their presence, he did not reveal himself to them during their first visit. (Neither did Christ's brethren, the Jews, recognize Him as their Messiah the first time He came to earth.)

Joseph's heart overflowed with love for his brothers, but he treated them harshly, accused them of being spies, and kept them in prison for three days. This treatment reminded them of what they had done to Joseph. Hiding their sin from Jacob had not silenced the voices of their conscience. In like manner, we cannot have peace of mind by hiding our sins from the eyes of humans. Only when we confess our sins and the Lord covers them with the blood can we experience true peace. One might ask, "How could Joseph treat the ones he loved so harshly?" When we see how this treatment brought them to a realization of their wickedness, we have a clearer understanding of God's dealings with sinners. Because of His love for the lost, He often allows calamities to come into their lives to awaken in them a true sense of guilt, which they must see before they can be saved.

II. Second Visit

Joseph held Simeon in Egypt and sent the other nine brothers to their father with the command for them to bring Benjamin back with them to Egypt. This caused Jacob much grief, and he saw nothing but evil in his misfortunes. Let us note his words in Genesis 42:36: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." The natural man cannot see a hidden blessing in his present trials. In reality the Lord was just preparing the way for one of the greatest family reunions in all the Word of God. How differently a spiritual person looks at his difficulties! Paul wrote from a Roman prison, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Philippians 1:12).

Because their supplies ran low, with no sign of the famine lifting, Jacob was forced to allow his sons to return to Egypt with Benjamin. When they attempted to return to Canaan with the grain, Joseph's silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack; and fearing that Benjamin would be slain, the brothers fell down before Joseph and begged for mercy. Their humble supplication overcame Joseph, and he revealed himself to them, saying, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt" (Genesis 45:4).

Jesus will likewise reveal Himself to His brethren, the Jews, when He appears the second time. However, it will take the harsh treatment of the Tribulation to bring them to the place where they will be willing to accept Christ. (See Isaiah 25:8-9; Joel 3:12, 16-17; Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7.) Benjamin was present the second time; even so, when Jesus reveals Himself at His second coming, "all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:25-27).

III. Joseph's Example

Joseph is an admirable example for the true Christian in his attitude toward his "misfortunes." At first his brethren were terrified in the presence of the one they had wronged. Joseph freely forgave them, saying, "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. . . . So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Genesis 45:5, 8). He had no trace of bitterness in his heart toward those who had caused him to suffer, but he "acknowledged the Lord in all his ways." The truth is here illustrated that God can cause even the wrath of humans to praise Him. (See Psalm 76:10.)

Joseph's life illustrates that we can become useful in the very place where we are tried. Let us note his words in Genesis 41:52: "For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." He could see how his affliction *worked for him*. (See II Corinthians 4:17; I Thessalonians 1:6-7.) David displayed the same attitude in Psalm 4:1: "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress." He realized that he had grown in the Lord while in the midst of trouble. Psalm 105:19 says concerning Joseph, "The word of the LORD tried him." God showed him that someday his brethren would bow down before him, and then circumstances came to pass that seemed to contradict all that God had spoken! God sometimes gives His children a definite assurance that He will answer a prayer, and then He steps back and allows events to shape themselves, which seem to the natural eye to make impossible the very thing He has promised. And so we, too, are tried by the Word of the Lord.

IV. Practical Lessons

We never can get God's best by taking our own way. God's way may seem hard at the time, but it leads to supreme happiness in the end. Joseph's own way would have been to stay with his father and mother. This is shown by the way he pleaded with his brothers. (See Genesis 42:21.) But if he had been allowed to have his own way, he never would have found the place of usefulness God had in store for him. (See Isaiah 55:9.)

Sinners must repent to receive forgiveness. Joseph's attitude seemed to be stern and harsh as long as the brothers acted as if they were without fault, but as soon as they humbly admitted their sin and cast themselves upon his mercy, he graciously revealed himself as a brother who freely forgave them and set them free. Those who "go about to establish their own righteousness" will never know the joy of salvation until they realize their lost condition and, like the sinner in the parable, cry out, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner."

V. Closing Scenes

Jacob was overjoyed in his old age when he found that his favorite son was still alive. At Joseph's invitation, Jacob and his entire household moved to the land of Egypt. Genesis 49 records the prophetic blessings that Jacob pronounced upon his sons. Genesis 49:10 records the most outstanding blessing: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah . . . until Shiloh come." It was through Judah that the Messianic line was to continue.

Questions on Lessons 41–50

Lesson 41

1. What special privileges were included in the birthright?
2. In what way is the sinner like Esau?
3. Could Esau buy back his birthright? How does this warn a sinner?
4. Can a saint lose his birthright? Support your answer with Scripture.

Lesson 42

1. Tell briefly how Jacob gained his brother's blessing.
2. What is the meaning of "the blessing" in this case?
3. Name two other incidents where blessings were pronounced on Israel.
4. What promise did Isaac give Esau? How was it fulfilled?
5. Why did Rebekah send Jacob away?

Lesson 43

1. Did Jacob deserve the blessing? What lesson does this teach us?
2. Was Rebekah right in contriving to get Jacob the blessing?
3. How did she suffer for what she did?
4. Describe Jacob's vision.
5. What is the significance of the ladder?
6. Where else in the Word do we read of a stone that was anointed with oil?
7. What vow did Jacob make?

Lesson 44

1. In what ways does Jacob's life at Haran parallel the condition of Israel in their present dispersion?
2. How was Jacob deceived by his uncle Laban?
3. Name the twelve sons of Jacob.
4. How did Jacob prosper in Haran?
5. Why did Jacob start for Canaan?
6. In what way did he leave his uncle's place?
7. What kept Laban from harming Jacob? What happened at Mizpah?

Lesson 45

1. What caused Jacob to realize his helplessness and call on God?
2. What did Jacob do in self-protection?
3. What is the importance of getting alone with God in prayer?
4. Why did the angel wrestle with Jacob?
5. What is the significance of Jacob's thigh being thrown out of joint?
6. Why did the angel ask Jacob his name?
7. What name did the angel give Jacob, and why?
8. Describe Jacob's meeting with Esau.

Lesson 46

1. In what two ways is the study of the life of Joseph profitable?
2. What difference is there between the sufferings of Joseph and those of his father, Jacob?
3. What New Testament truth is suggested Joseph's being especially loved by his father and hated by his brothers?

4. What significance can we see in Joseph's being mistreated at the very time he went to seek his brothers' welfare?
5. Describe Joseph's dream, which aroused his brothers' jealousy.
6. What did this dream signify?

Lesson 47

1. What New Testament truth is suggested by Joseph's being cast into the pit but taken out again?
2. How much money did Joseph's brothers receive upon selling Joseph? How does this parallel the life of Christ?
3. How did the brothers plan to cover up their wickedness?
4. What description do we find concerning Jesus, which is suggested by Joseph's coat being dipped in blood?
5. What is the meaning of the stained raiment in Isaiah 63:1-6? Give Scripture to support your answer.
6. What two kinds of "wine" are spoken of in the Scriptures?
7. Contrast the two vines in the New Testament.

Lesson 48

1. In what way did the law of sowing and reaping work in the life of Jacob? What showed Jacob's unbelief?
2. How did God bless Joseph while working for Potiphar?
3. In what two ways does Joseph's life, while working in Potiphar's house, parallel that of Christ?
4. Were Joseph's enemies permitted to do him harm?

Lesson 49

1. What good example did Joseph set in his attitude toward his fellow prisoners?
2. Why was God willing to use Joseph in such spectacular ways, such as to interpret the dream of a king?
3. What type do we find in Joseph's sufferings and later deliverance?
4. What is the significance of his taking a Gentile bride?
5. How did he become the savior of his family? How does this typify Christ?

Lesson 50

1. Did his brothers recognize Joseph at first? Explain the parallel with Christ.
2. Contrast Jacob's attitude toward his grief with that of the apostle Paul.
3. What possible type do we find in Joseph's revelation of himself to his brethren during their second visit?
4. What was Joseph's attitude toward his misfortunes?
5. How did the "Word of the Lord" try him?
6. Through which son of Jacob did the Messianic line continue?

Lesson 51

Exodus

Part 1

Setting

The word *exodus* means "departure" or "going out." It is the title of the second book written by Moses.

Many years elapsed between the scenes of the closing chapter of Genesis and the introduction of Exodus. After Joseph and his generation were dead, there arose a king (pharaoh) in Egypt who "knew not Joseph." Seeing that the Israelites had multiplied greatly and were becoming a mighty people, the king commanded that the male Hebrew children be killed, lest Israel join his enemies in some future war. Instead of the seventy people who came down to Egypt, Israel had now become a great multitude.

In Pharaoh's command to destroy all the baby boys, we see another satanic attempt to destroy the seed of the woman and thus frustrate God's plan of redemption. Many similar attempts followed: Haman's plot to destroy all the Jews, Herod's slaughter of the baby boys, and finally the crucifixion of Christ Himself.

Purpose

The Book of Exodus is known as the book of redemption because it sets forth God's plan of redemption for the soul through His deliverance of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. Pharaoh typifies Satan, who is reluctant to let his subjects go, and the bondage of the Israelites is typical of the bondage of the sinner. Indeed, we can trace the sinner from his lost, undone condition to his realization of his need of the Savior to his deliverance from the shackles of Satan. Then we can see, in type, many experiences that prepare him for heaven.

Israel now entered the "smoking furnace" that God revealed to Abraham. (See Genesis 15:17; Deuteronomy 4:20.) It appeared to be a move toward prosperity when they first went down into Egypt, but they were out of the place God had promised them for an inheritance, and consequently their prosperity could not continue.

Similarly, those who remain in the world may seem to do well for a time, as God is longsuffering and lets the rain fall on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). However, Satan's territory, though dazzling to the eyes, is dangerous ground and will in time lead to sorrow and to burdens too heavy to bear.

General Divisions

The first fifteen chapters of Exodus describe Israel in Egypt. The next three chapters tell of Israel in the wilderness. The rest of the book contains God's dealings with Israel at Mount Sinai.

We can also divide the life of Moses into three stages. He spent the first forty years of his life in Egypt, where he had the advantage of all the worldly wisdom that the kingdom had to offer. The second forty years he dwelt in the backside of the desert in the land of Midian, being instructed of the Lord. His mother's teaching, no doubt, became more real to him than ever before, since he had ample opportunity for meditation. He spent the last forty years of his life as the leader of Israel, taking them from the cruel life of bondage to the border of the Promised Land.

Lesson 52

Exodus

Part 2

I Corinthians 10:1-11 clearly shows that the events in the Book of Exodus are types, shadows, and examples for us. Notice especially verse 11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples."

While the Israelites groaned under the weight of their heavy burdens, the Lord was preparing a deliverer for them. Romans 5:8 says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." No sooner had the weight of sin descended upon fallen man, than preparations began for a Redeemer through the "seed of the woman." (See Genesis 3:15.)

One might question why the Lord allowed His people to be afflicted so heavily under cruel and unrelenting hands, but God first had to get them to see their *need of a deliverer*. If everything had continued as at the first, they would have been satisfied to dwell in Egypt, far from the land of God's covenant promise to Abraham. So it is that before a sinner will cry out to God for deliverance from sin and start for the "land of promise," he must first see the bondage he is in while serving Satan. (See Isaiah 26:9.) Just as there was nothing Israel could do to free themselves until God sent a deliverer, so it is also true that there is nothing a sinner can do to save himself. He must rely entirely upon Jesus, the great deliverer.

We now come to Moses, who typifies Christ as the One who frees from the bondage of Satan. "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (II Corinthians 1:10). "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thessalonians 1:10). (See also Luke 4:18.)

Moses came from the tribe of Levi, the tribe destined to become the priests of Israel. Acts 7:37 confirms that Moses is a type of Christ: "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." (See Acts 3:22-24.) Later, Stephen demonstrated that Moses, whom the Jewish leaders of his day reverenced, prophesied of Jesus, whom they despised.

In the actions of the mother of Moses, we see faith triumphing over every *natural* circumstance. She became an example for all time of faith in a *supernatural* God. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents . . . and they were not afraid of the king's commandment" (Hebrews 11:23). Proverbs 29:25 states, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe." God rewarded their faith by protecting the baby as it lay in the tiny ark on the banks of the river. One cannot think of a more dangerous place in the natural than the crocodile-infested Nile! Not only was Moses' life spared, but divine providence placed him in the palace of the king, where he had access to all the learning of Egypt (Acts 7:22). Nevertheless, the teaching his mother gave him concerning God's dealings with Israel was the greatest factor in the molding of Moses' life.

God's promise to Abraham that in the "fourth generation" (Genesis 15:16) He would lead His people out of Egypt must have especially appealed to Moses. This teaching caused Moses at the age of forty to make a choice that exemplifies the choice of one who leaves the world to follow Christ. (See Hebrews 11:24-26.) Moses decided against the riches of the kingdom and chose the true riches of a walk with God. No one ever gave up wealth or position for the gospel's sake without great spiritual gain. Moses' choice was a result of his faith. Because he believed God's promise to Abraham, he was willing to lay down the glory of an earthly palace and identify himself with a nation of bondservants.

When Moses had grown to manhood, he went to see how his brethren, the Hebrews, were faring. When he saw an Egyptian beating one of his own people, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

The next day he saw two Hebrew men striving together. This time he tried with kindness to reconcile the two. However, his efforts of mediation were spurned, and the one who did the wrong asked, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?" (Exodus 2:14).

The first incident proves that Moses had started out ahead of God's will to lead the people, so quite naturally he met with failure. "For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not" (Acts 7:25). His rash action demonstrated that he was not ready to perform the task God had for him to do. It takes preparation as well as a call to be able to perform the service of God. Moses had yet to learn that it was by the staff and not the sword—by meekness and not wrath—that God was to accomplish His purpose.

The second incident shows that Israel was not ready to be delivered! They had not suffered enough to be willing to take outside counsel. Likewise, a self-satisfied or independent spirit is not in a condition to receive help from the Lord.

We find another parallel to Christ in that the first time Moses appeared to his brethren he was rejected. Christ's brethren, the Jews, rejected Jesus the first time He came. John said, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (John 1:10).

During the time Moses was rejected by his brethren, he took a Gentile bride. Acts 28:25-28 gives an account of Paul turning to the Gentiles. "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

Speaking of the fall of the Jews, Paul told the Roman Christians, "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy" (Romans 11:11). (See also II Corinthians 11:2).

Later, after Moses was fully prepared for his mission and returned to his people, his brethren accepted him. Likewise, the Jews will accept Jesus as the Messiah at His second coming. Paul described the return of the Jews to the Lord in Romans 11:24-25. Their acknowledgment of Jesus as the true God is given prophetically in Isaiah 25:9, and their repentance is prophesied in Zechariah 12:10.

Lesson 53
The Call of Moses

As Moses was watching his father-in-law's sheep, he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to Mount Horeb. Moses saw a burning bush there, but it was not consumed. When he turned aside to see this great sight, God spoke to him from the midst of the bush.

What a fitting symbol in view of the work God had for Moses to do! The burning bush is a good illustration of Israel in Egypt—oppressed and under heavy persecution, but not consumed. The reason they were not consumed was that God was in the midst of His people.

The Jews of today are still suffering but are miraculously preserved as a people. What is true of Israel in a natural sense is also true of the church in a spiritual sense. The church has continued to thrive through the centuries amid the flames of the severest persecution. The church is purified (Daniel 12:10), rather than consumed, by trials, for the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

God commanded Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). In that day, to remove one's shoes was more than simply a sign of reverence. According to one of the best commentaries, it was "a confession of personal defilement, and conscious unworthiness to stand in the presence of unspotted holiness." God's presence always makes the natural man feel his weakness and unworthiness to partake of the grace He so freely offers. We must lay aside whatever separates us from being "in the dust" before God if God is to reveal Himself and His will for our lives. It was when Isaiah saw that he was a man of unclean lips that the angel touched his mouth with a burning coal from the altar, and the Lord said, "Go, and tell this people" (Isaiah 6:1-9). It was when Job repented in the dust, despising himself, that the Lord healed him and gave him twice as much as he had before. (See Job 42:5-6, 10.)

The Lord introduced Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, assuring Moses that He had heard Israel's cry and seen their oppression. He then informed Moses that He wanted to send him before Pharaoh that he might lead Israel out of Egypt. He made it clear that His purpose was not only to bring them *out of Egypt* but to also bring them *into Canaan*. Too many people today have been delivered from their conviction of sin through repentance but have not yet been *brought into the "good land" of the Spirit-filled life.*

One might be somewhat surprised at Moses' unwillingness to fulfill this call, since it was the desire of his heart to see God's promise fulfilled. His nature, however, was no different from that of many people today. First he attempted to run ahead of God. Then he lagged behind. No doubt his first failure had disheartened him. The life of Moses should show the gospel worker that though he may have made some colossal blunder at the outset of his ministry, he can still accomplish much by God's help if he will obey His call.

Moses' excuses—"Who am I? . . . What shall I say? . . . They will not believe me. . . . I am not eloquent"—were all met and overcome by the God who made man's mouth. "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exodus 4:12). God never calls someone without giving him the ability to fulfill that call.

Lesson 54
Before the Plagues

Even after Moses' rod turned into a serpent and his leprous hand was healed, he still showed reluctance to obey God's command. The Lord's anger was kindled against him, and He commissioned Aaron, the brother of Moses, to be his spokesman.

Then Moses took his wife and two children and started for Egypt. Exodus 4:24 says, "The LORD met him, and sought to kill him." Since the circumcision of one of Moses' sons immediately follows this incident, it appears that some affliction came upon Moses, bringing him near to death, to remind him that he had neglected to carry out God's command, which was the token of the covenant God had made with Abraham. (See Genesis 17:9-14.) When God chooses a leader, He expects this leader to be obedient to the commandments of God before he goes before the people.

The Lord sent Aaron to meet Moses, and together they went to the elders of Israel and explained their mission. This time "the people believed" (Exodus 4:31). How happy they must have been, knowing that God had sent someone to plead their cause! There is always joy in believing God's Word.

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh's palace to deliver their message: "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness" (Exodus 5:1). Pharaoh was defiant: "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go" (verse 2). As one writer said, "Pharaoh found out who the Lord was before He got through!" Those who do not know God are bound to find out some day who He is. How much better it is to know Him in His mercy than to learn of His power through His wrath!

The result of this first interview brought a severe test to the Israelites, for the king only increased their burdens. They went to Pharaoh, asking for mercy, but Pharaoh refused. When their own efforts and the efforts of Moses and Aaron failed, they were in a position to know that if any help came it would have to be from the Lord. People's efforts to save themselves are as vain as an attempt to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps. Salvation comes not from what the individual can do but from what the Lord can do.

God encouraged Moses in this desperate situation, assuring him that Pharaoh's strength was nothing in comparison with His divine power. In Exodus 6:3 God revealed for the first time the true significance of His name Jehovah. Jehovah was God's redemptive name in the Old Testament. Under this name, He proved Himself to be Israel's great Redeemer. Christ, our Redeemer, still carries this name, for *Jesus* means "Jehovah Savior."

In God's dealings with Pharaoh, His mercy preceded His judgment. In Exodus 7:8-10 the Lord clearly demonstrated His power before He sent any of the plagues. The magicians, through the power of Satan, imitated part of the miracles, but in doing so they displayed that their power was only for destruction, not for deliverance. The magicians could turn the rod into a serpent but could not turn it back into a rod again. Satan's work increases suffering but cannot allay it. They turned water into blood but could not restore it. Their attempt to imitate God's power shows that trying to imitate the Christian life without possessing Christ is only another of Satan's methods to deceive. Satan is a master at the game of counterfeit. If he cannot get a soul to *oppose* Christianity, he is satisfied to get him to *impersonate* Christianity.

Lesson 55

The Plagues

Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart

Because Pharaoh hardened his heart, the Lord sent ten great plagues to bring about the deliverance of His people. Some would have us believe that God foreordained Pharaoh to harden his heart, and therefore, the king was in no way responsible for his actions. However, taking the Scripture as a whole, we find that a person's own free will is the cause of either his downfall or his salvation. (See II Thessalonians 2:10-12.) Of course, God, being omniscient, knows the end from the beginning. But His foreknowledge of a person's reaction to one of His messengers does not force that person to a decision contrary to his own will. The same sun that melts wax will harden clay. The difference is in the elements of the object and not in the sun. The same message of salvation will cause some to become hardened, while other hearts will be melted under the preaching of the Word. Those who decide against the message become hardened, while those who accept are softened. (See Exodus 7:13; 8:15, 19.)

Pharaoh's two confessions that he was a sinner shows that he was responsible for his actions. (See Exodus 9:27; 10:16.) He realized that Moses' God was the true God and that he was a transgressor of God's command, but he still refused to yield.

Purpose of the Plagues

God sent the following ten plagues:

1. Blood
2. Frogs
3. Lice
4. Flies
5. Murrain (disease of cattle)
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death

In studying the customs of the Egyptians, we find that some of the objects with which they were plagued were things that they worshiped. The plagues showed the superiority of the true God over the false ones that they reverenced. A reliable commentary tells us that the Nile was their patron god; moreover, their god Ptha was represented with a frog's head. The ox and the cow were objects of superstition, and in some places temples were built in their honor. God proved to them that He had power over the ox and the cow.

Since rain, hail, thunder, and lightening were very rare there, "such as hath not been in Egypt" (Exodus 9:18), they could see that Jehovah had power over all of nature. This, too, was a blow to their superstitions, for they worshiped the god of nature. The miracle was made even greater in that no trace of the storm was found in Goshen. The Egyptians thought the sun had power in itself and should be worshiped. Jehovah darkened the sun, proving His sovereign power. Even today, God may have to take away objects on which we center our affection to prove that if we place our trust in anything but the power of God, we are trusting in a vain thing.

Only the first three plagues affected Israel. Then God put a division between His people and the Egyptians. (See Exodus 8:22-23.) Likewise, in the end time, the church will be affected by only a part of the end-time events. The Rapture will then divide them from the world.

Lesson 56

Pharaoh Tries to Compromise

When Pharaoh saw the plagues becoming more and more severe until they were intolerable, he began to realize that sooner or later he would have to loosen his hold upon the Israelites. Torn between this realization and an unwillingness to lose his slaves, he made four attempts at compromise. When Satan sees that he is bound to lose his hold on some soul, his last efforts are to get that soul to compromise with him instead of wholly obeying God's Word. To understand Satan's methods is to be fortified against him. Therefore we shall consider Pharaoh's proposals:

1. We find his first suggestion in Exodus 8:25: "And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land." He was willing for them to worship their God if they would only remain in Egypt. Satan would have a sinner to believe that he can "turn over a new leaf," and that God will accept his worship even if he still remains a partaker of the things of the world. Satan knows that such a "convert" can be an effective stumbling block to others. How the enemy of our souls hates separation! (See II Corinthians 6:17-18; Revelation 18:4.) Israel's separation from Egypt and their redemption were synonymous. God could not redeem them from the power of the king without taking them away from the country.

2. When Moses steadfastly refused, Pharaoh offered another concession: "And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away" (Exodus 8:28). If they insisted on leaving Egypt, he would have them stay so close to the border that he would be able to conquer them again after their religious fervor had cooled. If one insists on taking his stand for God, Satan would have him live, act, and talk so much like the people of the world that his light would be concealed. The only safe place for the Christian is "far away" from Egypt, acting in such direct contrast to the world that people will see our good works and glorify the Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). The person who drives his car as close to the edge as possible usually lands in the ditch.

3. In Exodus 10:8-11 Pharaoh still tried to compromise. He said that the men could go, but he wanted them to leave the children behind. Satan will whisper to young people that the worship of God is not for them. If he can get them to spend the best part of their lives in sin, they are much less likely to be saved when they are old—if, indeed, they live to see old age! Many young people who planned to get saved some day, after they were too old to enjoy the pleasures of the world, have been unexpectedly snatched out of the world, unprepared to meet God. Parents must never neglect the spiritual welfare of their children, lest when the Lord comes they are left behind!

4. When all his pleas had failed, Pharaoh made his final attempt to keep at least a partial hold on the Israelites. "Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed" (Exodus 10:24). Satan would have one believe that he can worship God with his heart and not with his substance. But God has said, "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase" (Proverbs 3:9). Some have tried to stay saved and leave God out of their business matters but have found such a course impossible. No, the flocks and herds must go along! If Pharaoh could have kept the flocks, he could have felt reasonably sure that they would have come back after them. Satan does not want us to put our treasure into the gospel work, for he knows full well that "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

Lesson 57

The Passover

Nature of the Final Plague

The last plague, the death of the firstborn, introduces us to the Passover. God promised that after this plague the Israelites would be set free (Exodus 11:1). In verses 4-6 Moses described the nature of the plague: "And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more."

Types Found in the Passover

Exodus 12 contains a gold mine of truth; it is full of significance for us. As death was the last of the plagues, so the second death will be the last and final judgment upon those who reject Christ. God's method of escape for the Israelites portrays exactly His plan for our escape from the second death. The key to the typology of this chapter is found in I Corinthians 5:7, for as Israel's redemption depended upon the blood of a lamb, so ours depends upon the blood of Christ: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

1. The Lord changed Israel's calendar. The month in which they were delivered was henceforth to be the beginning of their religious year. It was the month Abib, which generally corresponds to the month of April on our calendar. The life of Israel as a nation began the moment they escaped from Egypt (verses 1-2). Likewise we just begin to live in God's sight when we have escaped the bondage of Satan. All the years spent in sin are wasted years. No wonder the sinner is unhappy, and "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57:21). He has not begun to live yet! The person who accepts Christ experiences the dawn of a new day.

2. The Israelites proved their faith by their actions. They had to manifest their faith in God by their actions. Biblical faith will always be demonstrated by one's conduct. (See James 2:17-20.) Many who have refused to obey the Word have justified themselves on the grounds that the Bible says if we "believe" on the Lord Jesus we will be saved. True enough! But he who believes on the One who said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3) would not expect to do anything but perish unless he repented! To merely believe in a historical Christ is not biblical faith and, therefore, will not produce biblical salvation. Scriptural faith demands obedience and will lead us into a Spirit-filled life. (See John 7:38-39.)

3. A lamb became their substitute (Exodus 12:5). Out of their flock they were to choose a lamb without blemish. If they carried out every instruction, God would accept the death of this lamb as a substitute for the death of the firstborn son. The penalty for breaking the laws of God is death (Romans 6:23), and since everyone has broken His laws in some way or another, the death sentence has been pronounced over everyone (Romans 3:23). The only possible escape lies in that God provided a Lamb without blemish whose death He will accept as a substitute for the one who will trust in it and live. "Ye were not redeemed with . . . silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18-19). Christ was without spot, for He knew no sin. (See Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29; I Peter 3:18; Revelation 5:12.) No wonder the group of the redeemed is called "the church of the firstborn" (Hebrews 12:23), for Jesus took the place of the firstborn in death.

4. The lamb was kept four days. They were to choose the Passover lamb on the tenth day of the month but to keep it until the fourteenth day to be killed. Jesus was foreordained before

the foundation of the world to be offered as a lamb (I Peter 1:20), but in the plan of God, He was "kept" until the fullness of time to be offered on Calvary.

5. The Israelites applied the blood (verse 7). They were to sprinkle the blood above the door and on either side. No blood was to be put on the threshold, for the blood of Jesus is not to be trampled under the feet of people. Hebrews 10:29 speaks of those who have trodden underfoot the Son of God and have treated His blood as an unholy thing. When the death angel passed through the country, he made no distinction between good people and bad people. It made no difference whether they were highly respected or in grave disrepute. The blood made all the difference.

There is a truth here that strikes a blow at self-righteousness. The Lord did not say, "When I see what a good life you have lived," or "When I see that you have made some good resolutions," but He plainly said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). The question is not "Have you lived a good life?" but rather "Have you had the blood applied to your heart through the new birth?" (See Romans 3:24-25.)

6. The lamb was roasted and eaten (Exodus 12:8). The lamb had to be roasted. Likewise, Christ had to endure the fire of God's wrath on the cross before we could feed upon Him. There was a distinct purpose in both the blood and the flesh of the lamb. The Israelites were saved from death by the blood *but received strength for the journey* by feeding upon the flesh. This reminds us of the words of Jesus in John 6:53, 55: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. . . . For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Christ's blood was shed to deliver us from the second death, but His body was also broken for our healing. (See Isaiah 53:5.)

7. Not a bone was to be broken (Exodus 12:46). This harmonizes with the prophecy in Psalm 34:20: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken." It seemed very unlikely that this prophecy concerning Christ would be fulfilled, for it was the custom of the Romans to break the legs of those who were crucified to hasten their death. We find in John 19:32-36, however, that the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves, but when they came to Christ and "saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. . . . For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."

8. They were not to let anything remain until morning (Exodus 12:10). They were to burn up any of the lamb that they did not eat. If they had allowed parts of the lamb to remain uneaten, it would have decayed, and the prophecy concerning Christ is clear: "My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:9-10). The resurrection was to take place before the body of Christ would see corruption (Acts 2:31).

9. All leaven was to be put away from their houses (Exodus 12:8, 15). Throughout the Scriptures, leaven is a type of sin. The Lord will not tolerate sin in His blood-washed people. Christ came not only to deliver us from the penalty of sin, but from sin itself. In Luke 12:1 Christ warned us to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. I Corinthians 5:8 speaks of the "leaven of malice and wickedness" and admonishes the saints to keep the feast with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (See II Chronicles 29:5, 15-18; II Corinthians 7:1.)

10. They were to be fully dressed (Exodus 12:11). They were to eat the lamb with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staffs in their hands. In other words, they were not to wait until they were urged to leave to *get* ready, but they were to *be* ready—to be completely dressed for the journey. Even though the hour was late, they were not sleeping, as the foolish virgins were in Matthew 25. The foolish virgins hastened off to get ready, but only the wise who were already prepared went into the marriage celebration. As the Hebrews did not wear shoes indoors, it was necessary to put them on in order to be prepared for the journey. God's people, while strangers and pilgrims in the earth (Hebrews 11:13), are to be well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15).

11. They were to establish a memorial of the Passover. Each year they were to have a Passover feast as a memorial of their deliverance from slavery and death in the land of Egypt. (See

Exodus 12:14, 25-27.) God did not want them to forget; neither did He want succeeding generations to be ignorant of this great deliverance. The Lord has also given us a memorial of the slaying of the real Passover Lamb, which resulted in our deliverance from the second death. That memorial is the Lord's Supper. The eating of the bread is in memory of the body of Christ, which was broken for us, and the drinking of the "fruit of the vine" is in memory of the blood that was shed for us. "This do in remembrance of me," Jesus said. (See Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26.)

The Spoiling of the Egyptians

True to the word of the Lord, there was a great cry throughout the land of Egypt, for at midnight the death angel slew the firstborn of the Egyptians, from the captives in the dungeon to the house of Pharaoh himself (Exodus 12:29-30). When we remember that it was the custom in Egypt for the family to wail aloud over the death of a relative, we can easily imagine the horror of the cries that echoed throughout the land. No one could get help from his neighbor, for he, too, was in deep sorrow. Alas, they realized their mistake too late! This reminds us of the "last prayer meeting" when the door of God's mercy is closed and wicked people cry out too late to escape death. A great weeping and wailing will echo throughout the land. (See Proverbs 1:24-29; Revelation 6:15-17.)

The Mixed Multitude

In Exodus 12:38 we read that a "mixed multitude went up also with them." No doubt some of the Hebrews had intermarried with the Egyptians, and consequently there were some foreigners among them. We find in Numbers 11:4 that this crowd was instrumental in causing discord among the Israelites. Those in the church who pretend to be saved but still hold on to the vanities of the world are bound to cause trouble. The unregenerated church member makes up our "mixed multitude."

Lesson 58

How the Passover Combats False Doctrine

Modernism

Modernism is spreading at an alarming rate throughout Christendom. Since its teachings are so deceptive, the Christian worker must arm himself against it. Modernism teaches that salvation lies in imitating the virtues of Christ. Proponents go to great lengths to describe His perfect example, but they deny the necessity of His blood to save. Exodus 12 can be used to instruct such a person.

Let us suppose that some in the camp of Israel had "modernistic" inclinations. Not for a moment would such a person refuse to select a lamb from his flock. He would be careful to choose one without any spot or blemish. For the one who is to live an acceptable life must, of course, have a perfect example to follow. But since he would see no need for the *shedding of blood*, he would tie the innocent lamb close to his house and instruct his household concerning its virtues. He would tell his family that they must imitate its purity and become as meek and gentle as a lamb. When his family accepted his teaching and began to mend their ways, he would develop a feeling of security, being very proud that his family lived a more righteous life than his neighbors.

But when the death angel approached his house, the angel would not inquire concerning the lives of its members, but he would look for only one thing: the blood on the door post! The Lord commanded the death angel to spare the families who had applied the blood but to slay the firstborn in every home where it did not appear. The angel would ignore the living lamb, though it was ever so perfect. How plain it is, then, that it is not the perfect example of Christ that saves us from death, but the shedding of His blood. (See Matthew 26:28; Romans 3:24-25; Hebrews 9:22; I Peter 1:19.)

Universalism

Universalists teach that since Christ died for every soul, everyone will be saved. A favorite verse of Scripture for them is, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22). We agree that all who are *in Christ* shall live, but those who reject Him shall die. Let us suppose that one of the Israelites was inclined to believe as the universalists do today. He may have boasted in that he not only chose a spotless lamb but also believed it necessary to shed its blood for the salvation of his family. Feeling secure in that the lamb had been slain, he assured his family that all would be well. But since he did not believe it necessary to have the blood *applied* in order to be saved, he neglected to sprinkle the blood upon the door, and at midnight his firstborn lay dead in the house. Although Jesus was slain for every soul, *the blood must be applied* through the new birth to accomplish our salvation.

Unconditional Eternal Security

Another group teaches that it is necessary to repent, but after receiving Christ, there is no possibility of being lost, no matter how great a transgressor one might become. Such a person would have gone further than the universalist; he would have applied the blood, but believing that his future life had nothing to do with his salvation, he would have neglected to feed on the lamb

to gain strength for the journey. He would have seen no reason for putting shoes on his feet or girding his loins. The death angel would have passed his house, but when the rest of the crowd left the country in haste, he would then begin to hunt around for his shoes, his staff, and his traveling clothes. While he was thus engaged, the Israelites would have gone off and left him far behind. Being too weak from lack of food to catch up, he would have remained in bondage in Egypt after all! The fate of backsliders is shown in Matthew 10:22; Romans 11:22; Hebrews 3:6; Jude 11-13; Revelation 2:4-5.

Lesson 59

Victory at the Red Sea

When the Israelites took their leave of Egypt, the Lord mapped out their journey in a way that may have seemed very strange to them. There is a short and easy way to reach Canaan, but God did not permit them to go that way. "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea" (Exodus 13:17-18).

What a valuable lesson we learn here of taking God's way in preference to our own! If we could go our own way, we would choose the shortest way, the easiest route. But God curbs our own plans, for He knows the pitfalls along that path, which our finite eyes cannot perceive. The Lord saw that if these people, used to nothing but slavery, had suddenly encountered war, they would have become discouraged to the point of going back to Egypt. God's way, though it may seem to be the hardest at the time, is always best after all.

The Lord in His wisdom had much to teach the Israelites to prepare them to drive the enemy out of Canaan. He not only desired that they occupy the Promised Land, but He also wanted them to be an example before other nations of a people led and directed by the only true and living God. If they were to fulfill this high calling, they had to understand God's plan and learn obedience to His every command.

God has a higher plan for His people today than that they should merely escape a sinner's punishment. He wants to fashion them into His fit representatives in the earth, demonstrating to a lost world what a life can be like that is wholly subject to the will of God. Following God's plan requires that we take time with Him, as Mary did, and sit at His feet and learn His ways.

After the Israelites left, Pharaoh decided that it was folly to have given in, and he made hasty preparations to pursue them. Perhaps he foresaw financial ruin in having to hire workers to do all the work that the Hebrews had done. The thought of permanently losing two million slaves was too much for him, so he sent his chariots to overtake the Israelites as they camped by the sea.

What a perilous place God's people were in! They had been led into what looked like a three-cornered death trap: a mountain on one side, the Red Sea on the other, and Pharaoh's army just behind. Their first reaction was to cry out against Moses, but Moses cried to the Lord. Which course do we take when found in acute distress? Do we murmur about our fate or cry unto the Lord? The former leads to bitterness and discouragement; the latter, however, leads to certain victory.

God's answer to Moses was, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (Exodus 14:15). God always has a way of escape. As Moses stretched out his rod, a strong wind piled the water up on either side, and the people passed over on dry land. The cloud that had been leading them went behind them, hiding them from their enemies. What a different appearance it presented to the Egyptians! "The pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these" (Exodus 14:19-20).

This is a good illustration of how the same manifestations of the Spirit of God that cause great rejoicing to the saints are often scoffed at by sinners. The united prayers of a great company of people sound like music in the ears of those who love to pray, but they sound like folly to the unsaved. The difference is in which side we are on. The natural man cannot understand the things of God, for they are foolishness to him (I Corinthians 2:14).

As soon as they could see the path ahead, the Egyptians pursued after their prey. But Moses

again stretched out his rod, and the waters closed in upon the Egyptians, drowning the entire host. This victory was followed by a great outburst of praise. Miriam and the other women played their timbrels and danced before the Lord. Dancing is a sign of victory and often occurs today among God's Spirit-filled people.

Some who have gone to the prayer room to pray for a blessing wonder why they have gone away without it, while others who went to pray for someone else could scarcely contain the blessing that was poured out upon their souls when their prayer was answered. The intercessors have found the secret that when one gets under a burden and prays through it, the blessing will surely follow.

Nevertheless, the Israelites did not keep up their songs of praise. Instead, they failed at the very first trial. It is one thing to praise God as we see the enemy overthrown, and quite another to patiently endure the toils and hardships of the road, constantly trusting God to make a way where there seems to be no way.

The sad fate of Pharaoh should be a solemn warning to every sinner who has continually hardened his heart against God. Pharaoh had one chance after another to repent and to acknowledge Jehovah as the true God. But he was determined to go his own way, and his own way led to destruction and death. Louis Banks wrote:

> Pharaoh was a martyr to hard-hearted rebellion toward God. The devil has a great many more martyrs than has Christ. Someone has well said that the world's crowns of roses are sharper than the crowns of thorns. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* is not a large book, but if ever the devil should get out a *Book of Martyrs* there is no library in the world that would be big enough to hold it. And what a contrast between Christ's martyrs and the devil's! No man ever yet gave his life for duty in Christ's name without honor.

But those who die in the service of Satan go down in shame to a Christ-less grave. Therefore, we must not harden our hearts; we must not determine to have our own way. Instead, let us acknowledge Jesus as the true Savior and prove our belief in Him by living an unconditionally surrendered life.

Pharaoh's sad end reminds us of Proverbs 29:1. Those who are often reproved and harden their hearts against God shall suddenly be cut off without remedy.

Lesson 60
Israel at Marah

In Exodus 15:22 the Israelites had journeyed three days through the wilderness without finding water to quench their thirst. Finally in the distance they beheld the sparkle of water. No doubt they hastened their steps to reach it, but they were greatly disappointed to find the water so bitter that they could not drink it. Instead of encouraging one another with the great miracles they had seen the Lord perform, they murmured against Moses. But Moses cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree, which when cast into the water made the water sweet.

This striking incident has in it a pointed message, both for saints and sinners. To saints we would say that this incident marks the beginning of Israel's losing out with God. In Psalm 106 we have a fine commentary on the events that happened to the Israelites both in Egypt and in the wilderness. In verses 9-12 David described how the Lord made a path through the Red Sea, redeeming them from the hand of the enemy. When the waters covered their enemies and there was not one left, then they believed His words and sang His praise. But in verse 13 he revealed the first step of their downfall: "They soon forgat his works." No matter how many miracles we have seen, and no matter how many times the Lord has marvelously answered prayer, in the natural we are prone to forget God's mighty works and to allow our minds to dwell only upon the serious predicament we are in. Looking to circumstances and not to God's promises causes murmuring. Since forgetting God's promises and His works causes spiritual failure, how much more do we need the Holy Spirit to bring to our remembrance the teachings of His Word!

If Moses had merely cut the tree down but left it lying upon the ground, the waters would have remained bitter. It had to be cast into the pool before the miracle was performed. This is another blow to the teaching that since Christ died for all, all will be saved. It was not only necessary for Christ to die (be cut down), but He must also be received into an individual's life before a transformation can take place.

To sinners, this narrative illustrates the way in which Christ saves and transforms the lives of the lost. The pool of Marah is a good picture of the bitterness that is in the lives of unsaved people. Those who have gone from house to house in personal work have many times found in each home a broken heart. Perhaps the bitterness has been caused by hopes that have been crushed and now lay in ashes. Perhaps it is financial ruin, a serious accident, or even a death in the home, while those left behind have no hope of a life beyond physical death. Christ is the tree that has been cut down. There is no life so bitter that Jesus cannot sweeten it. When we cast Him into the bitter pool of our life, we find that He gives joy for sorrow, peace for pain, and beauty for ashes.

The most bitter thing each soul has to face is death. But if we receive Christ into the heart, the sting is taken out of death itself. The thing that causes death to sting is the sin that dwells in the heart. (See I Corinthians 15:56.) When Christ comes in to the repentant heart, His blood blots out every sin stain, removing the very sting of death. Those who live godly lives depart from this life with victory, for Jesus has made sweetness out of what otherwise would have been a bitterness.

Lesson 61
Israel at Elim

The Waters of Elim

"And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters" (Exodus 15:27). Here we have a placid picture of a time of refreshing on their wilderness journey. Christ is our Elim, for in Him we find rest and refreshing. (See Acts 3:19.) What a contrast was the green vegetation of Elim to the dry desert sands over which the Israelites had been traveling! And what a contrast there is between the sweet blessing of God's presence and the world through which we are traveling. It is a dry and thirsty land where no water is (Psalm 63:1).

At Elim they found an abundant supply of everything they needed. Water helped produce all the vegetation and made it possible for the seventy palm trees with their luscious fruit to grow in this desert region. We will find all we need in Christ, an abundant provision for every need. (See John 4:14.) The Holy Ghost causes rivers of living water to flow from our innermost being (John 7:38-39), and the presence of the Holy Spirit makes possible a life of fruitfulness. The Israelites' enjoyment of Elim was only temporary, but the one who has Christ on the inside can daily be refreshed with food for the soul. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Psalm 92:12). One who is led by the Spirit is "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season" (Psalm 1:3).

Manna from Heaven

When the cloud moved on, the Israelites journeyed on to the wilderness of Sin, which lay between Elim and Sinai. Again they forgot God's abundant provision for them and murmured against Moses because they were hungry and had nothing to eat. They even wished to be back in Egypt. One commentator wrote, "When people wish themselves back in Egypt (a life of worldliness and sin), they forget both the bitterness of the old life and the blessings of the new."

The Lord manifested His patience and love toward the Israelites by promising to send them "bread from heaven." This was not only to supply their lack of food but also to "prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no" (Exodus 16:4). Therefore, He gave them certain laws concerning the gathering of the manna. They were to gather it fresh every morning, and on Friday they were to gather a double supply to last over the Sabbath.

The manna is a type of Christ who came from heaven, taking upon Himself a body of flesh, which He gave for the sins of the world. In referring to this incident Jesus said, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:48-51).

We should get a fresh supply of food for the soul every morning to gain strength to overcome every trial. If people ate as sparingly of natural food as they sometimes do of spiritual food, their bodies would become very weak indeed.

Paul also used the supply of manna as an illustration of the supply of our natural needs. He pleaded for the Corinthian church to send an offering to the church at Jerusalem. He reminded them, "He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack" (II Corinthians 8:15). We need not fear to give, for if we keep much, we will have nothing over, and if we give much, we will have no lack.

Lesson 62
Israel at Rephidim

The Smitten Rock

From Elim the Israelites journeyed on toward Rephidim, where they encountered new difficulties. (See Exodus 17:1.) This time they lacked water. Again, they met this trial with murmuring instead of faith. It seems that by this time they would have learned that an impossibility is the first stage of a miracle and that each difficulty is only an occasion for witnessing some fresh manifestation of the power of God. The actions of the Israelites only prove to us the tendency of the human heart to disbelieve, to forget, and to murmur. As someone has written, "Nothing can exceed the desperate unbelief and wickedness of the human heart, save God's abounding grace."

Moses cried to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do unto this people?" (Exodus 17:4). He recognized that it was a desperate situation and that only God could come to their aid. The manifold grace of God is displayed in His answer. In justice the Lord could well have said, "Smite the rebels." But in mercy He answered, "Smite the rock" (verse 6). Instead of slaying the offenders who had cruelly treated Moses and tempted the Lord, God provided a refreshing stream of pure water, which gushed out of the smitten rock.

This is a beautiful picture of God's plan of salvation for unworthy humankind. Every soul has violated God's laws toward his fellow and has shown indifference and distrust toward God Himself. As such, each soul justly deserves punishment for his sin, but in mercy God has provided forgiveness for the sins of the whole world through Calvary. The result of this smiting is that every thirsty soul who will may come and drink of the "rivers of living water." This living water is the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Revelation 22:17). God laid the rod of chastisement, which we deserved, upon Christ (Isaiah 53:5-8). Paul mentioned this type in I Corinthians 10:4: "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

Battle with Amalek

This is the first account of Israel in conflict with an external foe. We have no record that Israel furnished any occasion for the Amalekites to attack them. But Amalek was the grandson of Esau, and apparently Esau's descendants had inherited a grudge against the descendants of Jacob. This grudge showed itself at the time the blessings of the birthright were taking effect in Israel. Since the Amalekites attacked Israel without cause, and since Saul was reproved for not destroying Amalek (I Samuel 15), they are a good illustration of the flesh in opposition to the Spirit of God. In Exodus 17:16 the Lord declared a perpetual war with Amalek. The last physical attack on the Israelites that we read about in the Word of God is that of Haman. He was hung on the gallows (Esther 7:10). To be carnally minded, or to live in the flesh, is death (Romans 8:6).

In the war with Amalek in Rephidim, Moses acted as an intercessor, and Israel prevailed as long as he held his rod aloft. Since Moses' hands became weary, Aaron and Hur held them up until evening, and the Israelites won the battle. As long as God's people intercede, they will prevail. Lack of victory in our services and in our individual lives is generally traceable to a lack of intercession before the Lord. The cooperation of Aaron and Hur was necessary that the battle might be won. Every leader needs the help and the cooperation of the laity in "holding up his hands," in order that great things may be accomplished for God.

Though Moses, Aaron, and Hur worked hard and the Israelites fought valiantly, they gave the praise for the victory to the Lord. (See I John 5:4.) In spite of all we can do, if God does not work for us, we will lose the battle against the enemy of our soul. Therefore God deserves the glory for whatever victory we win.

Lesson 63
Israel at Sinai

The Smoking Mountain

In a brief journey of three months from Egypt, the Israelites reached Mount Sinai, where the Lord was to instruct them for a year. Moses was on familiar ground, for it was on Mount Sinai (also called Mount Horeb) that he had received his call from God to deliver Israel. (See Exodus 3:1-12.) Moses separated himself from the people and went up on the mountain to receive the message God had for His people (Exodus 19:3). Any leader who is to be influential among people must seek times of separation from man and seclusion with God.

Exodus 19:18-19 and 20:18 describe a striking scene. The Lord Himself spoke to the people in a way that caused them to tremble. Not only did they hear the loud blast of a trumpet, steadily increasing in volume, but they also heard mighty crashes of thunder and saw the lightning flash. Furthermore, the mountain smoked and rocked, impressing upon the people the majesty and power of the God they served. Moses commented on this scene years later: "For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? . . . Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire" (Deuteronomy 4:32-33, 36). If the people in that day heard the audible voice of God, is it hard to believe that God speaks to His people today, who have been washed in His precious blood?

The Giving of the Law

God gave Moses a set of laws written on two tables of stone. They were engraved there by "the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18). They have since been used as the foundation of the laws for many of the civilized nations of the world. Some have tried to make us believe that Moses himself wrote the Ten Commandments. But it is unthinkable that a mere man could write a code of laws so perfect that no one has ever been able to improve upon it. No, indeed, this was not the work of a man but God.

At this point let us note the difference between law and grace. One writer noted, "Law sets forth what man ought to be; grace exhibits what God is. In the Law God sets forth what man ought to be and pronounces a curse upon him if he is not that. But when the man looks at himself in the light of the Law, he finds that he is actually the very thing which the Law condemns."

Romans 7:13 gives the purpose of the law: the commandment came that sin might be made to appear exceedingly sinful. It proved to be a mirror that a person could look into and see his undone condition. A mirror shows uncleanness but has no cleansing power in itself, even as a plumb line shows how crooked a wall is but cannot actually straighten the wall. The law then, did not *remove* evil but rather *revealed* evil. Thus, attempting to keep the law does not cleanse from the guilt of sin. That is what *grace* does. Paul said that the law was spiritual but that he was carnal. Therefore the law cursed him. But he said, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). This is a picture of the grace of God.

Questions on Lessons 51–63

Lesson 51

1. What is the meaning of the word *exodus*?
2. What sort of nation did Israel become in the first chapter of Exodus?
3. Why is Exodus called the book of redemption?
4. Name the three general divisions of the Book of Exodus.
5. Into what three stages can we divide the life of Moses?

Lesson 52

1. Give a verse of Scripture to show that the events in the Book of Exodus serve as types, shadows, and examples to us.
2. Why did the Lord allow Israel to be afflicted in Egypt?
3. Give a Scripture reference to show that Moses is a type of Christ.
4. What lesson in faith do we learn from the mother of Moses?
5. What did Moses count as true riches?
6. What fact is proven by the slaying of the Egyptian and from Moses' fruitless attempt to reconcile the two Hebrews?
7. What significance might we find in Moses' taking a Gentile bride?
8. What type might we find in that Moses was first rejected by his brethren but later accepted by them?

Lesson 53

1. Of what can the burning bush be an illustration, in Israel and in the church?
2. How can we carry out the command, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet"?
3. How did God meet the excuses Moses made?

Lesson 54

1. In what way did the Lord seek to kill Moses?
2. What lesson do we learn from this incident?
3. What was Pharaoh's attitude toward the message of Moses?
4. What was the result of the first interview with the king?
5. What name of God did He emphasize to Moses in greater revelation, and what is its significance?
6. What was the difference between the power of God and the power of the magicians?
7. What do we learn about Satan's methods in the magicians' attempts to imitate the works of God?

Lesson 55

1. Was Pharaoh responsible for his actions?
2. Why does the gospel message harden some and soften others?
3. Name the ten plagues in the order in which they were sent.
4. At what things were the plagues directed, and why?
5. How many of these plagues affected Israel?

Lesson 56

1. What was Pharaoh's first attempt at compromise?
2. What lesson do we learn from his suggestion?
3. What was his second offer to Moses? Give the lesson learned.

4. What was his third attempt at compromise and the lesson learned?
5. Describe his final attempt and give the lesson learned.

Lesson 57

1. Describe the nature of the last plague.
2. Give a Scripture reference that provides the key to the typology of the Passover.
3. What kind of lamb had to be chosen? Explain the type.
4. Tell how the blood was to be applied and why.
5. Why did the lamb have to be roasted and eaten?
6. Why were the Israelites instructed not to break a bone of the lamb?
7. What sort of leaven must be put away from God's people?
8. What is the memorial of the true Passover?

Lesson 58

1. In what way does the truth contained in the Passover overthrow the teaching of modernism?
2. How does the Passover contradicts the theory that since Christ died for all, all will be saved (universalism)?
3. How does the Passover combat the doctrine of eternal security? Give a Scripture reference.

Lesson 59

1. Why did God not allow the Israelites to take the shortest route to Canaan?
2. What lesson can we learn from this?
3. What was God's plan for Israel? What is God's highest plan for His people today?
4. Describe the predicament of the Israelites when pursued by Pharaoh.
5. What lesson do we learn from the cloud that furnished light to Israel but was darkness to the Egyptians?
6. How did God deliver His people? How did He conquer their enemies?
7. Why have some been more blessed in prayer than others?
8. How is Pharaoh's fate a warning to sinners?

Lesson 60

1. How were the waters of Marah sweetened?
2. What was the first step in the backsliding of the Israelites?
3. What doctrinal truth is illustrated by the tree?
4. How is the simple gospel story revealed in this incident?
5. How are the bitter waters of death sweetened?

Lesson 61

1. What sort of a place did the Israelites find at Elim?
2. What is our Elim today? What can the palm trees represent?
3. Of what are the wells of water an illustration?
4. What were some of the rules that applied to the gathering of the manna?
5. Of what is the manna a type? Give Scripture reference.
6. Did those who gathered little go hungry? What lesson does this teach?

Lesson 62

1. How did God provide for the Israelites' lack of water?
2. How is God's grace revealed in His answer to Moses' cry?
3. How does this incident portray the plan of salvation?
4. Why was there hatred between the Amalekites and the Israelites?
5. How was the battle won? What lessons do we learn from this incident?

Lesson 63

1. What lesson can the spiritual leader learn from Moses' life?
2. Describe the way in which God appeared to the people at Mt. Sinai.
3. What lesson do we learn from their hearing the voice of God?
4. How were the Ten Commandments given to Moses?
5. Give at least two comparisons between law and grace. Give Scripture references.

The Tabernacle

(30 Lessons)

Lesson 64
The Purpose of the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle provides one of the most interesting and profitable studies in all of the Old Testament. We can appreciate its importance when we consider that nearly twelve chapters in Exodus are given to its description. The Lord cautioned Moses to make every detail exactly as He commanded, for each part was to represent some truth precious to the heart of every believer. The two main purposes of the Tabernacle, which we shall consider in the first lesson of this series, are that it fulfilled God's desire to dwell among His people and it furnishes us with types and figures to illustrate God's truth.

God Desired to Dwell among His People

The Lord clearly stated His own purpose in Exodus 25:8: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." The grace of God is exhibited at the very outset of our study, for it was certainly His unmerited favor that made a holy God willing to dwell among a sinful people and devise a plan whereby this would be possible.

God's dwelling place among humanity takes on three aspects throughout the Word of God, the first being a type of the other two.

1. The Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple of Solomon. The Temple of Solomon was built on the same plan as the Tabernacle and contained the same articles of furniture, but it was a permanent, instead of a temporary, structure, and it far exceeded the Tabernacle in glory and splendor. While Israel was on the march, it was necessary that they have a building that they could carry easily from place to place. Exodus 29:43-45 records God's promise to dwell with the Israelites in the Tabernacle. Solomon made a similar statement concerning the Temple: "I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever" (I Kings 8:13).

2. Jesus Christ. God next dwelt among people in the person of His Son for thirty-three and a half years. The Word, which was God (John 1:1), was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The word *dwelt* in Greek literally means "tabernacled." The human temple of Christ, then, was God's tabernacle, His dwelling place among people. He was "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:2). God's dwelling place was no longer a house of wood and gold, but a house of flesh and bones, the body of the Lord Jesus (Hebrews 10:5). (See also John 14:9-10; II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 1:15, 19; 2:8-9.)

3. The church. God next dwelt in the church through the Holy Spirit given to each of its members. When the tabernacle of the Son ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9), His followers were lonely, for God no longer dwelt among them. The Lord promised before He went away, however, that He would not leave them alone but would come to *dwell in them*: "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Corinthians 6:16). God's Spirit-filled people are now His "tabernacles." (See John 14:16-17; Romans 8:11; II Corinthians 5:1.)

In connection with the point 2, God will dwell among people in the person of *the glorified Christ* throughout the Millennium and all eternity. We see Jesus dwelling in the midst of His people during the Millennium in Isaiah 32:1, Jeremiah 23:5, and Zechariah 2:10-11. We see God dwelling with humanity throughout eternity in the person of the glorified Christ in Revelation 7:15; 21:3, 22; 22:4. Let us especially note Revelation 21:3: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with

them, and be their God." Verse 22 speaks of this tabernacle "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb," with a singular verb in Greek. These terms apply to one person, for when Revelation 22:3-4 describes "the throne of God and of the Lamb," it is careful to use a singular pronoun for Him: "*his* servants . . . shall see *his* face; and *his* name shall be in their foreheads" (emphasis added).

The Tabernacle Provides Types of Christ and the Church

The writer of Hebrews referred to the worship in the Tabernacle as "a figure for the time then present" (Hebrews 9:9). Hebrews 9:24 explains that Christ, the true high priest, "is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself." The Tabernacle was not only a type of the person of the Lord Jesus, but each piece of furniture is also an object lesson, describing some phase of Christ's work for humanity. (See Hebrews 9:2-11; 10:1.) That the Tabernacle and the Temple are both types of Jesus is clearly shown by a number of statements made in regard to the Temple in I Kings 8:27-30.

1. It was a house where God chose to place *His name* (verse 29). The body of Jesus was the temple where Jehovah placed His name. "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43). That the Son of God was given *God's own name* is made plain, for he obtained it by inheritance: "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Hebrews 1:4).

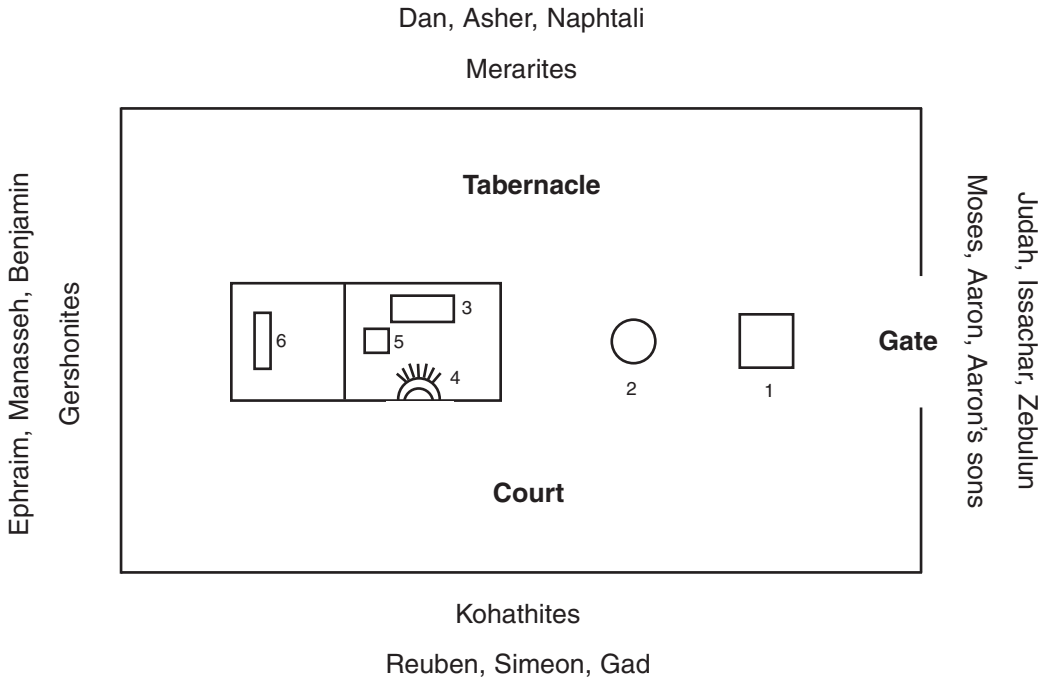
2. Men were to *pray toward the Temple*. "And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place" (I Kings 8:30). This illustrates that if we wish to find God, we must pray toward His present dwelling place, for we can only gain audience with God as we seek Him in and through His Son, Jesus Christ. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). It is in the "face of Jesus Christ" that we behold the "glory of God" (II Corinthians 4:6).

3. Although God dwelt in the Temple, His entire being was not contained by it. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?" (I Kings 8:27). Although the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:9), meaning God's character and personality, God is an omnipresent Spirit who fills the universe.

The Tabernacle is also a type of God's plan of salvation. The sacrifices in the courtyard showed that God could not dwell in the midst of a sinful people except on the basis of a blood atonement. In God's plan of salvation, no sinner can approach God unless he trusts in the blood of His Savior alone as the atonement for his sin. We shall also consider in the following lessons a number of ways in which the Tabernacle typifies the church and its members.

Lesson 65

The Outer Court



Dimensions
Court: 150' x 75'
Tabernacle: 45' x 15' x 15'
Holy Place: 30' x 15' x 15'
Holy of Holies: 15' x 15' x 15'
Gate: 30'

Furniture
1. Brazen Altar
2. Brazen Laver
3. Table of Shewbread
4. Golden Candlestick
5. Altar of Incense
6. Ark of the Covenant

Surrounding the Tabernacle was an area called the courtyard. It was an enclosure 150 feet by 75 feet, with a gate on the eastern side. Everyone was allowed to come into this courtyard. The courtyard fence was made of white linen, which hung from sixty pillars, twenty on each side and ten on each end.

Outside the Tabernacle in the courtyard stood two important objects of ceremonial worship: the brazen (brass or bronze) altar, which was the place of sacrifice for the sins of the people, and the brazen laver (basin), where the priests had to wash before they could enter the sanctuary.

The Tabernacle itself was an oblong building forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen feet high. It was constructed of forty-eight boards covered with gold and dropped into sockets of silver. These boards were held in place by horizontal bars, five on each side. This building was divided into two unequal chambers: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (or Most Holy Place). The latter contained the ark of the covenant; its lid was the mercy seat. The larger division, or Holy Place, contained the golden candlestick (lamp), the table of shewbread (bread of the Presence), and the golden altar of incense. A curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet separated it from the outer courtyard. A magnificent curtain called the veil divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This, in brief, describes the Tabernacle and the outer court.

Lesson 66
The Order of the Camp

Arrangement of the Inner Circle

Outside the gate, the camp of Israel was arranged in the exact order given by the Lord. The inner circle was made up of the priests who ministered in the sanctuary and the workers who took down and put up the Tabernacle as they journeyed from place to place. Moses and Aaron and Aaron's sons camped on the east side directly in front of the Tabernacle entrance (Numbers 3:38). This is why the entrance into the holy city is often spoken of as "the eastern gate." Only this priestly family could enter the sanctuary.

God chose the Levites from among the rest of the tribes to "do the service of the tabernacle" (Numbers 3:6-7). The tribe of Levi consisted of the sons of Gershon, the sons of Kohath, and the sons of Merari (Numbers 3:17). The Gershonites were to camp on the west, the Kohathites on the south, and the Merarites on the north of the Tabernacle (Numbers 3:23, 29, 35).

The Gershonites had charge of the coverings, hangings, and curtains (Numbers 3:25-26). They carried these items by two wagons and four oxen (Numbers 7:7). The sons of Merari had charge of the framework (Numbers 3:36-37). They carried pieces of the framework with four wagons and eight oxen (Numbers 7:8). The sons of Kohath had charge of the furniture and the veil (Numbers 3:31). They carried all of these things on their shoulders (Numbers 7:9).

Arrangement of the Outer Circle

The tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun camped on the east; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad camped on the south; Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin camped on the west; Dan, Asher, and Naphtali camped on the north. These were the soldiers, making four armies of three divisions each. (See Numbers 2.)

One had to enter the court from the camp of Judah, which reminds us that Christ was born of the tribe of Judah. We enter into Christ's plan of salvation by coming in contact with Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Three Classes of People

From this arrangement we can see that the camp of Israel was divided into three classes of people: the *priests*, the *workers*, and the *soldiers*. Each Christian confronts three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. His defense is also threefold, for each saint of God should be a worshiper, a worker, and a warrior. Some Christians who love to worship God hesitate to step out in His service. Others are always doing things in the Master's vineyard, but they keep so busy that they take little time for true worship and praise. Each saint should be a soldier, having on the whole armor of God. (See II Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:13; I Timothy 1:18; II Timothy 2:3-4.) Soldiers must not only be well equipped, but they should also be willing to endure hardness and not get entangled with the affairs of this life. God's people are also workers, or servants (Romans 1:1; I Corinthians 9:19-20; Galatians 5:13). As worshipers, they are called priests of God, not only because they are to offer praise and adoration continually but also because they are to intercede for those who are still out of the ark of safety. As priests and kings, we shall "reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10; 20:6.)

Lesson 67
The Priesthood

The Tribe of Levi Chosen for the Priesthood

The priesthood set up the Tabernacle, performed its ceremonies, took it down, and transported it. (See Numbers 3:6-8.) The Levites took the place of the firstborn, who had been set apart as holy unto the Lord in memory of God's protecting them on the night of the Passover. (See Exodus 22:29-30; Numbers 3:12-13; 8:17-18.)

Each Levite redeemed one of the firstborn. "Behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn" (Numbers 3:12). However, since there were 22,273 firstborn and only 22,000 Levites, the remainder of the firstborn were redeemed at the rate of five shekels each; the redemption money was given to the priests. (See Numbers 3:43-51.)

This redemption is a type of Jesus, our priest, who redeems each member of the church, which is called "the church of the firstborn" (Hebrews 12:23). We were not redeemed with gold, however, but with the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 1:18-19).

God no doubt chose the tribe of Levi because of their stand for the Lord when the Israelites worshiped the golden calf. (See Exodus 32:26.) God has always had a faithful few. As God rewarded the Levites for their bold stand against the sin of their day, so God will reward those today who take their stand for the Lord amid an unbelieving people. Our reward, like theirs, will be membership in a royal priesthood. (See I Peter 2:9.)

Purpose of All Details Given by the Lord

The Tabernacle and the Temple are the only buildings we read about in the Word of God that had the Lord as the sole architect. God Himself arranged the order of the camp and gave all the instructions as to how to carry on the worship. He left no room for humans to incorporate their own ideas into the plan or to choose their own place in the body.

This fact demonstrates that if God is to accept our worship, we must conduct it only as He directs and not as we please. (See Matthew 10:19; John 17:20; Galatians 1:8; Hebrews 8:5; Jude 3.) Just as the Book of Exodus gave the pattern for Old Testament worship, so the Lord has given a pattern for New Testament worship in the Book of Acts. Jude exhorted Christians to contend earnestly for the same faith that the apostles once delivered to the saints, and Paul warned us not to preach any other gospel than what he preached to the people. (See Galatians 1:8-9; Jude 3.)

Each person's having his allotted place and duties created order and eliminated confusion. If each member in the church will allow the Holy Spirit to show him his place, the church can be just as orderly. It is God's desire to eliminate all confusion from the church. (See I Corinthians 14:27-33; I Timothy 3:14-15.) If each church will follow the pattern of the early church as led by the apostles, there will not be controversy among them. Recognizing God's order of things will eliminate the evil of place seeking in the church. (See Mark 10:37, 43; Luke 14:7-11; Isaiah 33:22; I Corinthians 11:1, II Timothy 3:16.) Many are deceived, thinking that God will accept their worship as long as they are sincere. But sincerity in a wrong belief will not take the place of obedience.

Lesson 68
Tabernacle Typology

The Tabernacle and the Temple Contrasted

What a great contrast we see between the small, humble, tentlike Tabernacle, which had to be carried over the hot desert sands, and the magnificent Temple of Solomon! The greatest riches that the earth could produce were combined to make the Temple a spectacle of glory to all who beheld it. The heathen who passed by the Tabernacle saw nothing to attract them, however. One had to be inside the Tabernacle to appreciate its beauty. By contrast, people came from far and near to behold the splendor of Solomon's Temple and could not help but acknowledge its majesty, whether or not they sympathized with the king.

Such a contrast is also presented to us in the two comings of the Lord Jesus Christ. His ministry on earth was a humble one. Not everyone who beheld His miracles recognized that the God of heaven had come to earth wrapped in human flesh. Indeed they could not know it unless the Spirit revealed it to them, as He did to Peter. To this day, one must be *in Christ* to appreciate His beauty. But when Christ comes the second time, He will come not to be mocked, humiliated and crucified, but He will appear in His exalted position as ruler of the universe. All people, whether in sympathy with His plan or not, will behold Him in His kingly glory. What a different ministry Christ will have during His millennial reign! Just as the Tabernacle was built first and was followed by the building of the Temple, so the prophets testified of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:11).

Many things that are true of Christ, the head of the body, are also true of His body, the church. While each member of the church has the glory of God dwelling within, the earthly life of this body is a journey beset by many trials, entering into the suffering and humiliation of the Savior. However, our present afflictions are nothing to compare to the glory that shall be revealed when we reach our permanent home. There will then be a glory greater than that of Solomon's Temple when the redeemed of the Lord are gathered on Mount Zion and the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The Tabernacle Occupied a Central Position

Whether the Israelites were settled for a period, or whether they were on the march, the Tabernacle remained in the center of the camp. (See Numbers 10.) Christ should always be the head and center of the church. All activities should revolve around Him. No program should ever be launched that is not prompted by the Holy Spirit and that will not bring glory to Him. If Christ is the chief object of a Christian's affection, he will follow on, even when leaders fall by the wayside. Let us keep Christ in the center! (See I Corinthians 11:3; Hebrews 8:2.)

The Tabernacle in the Storms

The Tabernacle was subject to the same storms and was beaten by the same winds that spent their fury on the smaller tents of the Israelites. Likewise, Christ partook of the adversity of the world and was tempted in all points as we are, so that He might be able to help those who are tempted (Hebrews 2:18; 4:15).

Lesson 69

The Materials and the Workers

Source of Materials

With the exception of the redemption money, the Tabernacle was constructed from materials given as freewill offerings by the Israelites. "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering" (Exodus 25:1-2). This is one of the most outstanding accounts of giving on record. When all the materials were gathered together, they found that there was enough and to spare! (Exodus 36:7).

In the gathering of the materials we find Christ exemplified, the supplier of every need. He is Jehovah-jireh, the God who provides. The Lord enabled the people to give all that was required to complete the Tabernacle. Likewise, God will make it possible for His people today to give what is required to support the work of God. (See Genesis 22:14; I Chronicles 29:14; Philippians 4:19.)

The freewill offerings also showed that the church, God's present dwelling place, is to be sustained in the earth through the willing gifts of its members. (See Matthew 23:23; Mark 12:41-44; I Corinthians 9:7, 11, 14; 16:1-2; II Corinthians 9:6-7.) These verses of Scripture reveal that God's plan of giving today includes tithes, offerings, and sacrifices, as in the case of the widow who gave two mites. A vision of God's wonderful gift of His Son makes it easy for us to give to His cause. (See Matthew 6:21; II Corinthians 8:9.)

The Israelites did not give in order to become God's people, but they gave because they had been redeemed, had been blessed materially, and were willing and glad to see God's plan put into effect. We do not become God's people today by our giving, but we give because we have been redeemed and love the cause the Lord has committed into our hands. Since Christ paid the price for us, nothing that we have belongs to us; in fact, we do not belong to ourselves! We are merely stewards of what He has placed into our hands.

Who gave? "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing" (Exodus 35:21). When our hearts are stirred more, we give more. Someone rightly said, "When the heart is right with God, the hand is quickly filled with gifts for Him." (See II Corinthians 8:1-2.)

The Workers

God gave the needed wisdom to those who were willing to work. (See Exodus 35:31, 35.) The Lord especially gifted Bezaleel and Aholiab for the difficult work they had to perform. In the genius of the workers, we see a picture of Christ, who is the wisdom of each member of the church. (See I Corinthians 1:24; James 1:5.) The Lord will never call anyone to any type of service without anointing him for that particular service. (See Galatians 1:12; I Thessalonians 5:24; I John 2:27.) How much havoc has been wrought, on the other hand, by those who are not called, and consequently not gifted, to perform the service they have taken upon themselves to do!

The women also had their share in the workmanship. They spun the rich linen hangings. (See Exodus 35:25-26.) Women also have their place as workers in the church. (See Joel 2:28-29.) God promised that in the last days He would pour out His Spirit upon the handmaidens, as well as upon the servants, and they would prophesy.

Lesson 70
The Boards

Description

The framework of the Tabernacle consisted of forty-eight boards of acacia wood, twenty on each side and eight on the end. Each board was completely covered with gold and had two tenons (projections) by which it connected to the silver sockets underneath. These boards were held in place by fifteen horizontal bars, five on each side. (See Exodus 26:15-29.)

The Boards as a Type of Christ

The two contrasting materials of which each board was made—wood and gold—perfectly illustrate the humanity and deity of Christ.

Acacia wood is noted for its incorruptibility, so here we have a fitting symbol of the sinlessness and incorruptibility of the humanity of Christ. Christ "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Peter 2:22). He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). (See also Hebrews 7:26; I John 3:5.) Even in death His body did not decay—it was prophesied of Him that His soul would not be left in hades and His flesh would not see corruption (Acts 2:31).

Since each board was made of both wood and gold, we have the truth illustrated that Jesus was *truly man* and *truly God* at the same time. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). He spoke of Himself as both Spirit and flesh (John 6:62-63). John described Him upon the throne as simultaneously God and the Lamb (Revelation 22:1-4). While the wood was not the gold, and the gold was not the wood, they still formed *one board*. While Christ's deity is not His humanity, and His humanity is not His deity, they still form *one person*. (See Isaiah 42:8; 43:3; 45:5; John 10:30.)

As a man Jesus slept with weariness in the bottom of the ship; as God He arose and rebuked the storm (Matthew 8:24-26; Proverbs 30:4). As a man He wept at the grave of Lazarus; as God He called him forth from the tomb (John 11:33-44.) As a man He suffered upon the cross; as God He arose triumphant (Matthew 27:33-50; 28:2-6; John 2:19).

The Board as a Type of the Church

Considering the construction of the boards in relation to the church, they can well represent the individual members in the body of Christ, for the church is also a building "fitly framed together" (Ephesians 2:21; I Peter 2:5). When the woodcutters chose trees to make the boards, they found them among the other trees of the forest, firmly planted and rooted in the earth. Since the Lord had need of them, they were cut down, forever separated from the earth. They were then covered with gold and fashioned into a dwelling place for the great Jehovah. In our unsaved state, we, too, were rooted in the earth, partaking of the pleasures of the world. (See Ephesians 2:1-3, 12.) Through the sword of the Word of God we died to the world, separating ourselves from it forever. Through the Spirit we became partakers of His divine nature, covered with His righteousness and made into God's own dwelling place.

Lesson 71
The Bars

Comparison to Christ

Five gold-covered wooden bars, running horizontally across each side of the Tabernacle, held the Tabernacle boards in place. (See Exodus 26:26-29.) The boards had to be fastened securely, so that the framework could not be blown down. If the framework could have been blown down, the curtains and hangings would have become a twisted mass.

Similarly, if the deity of Christ could be overthrown, every other Christian doctrine could be contested. But the Scripture declares that every enemy of the truth shall someday be overthrown (I Corinthians 15:25). If the deity of Christ cannot be established, if indeed He did not rise from the dead, as only deity could do, then Paul said, "Ye are yet in your sins . . . [and] they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Corinthians 15:17-18). This explains why the attacks of the critics center upon Christ's deity, His incarnation, His virgin birth, His bodily ascension, and His second coming.

As the boards were not secure until bound up by the bars, the world will never be secure until all things are gathered under the rulership of Christ. At the end of the age, He is going to "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Ephesians 1:10). (See also Hebrews 2:8.) With the government upon His shoulder, He will establish a kingdom that can never be torn down.

Comparison to the Church

God has given five heaven-appointed offices designed to hold the church together and bring its members to perfection. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12). Without Spirit-filled people filling these offices, the winds of false doctrine would wreak havoc among the individual members of the body of Christ. Many who have claimed no need of a pastor or anyone else to teach them have been sidetracked and have brought much reproach upon the cause of Christ.

The Gate into the Court

The court itself can represent our abiding place in Christ, or the "sheepfold" over which Christ is the Shepherd. (See Psalm 65:4; 84:10; 92:13; 100:4.) A fence of white linen enclosed the court.

There was only *one* gate or entrance into the court. This illustrates that there is only one plan of redemption and only one door into the kingdom of God. (See Psalm 118:20; John 10:7, 9; 14:6.) Likewise, there was only one door into Noah's ark, which is also a type of the kingdom. (See Genesis 6:16.) Self-manufactured plans to enter heaven will all fail.

Jesus gave Peter the *keys* to the door of the kingdom (Matthew 16:19). He used these keys on the Day of Pentecost, after the Lord had anointed him to be the apostolic spokesman. In Acts 2:38-39 he instructed the multitude to repent, to be baptized in the name of Jesus, and to receive the Holy Ghost. He must have used the right key, for the door opened wide enough to let three thousand souls enter (Acts 2:41). This message harmonizes with the teachings of the other apostles. (See Acts 8:14-17; 10:44-48; 19:1-6.)

Lesson 72
The Foundation

Description

The Tabernacle had a silver foundation, consisting of one hundred sockets of silver, two under each of the forty-eight boards and four under the pillars of the veil. Each socket weighed a talent, or nearly a hundred pounds. (See Exodus 38:27.) These silver sockets were made from the *redemption* money that each man above twenty gave as a ransom for his soul. The price that each gave was a half shekel. (See Exodus 30:11-15.)

Types

Since the Lord designated this tax as a ransom for their souls (Exodus 30:12), the silver sockets typify the ransom price that the Lord Jesus paid for the souls of people. We, too, were bought with a price (I Corinthians 6:20)—not by silver or gold but by the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 1:18-19).

The silver atonement money used as the Tabernacle's foundation shows that the atonement of Christ, through His death, burial, and resurrection, is the very foundation upon which Christianity is built. This being true, we can see that modernism, though it may be termed a religion, cannot be considered Christianity, for it lacks the very foundational principles upon which we rely for our salvation. The gold-covered boards would never have stood if they had not been firmly embedded in the silver foundation.

Modernism's deceptive teachings, which ignore the atonement of the blood of Christ, can never stand the test of God's judgment. The purity of Christ alone, symbolized in the acacia wood, could never complete salvation. If Christ had come into the world just to demonstrate His sinlessness, the gulf between humanity and God would have been greater than ever, but He came to die for the world. (See John 10:17-18; Hebrews 2:9.) Not even the miracles He performed, which proved His deity, could save people's souls. Preaching Christ only as a good example still leaves humanity without any plan of salvation and without any real power to follow Christ's example.

Just as the money did not come from any one place, but from each individual, we see that salvation is an *individual* matter. (See Matthew 16:26; Romans 10:9.) Paul told the saints at Philippi that each one must work out his "own salvation with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). In fact, no one who neglects this great salvation can escape (Hebrews 2:3). This point is another blow to the teaching of universal salvation.

Both the rich and the poor were redeemed with the same sum. "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls" (Exodus 30:15). The rich and poor alike have but one plan of salvation and must meet on the same level of humility.

If anyone refused to pay the ransom price, he became subject to divine judgment. In Exodus 30:12, the Lord told Moses to collect the ransom from each one, "that there be no plague among them." Anyone who refuses to acknowledge the blood as his only hope of salvation becomes subject to the judgment of God, which is the second death. The morally good paid the same price as the extremely wicked. Those who have lived moral lives need the blood of Christ as much as those who have lived wicked lives.

Lesson 73
The Coverings

Four coverings were spread over the Tabernacle framework. The outer covering was of badger skins, the next was of ram skins dyed red, the third was of white goat hair, and the fourth was of linen. In this lesson, we shall consider the significance of each one.

The Badger Skins

The badger skins, or outside covering, illustrate the *outward form of Christ*. (See Exodus 26:14.) These skins were not dressed or adorned. They were a dull blue-gray color and were not pleasant to look at. Isaiah 53:2-3 gives us a picture of Christ in His humiliation: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." His humanity is further described as being smitten of God, wounded, and bruised. This outward covering, then, pictures the humiliation of Christ, and as this covering was without any dimension or measurement, so it is also true that the humiliation of Christ cannot be measured. If the holy God has to humble Himself even to behold the things that are on the earth (Psalm 113:6), who can measure the depths of humiliation to which He descended to become obedient even unto the death of the cross (Philippians 2:8)?

The heathen no doubt despised the tent that was the center of Israel's worship. Nothing they could see on the outside would cause them to desire to go inside. They would have had to pass the altar of sacrifice in order to enter the Tabernacle and behold the beauty inside. Those who would behold the beauty of Christ cannot do so by merely looking on. They must come into the kingdom through the door, pass the altar of sacrifice where Christ was slain, and enter into the sanctuary by seeking His face.

What a contrast to the ugly badger skin was the *inside* of the sanctuary: gleaming walls of the purest gold on both sides; tapestries of white linen overhead, in front, and behind; and the light from the golden candlestick showing off the beauty of each piece of furniture. Inside the Holiest Place, the glory of God shone brilliantly. Many who at one time looked on Christianity with contempt, seeing no beauty in the Christ we worship, after repenting of sin and entering the sanctuary, have cried out, "The half was not told me!" (See Psalm 27:4.)

We can explain the way of salvation and describe in a feeble manner the joy of a blood-bought soul. But until a person enters the gate of the kingdom and passes by the altar of sacrifice into the sanctuary itself, he will not know the inward beauty of the Man of Galilee.

The *shekinah* (cloud of God's glory) was inside the Most Holy Place. Although we have been redeemed from sin and enjoy the beauty of the sanctuary, we will not know what the *shekinah* of God's glory is like until we let God fill us with His Holy Spirit. (See Acts 2:4; 10:44.) The Christian must continually be clothed with the badger skins of humility, so that the glory of God may constantly dwell within. (See I Corinthians 1:26-29; Hebrews 13:12-13.) The glory of the church is not in costly decorations but in the indwelling presence of a holy God. (See I Peter 4:14.)

The Ram Skins Dyed Red

The covering of ram skins was placed just underneath the badger skins and was also without any specific dimensions. (See Exodus 26:14.)

The ram skins typify *Christ as our substitutionary sacrifice*. The red dye in which they were dipped pointed to the blood that Christ would shed as He took our place in death. The Word of

God pictures the ram as a substitute for the death of another. When Abraham was about to slay his son, Isaac, in obedience to the command of God, an angel stopped his hand. Abraham then beheld a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. "And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up . . . in the stead of his son" (Genesis 22:13). The Lord provided the ram as a direct substitute for Isaac. This event showed in type that God would provide a substitute for the sinful and unholy, all of which were condemned to die for their own sin (Romans 5:8). How very true it is that Christ our substitute came into the world to exchange places with the sinner.

The root meaning of the word "gave" in John 3:16 is "devoted." Thus a satisfactory rendering of the verse is, "God so loved the world, that He devoted His only begotten Son to be a substitute, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (See also Isaiah 53:6; Romans 4:25; I Peter 2:21.) Christ's crucifixion in the place of Barabbas pictures what He has done for every guilty sinner.

The covering of badger skins typify our Lord's humanity. The curtains of ram skins portray the purpose of His humanity—to be sacrificed upon Calvary.

Curtains of Goat Hair

The third Tabernacle covering consisted of eleven goat-hair curtains. (See Exodus 26:7-13.) Five of them were joined together, covering the Most Holy Place and the back of the Tabernacle; five of them were joined together, covering the Holy Place, and the extra width hung down over the eastern end of the Tabernacle.

These curtains portray *Christ as our sin offering*. The Lord instructed the priests to offer a goat as a sin offering: "And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin" (Leviticus 9:15). (See also Numbers 28:22.) Jesus, as our sin offering, was actually treated as if He were sin itself. "He hath made him to be sin for us" (II Corinthians 5:21). God dealt with Him upon the cross as if He were the criminal of the universe. Because our sins were laid on Him, they are as completely covered as the Tabernacle was by the goat-hair curtains. (See Psalm 32:1-2; 103:12; Isaiah 44:22.) (This explains Numbers 23:21).

Curtains of Fine Twined Linen

Ten linen curtains were placed under the goat-hair curtains, forming the ceiling of the Tabernacle. (See Exodus 26:1-6.) They were dropped over the outside of the boards, leaving the golden boards for walls. They were shorter than the other curtains, not being allowed to touch the ground. They signify *Christ's righteousness*. (See Revelation 19:8.)

Christ's purity was never contaminated by the world. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). Cherubim were embroidered on the white linen in blue, purple, and scarlet. The outspread wings of the cherubim overhead remind us of the overshadowing of God's presence. (See Psalm 36:7; 61:4; 63:7.)

Questions on Lessons 64–73

Lesson 64

1. Why is the study of the Tabernacle important?
2. What are the two main purposes for the giving of the Tabernacle?
3. Explain how God's dwelling place in the Tabernacle typifies His Son, Jesus.
4. How does it typify the church?
5. How will God dwell among His people in eternity?
6. Name three ways in which Solomon's Temple typifies Christ.

Lesson 65

1. Draw from memory a small chart showing the general arrangement of the Tabernacle and outer court.
2. What were the dimensions of the court and the Tabernacle?
3. Name the six pieces of furniture found in the Tabernacle and the courtyard.
4. Into what two compartments was the Tabernacle divided?
5. What was used to divide these two rooms?

Lesson 66

1. Of what did the inner circle consist?
2. Name the three sons of Levi.
3. What were they called to do?
4. How were the different parts of the Tabernacle carried about?
5. What three tribes camped on each side of the Tabernacle?
6. Through what camp did the priests enter the court? What does this suggest?
7. The camp of Israel was divided into what three classes of people?
8. How do these three classes of people typify the Christian?

Lesson 67

1. The Levites took the place of what class of people? How?
2. How were those redeemed who did not have a Levite to take their place?
3. Why was the tribe of Levi chosen for this special service?
4. What two lessons do we learn from the fact that the Lord Himself gave every detail of the construction and worship in the Tabernacle to Moses?

Lesson 68

1. In what ways did the outward appearance of the Tabernacle differ from the appearance of the Temple of Solomon?
2. How does this apply to the life of Christ?
3. How is this contrast fulfilled in the church?
4. What lesson do we learn from the Tabernacle always being in the center of the camp?
5. How can we find comfort in that the Tabernacle was subject to the same storms as the smaller tents of the Israelites?

Lesson 69

1. How did Moses get the material with which to build the Tabernacle?
2. How is Christ exemplified in the gathering of the material?
3. What is God's plan for the financing of the church?
4. What reason does Scripture give for the abundance of the gifts brought to Moses?
5. How were the workers able to do the difficult task they had to perform?

6. What lesson do we learn from the wisdom of the workers?
7. What part did the women have in the workmanship? What part do they have today in the church?

Lesson 70

1. How many boards were in the Tabernacle?
2. Of what materials was each board constructed?
3. Of what is the wood a type?
4. Of what is the gold a type?
5. What lesson can the boards teach us concerning the oneness of God?
6. In what way can the boards represent the members in the church?

Lesson 71

1. What was the purpose of the horizontal bars?
2. What would have happened to the framework if there had been no bars?
3. What essential doctrine concerning Christ do critics often attack?
4. What lesson can we learn from the use of the bars?
5. What is God's method of holding the church together?
6. What is illustrated by there being only one entrance, or gate, into the courtyard?
7. In what way was the door to the kingdom of heaven opened?

Lesson 72

1. Describe the foundation of the Tabernacle.
2. From what source did the material come?
3. Of what was the ransom price a type?
4. What does the Tabernacle foundation indicate about the foundation of Christianity?
5. Why is modernism contrary to the true principles of Christianity as shown in the lesson?
6. What concerning the Tabernacle's foundation illustrates that salvation is an individual matter?
7. What other lesson did you learn from the foundation?

Lesson 73

1. What was the use of the covering of badger skins?
2. In what way does this covering typify Christ?
3. Contrast the outside and the inside of the Tabernacle. What lesson can we learn from this contrast?
4. What lessons do we find here for the sinner and for the Christian?
5. In what way does the covering of ram skins typify Christ?
6. Explain the typology in the curtains of goat hair.
7. How do the linen curtains typify Christ?

Lesson 74
The Pins and Cords

Brass pins and linen cords secured the court and the Tabernacle. The same word translated "pin" here is translated "nail" in other places. (See Judges 4:21.) Exodus 27:19 and 35:18 both describe the pins and the cords.

These brass pins, or nails, symbolize Christ, for Isaiah 22:20-25 speaks of Him as "a nail in a sure place." The immediate reference there is to Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah. But the nature of the prophecy shows that the ultimate fulfillment is the Messiah, Jesus. For example, the name "Eliakim" means "raised up by God." God will lay the key to the house of David upon his shoulder. Revelation 3:7 describes Jesus as "he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth." Thus Jesus is the antitype of Eliakim, or the One who God raised up to set upon His throne. The sure place where the nail is to be fastened is the throne of David in Jerusalem, and all the glory of the Father's house will be hung upon Him.

Before the prophecy closes, it speaks again of a nail that is fastened in a sure place. Upon this nail the Jews will hang their hopes, but as it will be cut down, everything that is hung upon it will fall. "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it" (Isaiah 22:25). Here we find pictured the Antichrist, who will set himself up as God on Mount Zion but, being false, will be cut off. The true and abiding nail will then occupy the sure place.

Since these pins were made of brass, they did not rust in rain or storm. They withstood any test. They show Christ to be One who was tested and tried. He suffered a threefold temptation but stood the test and overcame Satan. He was tested in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross but fulfilled in every detail His glorious mission. Therefore, we can hang all our hopes upon Him. (See I John 3:2.)

As perfect as the pins were, if they had been left lying on top of the ground, they would have been useless. The fact that they were buried deep in the earth made the structure secure. The sinlessness of Christ alone could never make the believer secure, but since Christ died, was buried three days in the earth and rose again, our hopes of heaven remain secure.

The cords drawn tightly over the Tabernacle and fastened to the pins made the Tabernacle secure. The cords picture the drawing power of God. In Hosea 11:4 the cords symbolize the love of God, which draws men and women to Himself: "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love." (See John 12:32-33.) II Corinthians 5:14 states, "The love of Christ constraineth us." In the original Greek, *constrain* means "to hold together." It is the love of God that holds the different parts of the church together.

Without the cords, the pins would have been useless. Although Christ died for us, it will be in vain as far as we are concerned unless we yield when He draws us toward Himself and into His service. No one can come to Christ except the Father draw him (John 6:44), and since His Spirit will not always strive with humans (Genesis 6:3), it is a serious thing to turn away when one feels the Spirit of God tugging upon his heart.

Lesson 75
The Pillars

There were three sets of pillars: one at the gate of the courtyard, one at the entrance to the Tabernacle, and the one at the entrance of the Holy of Holies. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). He is the way into the court (or kingdom), He is the truth as set forth in the Tabernacle, and He is the life as shown in the glory behind the veil.

The naming of the two pillars of the Temple of Solomon shows that the pillars were very significant. (See I Kings 7:21.) Solomon called one Jachin and the other Boaz. Jachin means "he shall establish," while Boaz means "strength." In the pillars, we see the strength, or power of God, vested in the man Christ Jesus. (See Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:18-19; I Peter 3:22.) In Jesus is the power to uphold the whole plan of God—power enough to uphold every follower. (See Exodus 15:2; Psalm 29:11.) In Psalm 96:6, David found both the strength and the beauty of the Lord portrayed in the sanctuary. In the word *jachin*, we find another phase of the Christ's work—to establish the saints. (See Romans 1:11; I Peter 5:10.)

There were four pillars for the gate, five pillars for the door of the Tabernacle, and four pillars for the veil. Unlike the other pillars that had capitals (tops) of silver, the pillars for the veil were cut off and were placed just before entering into the glory. Isaiah prophesied that just before Christ should enter into His glory, He would be cut off: "He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken" (Isaiah 53:8). He was willing to endure the cross, despising the shame, for the glory that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:2).

In God's present dwelling place, which is the church, the pillars are the overcomers. (See Jeremiah 1:18; Galatians 2:9; Revelation 3:12.) As the pillars upheld and showed off the white linen curtain, so the overcomers show the righteousness of Christ. (See Ephesians 4:24; I Peter 2:9.) In contrast to pillar Christians, pillow Christians will be punished. (See Amos 6:1-7; Zephaniah 1:12.)

Lesson 76
The Furniture Or The Shadow of the Cross

Order of the Furniture

The furniture in the Tabernacle and courtyard formed a cross. It is no wonder that Hebrews 8:4-5 explains that the priests' ministering in the sanctuary serves as an example and "shadow of heavenly things."

Although the cross on Calvary's hill had not yet been revealed, it always existed in the plan of God and it cast its shadow through fifteen hundred years onto the desert sands of the wilderness in the form of the Tabernacle furniture. (See Hebrews 9:1-24.)

The order of the furniture is such that we can trace in type the footsteps of Christ from the cross to the throne.

At the extreme right was the brazen altar, a symbol of Christ's sacrifice in our place. This is a picture of Christ on the cross, a scene of suffering and the shedding of blood.

We note the contrast at the extreme left, where the cherubim overshadowed the mercy seat. Here we behold the golden walls, the worshiping angels, and the glory of God's presence in the shekinah fire—a beautiful picture of Christ on the throne. The Most Holy Place was the throne of God in Israel. Therefore, the two sections of the diagram show the contrast between the two comings of Christ: first to die and second to reign.

Christ, knowing the glory of reigning on the throne, was willing to endure the cross (Hebrews 12:2).

The Christian who understands the plan of God, as revealed in the Tabernacle furniture, not only sees the trials but also patiently endures, looking forward to the "glory which shall be revealed" (Romans 8:18; see I Peter 4:13).

Lesson 77
The Brazen Altar

As we think of the separate pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle, there are two important questions to consider: (1) How was the gospel, as revealed in the Tabernacle, fulfilled in Christ? (2) How is the gospel fulfilled in the church? Paul declared that the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Since we are commanded to obey the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:8; I Peter 4:17), it is clear that the death, burial, and resurrection must be fulfilled in us. How shall these operations be carried out in our lives?

Description

The altar was the first piece of furniture inside the gate. It was made of wood overlaid with brass. It was seven and a half feet square and had a horn on each corner. The priests were to keep fire constantly burning on this altar. Without this altar, the rest of the worship in the Tabernacle would have been in vain, for the worship of the priests would not have been accepted if they had not come with blood from this altar. (See Exodus 27:1-8; Leviticus 5:9-13.)

Types

Since this altar was the place where the priests offered the sacrifices for the sins of the people, the altar is a symbol of the cross of Christ, where the real offering was made for the sins of the world. Here we have Christ portrayed in His *death*, which is *the first component of the gospel message*.

According to Leviticus 1:9, the burnt offering was a sweet savor to the Lord. The death of Christ upon the cross was also a sweet savor: "Christ . . . hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2). (See John 1:29; Hebrews 9:28; 13:10-12.) Just as people fashioned the altar according to the pattern that God gave, so people also crucified Jesus according to the foreordained plan of God. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

This component of the gospel message, the death of Christ, is fulfilled in the church by our *repentance*. In Acts 2:38, Peter named repentance as the first thing that we must do if we wish to find God. (See II Corinthians 7:10; Galatians 6:14.) Just as Christ died, so we must also die to the things of the world and to our own desires and plans. Repentance in its fullest sense, then, is not only sorrow for past transgressions but also a complete death to self. (See Romans 6:7, 11.)

In the sin offering, the priests poured out the blood of the animal at the bottom of the altar. Christ was the perfect sin offering, for His blood was poured out of His body.

No one could enter the Tabernacle without passing the altar. Likewise, no one can approach God without trusting Christ as the sacrifice for his sins. No one can come to the Father but by Christ's death. (See John 1:12; 14:6.) It is only after we claim Christ as our substitute that the power of God can save us, for it was only after the guilty Hebrew claimed the slain lamb as his substitute that the priest could pronounce him ceremonially clean. The true Tabernacle is now in heaven itself, and just as one could not enter the Tabernacle without first passing the altar of sacrifice, so no one will ever enter heaven except by way of the cross.

This altar of sacrifice was open to all classes of people, the poor as well as the rich, the slave as well as his master. The blood of Christ is sufficient for the salvation of all classes of people,

from the very poorest to the most wealthy. Those who have high positions must humble themselves and repent as well as those who live in obscurity.

The furniture outside the Tabernacle was overlaid with brass, while the furniture inside was overlaid with gold. Brass, used in ancient times for weapons, symbolizes judgment. We see in both the altar and the laver of water, God's judgments falling on Christ in our place. Gold symbolizes faith. (See I Peter 1:7.) This shows that each part of the gospel is fulfilled in us by faith. (See Ephesians 3:17-19.)

The altar's horns symbolize power, as the horns of an animal signify its power. The horns on the altar show that until one repents and has the blood applied to his heart through faith, he can never have power with God. (See Psalm 75:10; Revelation 12:11.)

The priests carried the altar about on their shoulders with two staves. The story of the cross of Christ is to be carried all over the world. (See Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47.)

The Hebrew root word for *altar* means "lifted up." Thus the brazen altar was the same symbol as the brass serpent in the wilderness. (See John 3:14.)

During the Franco-Prussian war, a certain soldier who had disobeyed orders was sentenced to be shot. Being in great mental agony, he talked with the chaplain. The chaplain asked, "Are you ready to die?"

"No," replied the prisoner, "I am not ready, but that does not trouble me. I am so troubled about my wife and children, thinking of their sorrow and the years of misery they will have to go through, that I cannot think of my soul."

A Christian man in the regiment, well advanced in years, heard all of this and stepped forward, saying, "I have no wife or children, and I would be glad to be with my Lord. Let me die in your place."

The chaplain was greatly affected but, not knowing what to do, referred the offer to the superior officer, who said, "Do you really mean it?"

"Yes," he answered. "That poor fellow is not ready to die. It would mean eternal death to him. I am ready to go. Let me take his place."

They were greatly touched, but having no authority to make such a substitution referred the matter to the crown prince. The prince answered, "My brave fellow, I have no power to take the life of an innocent man, but I do have the power to pardon, and *for your sake*, I will pardon this man. You may go back and tell him."

Christ's blood has been given on the altar of sacrifice for us, and it pleads for the life of every sinner. We can now ask God for *Christ's sake* to forgive us, and He pardons us!

Lesson 78
The Brazen Laver

Description

The laver was a basin of brass that sat upon a pedestal, called a "foot." It stood between the altar and the door of the Tabernacle. (See Exodus 30:18-20.)

Types

The second component of the gospel is *the burial of Christ*. The laver is a type of (1) Christ's burial and (2) *our baptism*, in which we are buried with Christ and cleansed from our sins.

The underlying thought is that Christ is our cleanser. (See John 1:29.) After His suffering on the cross, Jesus descended into the cold waters of death and was buried in the tomb for three days that we might be cleansed from the record of our sins.

The priests did not dare to enter the Tabernacle without first washing in the laver. Otherwise they would have died. (See Exodus 30:20.) This type is fulfilled in the church, for unless we are born again of the water and of the Spirit, we can not become one of its members (John 3:5).

Water baptism in Jesus' name is for the remission, or washing away, of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). It symbolizes our burial with Him (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). There is no virtue in the water itself, but the blood of Jesus cleanses our sins because of our faith in Christ and our obedience to the Word.

The laver was made with brass mirrors brought by the women. The Word of God is like a mirror (James 1:23-24). When the Spirit of God applies the Word to our hearts, we can see what we look like in the sight of God and can see His plan for our cleansing. (See Titus 3:5.)

The laver was for the washing of both the hands and the feet. It is only by a continual study of the Word that we can keep clean hands before the Lord and walk in a way that pleases Him. (See Exodus 30:21; Psalm 24:3-4; 119:105; John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26).

Lesson 79
The Ark of the Covenant

Description

The ark was a chest of acacia wood, covered with pure gold, both inside and outside. (See Exodus 25:10-16.) A crown of gold ran around the top. The mercy seat, or lid, was of solid gold, and two golden cherubim were attached at opposite ends of the mercy seat facing each other, bowing over the mercy seat with their wings touching. The shekinah fire of God's presence shone between the cherubim. This chest contained the Ten Commandments, a golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. Priests carried the ark on their shoulders with golden staves.

Types

We have traced the footsteps of Christ from the cross to the grave, and now in the glory that overshadowed the mercy seat we see Him in all the glory of *His resurrection power*. The ark always led the people, for the priests always went before the people carrying it. The resurrected Christ will lead His people. Anyone who is willing to follow Him will be led to victory. The only sure way to reach our resting-place in heaven is to follow the Lamb.

The presence of the rod that budded emphasizes that this piece of furniture shows Christ in His resurrection. The very same rod that Aaron had used was laid within the ark. The stick was dead, but the blossoms were living, showing life out of death, or the resurrection power of Christ. The crown, running around the top of the ark, showed that Christ was resurrected to become King of kings over all the earth. (See Psalm 2:6; Revelation 19:16.)

The high priest alone could enter the Holy of Holies once a year. He took some of the blood that was shed on the brazen altar, went within the veil, and sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat. "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (Hebrews 9:7-8).

The mercy seat was the throne of God in Israel. The sprinkling of the blood changed the throne of God from a judgment seat into a mercy seat. We may now "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Jesus, as our high priest, sprinkled the throne of God with His own blood. The Scriptures declare the mercy seat to be a direct symbol of Jesus. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:24-25). The Greek word translated as *propitiation* can mean "mercy seat." Jesus was set forth to be a mercy seat through faith in His blood.

The word for "mercy seat" in Hebrew literally means "a bloody covering." One thing that the mercy seat covered was the Ten Commandments, the law, which condemns every soul, for every soul is guilty of breaking some part of God's law. The sins of Israel were there, and the eyes of God were looking down upon them. How merciful that the Lord ordered the blood-sprinkled lid of pure gold to be laid over the thing which condemned them! This is why the Lord could say by the mouth of the Balaam, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel" (Numbers 23:21). They had been disobedient and stiff-necked, but the Lord had provided a covering for all their sin.

In the past two lessons we have also traced our obedience to the gospel from repentance to

water baptism. The third component of the gospel, the resurrection of Christ, is fulfilled in the church through *the baptism of the Holy Ghost*. The Holy Ghost is resurrection power in us, which we should expect to receive after having been buried with Christ in baptism. (See Acts 1:8; 2:38-39; 19:5-6; Romans 6:4-5; 8:2, 10-11.)

Just as the resurrected Christ ascended to the throne, so the Holy Ghost is given to prepare His blood-bought saints to reign with Him on the throne. (See Luke 24:49; II Timothy 1:14; Revelation 3:21.)

When Jesus died, the veil of the Temple, which shut the people out of the Most Holy Place, was rent from the top to the bottom. (See Mark 15:37-38.) Since the rending came from above, it was not done by humans but by God Himself. The Holiest Place was now open to any who would enter. Thus the Holy Ghost, or resurrection power, is for everyone who will enter by way of the blood-stained altar and the laver of water.

Lesson 80

The Altar of Incense

Because of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, as foreshadowed by the altar of sacrifice, the brazen laver, and the ark of the covenant, Christ became (1) our light, (2) our intercessor, and (3) our spiritual food. These three roles were foreshadowed by (1) the golden candlestick, (2) the altar of incense, and (3) the table of shewbread. The first three are on the horizontal line and the last three are on the vertical line as depicted in the lesson entitled "The Shadow of the Cross."

The altar of incense was made of wood covered with gold. There were four horns on its four corners. It had a crown of gold, and priests carried it about with two staves. It stood in front of the veil in the Holy Place. (See Exodus 30:1-10.)

The altar of incense typifies *Christ as our intercessor*. (See Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25.) Incense clearly symbolizes prayer: "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense" (Psalm 141:2). The high priest offered this incense every morning and evening. Likewise, Jesus, our high priest, intercedes for us by the blood He shed. (See Exodus 30:7-8; Luke 22:32; John 17:9.)

Once a year the blood from the altar of sacrifice was put on the horns of the incense altar. (See Exodus 30:10.) Similarly, Christ could not have interceded for us as high priest if He had not shed His blood.

In the church, the incense typifies *the prayers of the saints*. (See Luke 1:10, 13; Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4.) The church stands between God and the sinner, beseeching him to be reconciled to God. (See II Corinthians 5:20.) If it were not for the prayers of the saints, nothing would hinder Satan from completely dominating the earth. (See Ezekiel 9:4; II Thessalonians 2:6-8; Revelation 7:3.)

Since horns denote power, it is through prevailing prayer that we have power with God. When the priest poured the incense on the altar, the red-hot coals on it made the fragrant cloud rise up toward God. The priest could have dumped great quantities of incense upon the altar without any cloud rising if the fire had been allowed to go out. This illustrates the difference between merely saying prayers and praying until we make contact with God. "The effectual fervent [red-hot] prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). (See Genesis 32:28; Matthew 21:21-22; Luke 11:5-13; John 15:7; James 5:17-18.)

The priests were to carry this altar about on staves. No matter where we are in our wilderness journey, we can carry with us the powerful weapon of prayer. The incense was beaten very small, for God answers the smallest prayers. It was to burn continually (Exodus 30:8), for "men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). The apostle Paul exhorted, "Pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17). To counterfeit the incense meant death—and it still means death.

Lesson 81

The Candlestick and the Shewbread

The Candlestick

The candlestick (lampstand) was beaten by hand out of pure gold. There were seven branches in all. A flower was placed at the end of each branch, and a golden lamp was on top of each flower. (See Exodus 25:31-37.)

In the candlestick we see a picture of *Christ as our Light*. (See Isaiah 42:6; John 8:12.) "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). No one can see the confusion or the dirt in a dark room, but when the light is turned on, every defect can be seen. As our Light, Christ first reveals to us our lost and sinful condition.

Light is more than a revealer; it is also a purifier. The heat from the light of the sun kills thousands of germs that thrive in the dark. The same Christ who reveals sin also cleanses from sin. He then becomes our guide by lighting the pathway ahead.

The gold was to be beaten by hand. "And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made" (Exodus 25:31). In order to become our Light, Christ was first beaten and bruised for our transgressions. "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5).

The blossoms on Aaron's staff revealed that there would be a resurrection from this suffering. The saints will also blossom after they have suffered. The crushed flower gives forth the greatest fragrance. (See Romans 8:18; II Timothy 2:12.) "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17).

The candlestick is also a type of *the church, which is now the light of the world*. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8). According to John, the golden candlesticks refer to the churches: "The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Revelation 1:20). John saw Jesus in His priestly garments walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Just as oil flowed through the branches to make the light, so the anointing of the Holy Spirit causes God's people to shine for Him. (See Exodus 27:20; I Corinthians 6:19; Philippians 1:20.) As the oil was made by beating the olives, so we must be of a broken spirit to receive the anointing oil. (See Isaiah 57:15; 66:2.)

Since there were no windows in the sanctuary, the candlestick was the only light. The priests had to walk in the light of the candlestick to serve in the Holy Place. No one can minister to God's people with worldly wisdom. It takes the wisdom that comes from above. (See Isaiah 2:5; I Corinthians 1:19-21; I John 1:7.)

The Shewbread

The table of shewbread (literally, "bread of the presence") was made of wood covered with gold, and the priests placed twelve loaves of bread on it. They also offered frankincense on this table. The bread was renewed every Sabbath, and the priests ate the old loaves. (See Exodus 25:23-30; Leviticus 24:5-9.)

In the shewbread, we see a type of *the Lord Jesus as the Bread of Life*. Jesus plainly said that His flesh, sacrificed for us, was the living bread that came down from heaven (John 6:50-51). He called His broken body the Bread of Life, for only those who feed upon this bread—eat His flesh, and drink His blood—shall have eternal life (John 6:54-56).

As the Bread of Life, He is also our daily spiritual food. In Numbers 4:7, the bread was called

the "continual bread." It is the privilege of every Christian to feed upon Christ every day and grow in grace thereby. The church at Berea "searched the scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11). (See Psalm 61:8; 68:19.) Job esteemed the words of the Lord more than his necessary food (Job 23:12).

The very method in which bread is prepared is suggestive of the person and work of Christ. The seed must first be planted in the ground and die before it can produce a harvest. The grains of wheat are crushed and ground between the millstones, and then the dough is baked in the heat of the oven. Similarly, our sacrifice was prepared in the heat of great suffering. He was the grain of wheat buried in the earth to produce a harvest of true saints.

Before the priests ate the bread, it was first offered to God and placed on the table for seven days. It was first necessary for the priests to make an offering that God would accept, since they had broken His holy law. God "shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). Since Christ's sacrifice satisfied God's justice, God can now pardon those who come to Him. Instead of laboring for the bread that does not satisfy, we can now eat "that which is good" and let our "soul delight itself in fatness" (Isaiah 55:2).

The table is a symbol of the church in that its purpose was not to show itself but to exhibit the bread. The church is to show forth Christ, the Bread of Life, to a lost world.

Lesson 82
The Veil

The veil, made of finely twined linen, separated the Most Holy Place from the sanctuary. (See Exodus 26:31-33.) Cherubim were embroidered upon it in colors of blue, purple, and scarlet. This hanging was not only gorgeous but was also amazingly strong. Two teams of oxen, pulling in opposite directions, could not tear it apart.

This veil points directly to the *humanity of the Lord Jesus*. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:19-20). We are clearly told here that the flesh of Jesus was the real veil, of which the veil of the Holy Place was only a symbol. Why was it a perfect type of the humanity of our Lord?

In the first place, the veil concealed the glory of God, which shone between the cherubim. Just behind it dwelt the divine presence of the Almighty God. From this fact, we gather that the veil was a silent prophecy that someday God, who is a Spirit, would appear wrapped in a veil of flesh! The invisible Jehovah was to come to earth in human form. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). "God was manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16). (See II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:9.) No human could look upon God and live, and yet God wished to reveal Himself to humanity. The only way our God, who is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29), could approach sinful humans and reconcile them to Himself, was to hide behind a veil of flesh. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (Isaiah 45:15).

The glory of God dwelling behind the veil of the Tabernacle is one of the clearest biblical illustrations of the truth of the Incarnation. In the scene of the Transfiguration, the glory of Jehovah shone from behind the veil of the flesh of Jesus. In the darkness of night, a light shone that did not come from the moon or the stars, and yet it filled the place as the sun would have done at midday. A ray of this light, which had continually dwelt behind the veil, now proceeded out of the very flesh of Christ, making His garments "exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mark 9:3).

That the veil, representing His flesh, was made of white linen showed that His humanity was to be sinless, and yet a mere attempt to imitate this purity cannot bring salvation, for the unrent veil shut the people out of the presence of God. The rent veil, however, opened the way to the Holiest Place. The truth portrayed here contradicts the modernistic teaching of saving oneself by trying to display the same virtues that Christ exhibited. Suppose that the priest should stand before the veil, admiring the spotlessness of the linen and the exquisite workmanship of the embroidery. He would have to admit that, however beautiful it was, it was a barrier between him and God's presence. Likewise, humans may admire the virtues of the humanity of Christ, but they will have to admit that they fall far short of His perfection (Romans 3:23). Try as he might, the unregenerated person is as different from Christ as darkness is from light. The only way the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place, even on the Day of Atonement, was with the blood from the altar of sacrifice. Likewise the blood allows us to enter into God's presence today.

Lesson 83
The Rending of the Veil

We saw in our last lesson that the unrent veil was a barrier, shutting humanity out of the presence of God, just as the sinlessness of Christ alone only shows what a great contrast there is between a holy God and sinful humanity. We are unable to approach God merely because Christ lived a sinless and beautiful earthly life. Our approach to the shekinah is made possible because this veil of His flesh was rent, as was the veil of the Temple. The flesh of Jesus was rent when He died on the cross of Calvary. Since the veil was so strong that the oxen could not tear it apart, and since the rending was from the top to the bottom, God Himself had to have rent it.

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:50). How plain this type is made when we see that at the same moment that Jesus died an unseen hand rent the veil of the Temple.

Let us picture the events of that sacred hour. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice. (See Matthew 27:46.) The priest was sacrificing the Passover lamb upon the brazen altar in the Temple courtyard. At the same hour, Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, was being sacrificed upon the brazen altar of the cross of Calvary. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Corinthians 5:7). At the moment Jesus cried, "It is finished," and died, the veil of the Temple was rent in two, changing the veil from a barrier to a new and living way into the presence of God. The sinlessness of the Man showed how unfit humanity was for heaven, while the sacrifice of this Man made a way for humanity to enjoy the presence of God.

If Jesus had merely come to earth, lived a beautiful life beyond reproach, and then went back to heaven without dying upon the cross, He would never have any "sons of God" to share heaven with Him—this grain of corn wheat would have had to dwell alone. But because the grain fell into the ground and died (John 12:24), it was able to bring forth much fruit, that is, Jesus was able to produce more after His own kind. We see the same truth here as in Aaron's rod that budded. Life really comes out of death. As the Scripture says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die" (I Corinthians 15:36). Those who recognize the rent veil and accept Christ's sacrificial death as their only claim to eternal life are the only ones who will escape the death that is justly their due.

When the high priest took the blood into the Holiest of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he was not allowed to sit down or to remain in that sacred room. As soon as he finished the ceremony, he had to withdraw. This shows that the sacrifice was not complete and could not perfect anyone. But when Jesus, our high priest, entered with His own blood into the real Holy Place in heaven (Hebrews 9:24), He *sat down* at the right hand of God, showing that the sacrifice was now complete. "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). This offering can make those who come to Him perfect. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). Since we have such a high priest, whose own flesh was rent for us, we can now "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22), and we can "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Questions on Lessons 74–83

Lesson 74

1. Describe the pins or nails that held the Tabernacle in place.
2. How do the pins symbolize Jesus? Give a Scripture reference.
3. Who is the false nail in Isaiah's prophecy, which is to be cut off?
4. What is the significance in that the pins were made of brass?
5. What point can we make from the pins burial in the earth?
6. What do the cords typify? Give a Scripture reference.

Lesson 75

1. How many sets of pillars were there, and where were they located?
2. What verse shows that the pillars have a definite significance?
3. Why were the pillars of the veil cut off?
4. Who are the pillars in the church?

Lesson 76

1. In what order were the pieces of furniture of the Tabernacle placed?
2. What verse of Scripture refers to the types found in the Tabernacle?
3. Of what was the brazen altar a symbol?
4. What was the throne of God in Israel?
5. How do the two sections of the diagram show the contrast between the two comings of Jesus?

Lesson 77

1. Describe the brazen altar.
2. What part of the gospel is revealed in the brazen altar?
3. How is this component of the gospel fulfilled in the church?
4. Why can we say that Christ was the perfect sin offering?
5. What significance is there in that no one could enter the Tabernacle without passing the altar of sacrifice?
6. Who were allowed to approach this altar? What type is found here?
7. What was the difference between the furniture outside of the Tabernacle and that inside the Tabernacle?
8. What is the symbolism of the horns upon this altar?

Lesson 78

1. Describe the brazen laver.
2. What component of the gospel is revealed in the laver?
3. Where did the material come from with which to make the laver?
4. What type do we find here?
5. How is this component of the gospel fulfilled in the church?

Lesson 79

1. Describe the ark of the covenant. Where was it placed?
2. What did the ark of the covenant contain?
3. What component of the gospel is revealed in this piece of furniture?
4. What symbol is found in Aaron's rod that budded?
5. What did the high priest do in the Most Holy Place? How often could he enter?
6. What was the importance of the sprinkling of the blood?

7. How was this ceremony of the high priest fulfilled by Jesus?
8. What is the literal meaning of the word “mercy seat”?
9. How is this component of the gospel fulfilled in the church?

Lesson 80

1. Describe the altar of incense.
2. Where was it placed in the Tabernacle?
3. Of what is incense a type? Give a Scripture reference.
4. How is the burning of incense fulfilled in the church?
5. What is the significance of the incense being beaten very small?
6. What significance can we find in the red-hot coals?
7. What would happen to anyone who counterfeited the incense?

Lesson 81

1. Describe the candlestick. Where was it placed?
2. How does the candlestick typify Christ?
3. What is the significance of the gold being beaten by hand?
4. How does the candlestick typify the church?
5. Of what is the oil a type?
6. Was there any other light in the sanctuary? What lesson do we learn from this?
7. Describe the table of shewbread. Where was it placed?
8. How does the shewbread typify Christ? The church?

Lesson 82

1. Which hanging in the Tabernacle was called the veil?
2. Describe the veil.
3. Of what is the veil a type?
4. What incident in the New Testament illustrates this type?
5. How does the truth brought forth in the veil overcome modernism?

Lesson 83

1. Of what is the rending of the veil a type?
2. What is the significance of the manner in which the Temple’s veil was rent?
3. Show how the typical and the real veil were rent at the same time.
4. Why was the high priest not allowed to sit down in the Holy Place?
5. Why did Christ sit down? Give a Scripture reference.
6. How was the unrent veil a barrier?
7. What benefits are derived from the rending of the true veil?

Lesson 84

The Consecration of the Priests

Leviticus describes how the priests were consecrated, or made ready for service. "And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water" (Leviticus 8:6). First, let us notice that the priests did not consecrate themselves. Moses did the work. Likewise we, who wish to become "priests unto God," cannot consecrate ourselves. We cannot change our own hearts or make ourselves fit for the service of God. All they did was to present themselves to Moses. We are also commanded to present ourselves to God: "I beseech you therefore, brethren . . . that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1).

In the consecration of the priests, water, blood, and oil were used, typifying the operation of water, blood, and Spirit in the life of a saint of God. (See I John 5:8.) Lastly, they were clothed with the beautiful priestly garments.

Moses took blood from the altar of sacrifice and applied it to Aaron and his sons. It was put upon the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the toe of the right foot. (See Leviticus 8:23.)

Those who would be priests unto God must have ears to hear God's Word and God's voice as it speaks to the heart. "Take heed what ye hear" (Mark 4:24). "Take heed therefore how ye hear" (Luke 8:18). Those who are true servants of God do not listen to all that pleases the flesh, but to those things that are for edification. Let us apply this to the radio, television, and any other technology. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 2:7).

If the blood is upon our hands, we will use our hands in His service alone; and if we are faithful, the Word assures us that we need not appear before Him empty handed but will doubtless come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us. (See Exodus 23:15; 34:20; Psalm 126:6.) If the blood is upon our feet, our walk will please God. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

The priests were also washed with water (Leviticus 8:6). Here we find a symbol of water baptism. (See Titus 3:5.)

"And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him" (Leviticus 8:12). Before our consecration as priests can be complete, we must be anointed with the "oil of gladness," or filled with the blessed Holy Spirit. Kings, priests, and prophets alike had to be anointed before they entered God's service. Whether we have a prophetic ministry of preaching, a priestly ministry of intercession, or a kingly ministry of overcoming, we need the anointing of the Holy Spirit to guide us.

As were Aaron and his sons, we must also be clothed with the priestly robes of righteousness. (See Isaiah 61:10; I Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 5:22-23.)

Lesson 85

The Garments of the Priests

Moses, who in the Tabernacle setting typifies Christ, put the garments, piece by piece, upon Aaron and his sons. First he put on the embroidered linen coat with the linen breeches and fastened it with the girdle. Then came the blue robe, having upon its hem the golden bells and pomegranates. Next came the ephod (outer vestment) itself, buttoned on the shoulders with two onyx stones, and the breastplate bearing the names of the twelve tribes. Finally, he took the snowy white linen and wound it in folds about their heads, making of it a turban upon which blue lace was laid. Upon the blue lace was fastened a golden plate with the words graven upon it, "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (Exodus 39:30).

The first garment, the coat of linen, typifies the righteousness with which the saints are clothed. "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Revelation 19:8). Since Christ was the only sinless One, He Himself is our righteousness (I Corinthians 1:30). Pilate testified to His perfection when he said, "I find no fault in him" (John 19:4). Pilate's wife called Him "that just man" (Matthew 27:19). The thief on the cross testified, "This man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23:41). The centurion who beheld the death of the Lord cried out, "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47). Even the demons acknowledged Him to be "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). No one could answer when Jesus asked, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46). The beautiful linen coat, then, pictures Christ the perfect Man, who through our faith becomes our righteousness.

The girdle was a beautiful piece of workmanship made of linen and embroidered in blue, purple, and scarlet. The girdle symbolizes strength for service. "Gird thyself, and serve me" (Luke 17:8). "I will . . . strengthen him with thy girdle" (Isaiah 22:21). Jesus was the perfect servant, for He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matthew 20:28). After the Passover supper, Jesus girded Himself with a towel and proceeded to set forth an example of humble service, reminding the disciples that the servant is no greater than His Lord. Since He was the perfect servant, we get strength from Him for service.

We shall leave the robe of the ephod until a later lesson. The ephod itself was an outer garment, a sleeveless tunic, coming down below the waist. It was fastened together at the shoulders with two onyx stones, bearing the names of six of the tribes of Israel on each stone. We are reminded of the lost sheep that the shepherd found and carried back to the fold on his shoulder. God's children are borne upon God's mighty shoulder, protected by His infinite strength. On the front of the breastplate were twelve precious jewels with the names of one of the tribes engraved upon each stone. Thus, the priest not only carried the names of the tribes upon his shoulders but also upon his heart.

Just as Aaron bore their names continually on his heart before the Lord, so our high priest bears the saints on His heart. Because of this, He is "able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). The jewels represent the saints: "They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" (Malachi 3:17).

The breastplate was a square bag fastened to the front of the ephod by twisted golden chains. Two undescribed objects called Urim and Thummim were placed in the bag. The meanings of these words are "Light" and "Perfection" respectively. The Scripture reveals little about these, but the priest consulted them when he wished to get an answer from the Lord.

Lesson 86
The Mitre and the Golden Plate

The Mitre

The mitre, or headdress, was made of fine linen. (See Exodus 28:39.) The word *mitre* comes from a Hebrew word meaning "to wrap." Thus, the white linen was wrapped in folds around the high priest's head to form a turban. The covering of the head in the Scripture symbolizes obedience to a higher power. This is one reason why the New Testament commands Christian women to cover their heads, for the man is the head of the woman. According to I Corinthians 11:15, a woman's long hair is given to her for a covering. A Christian woman's long hair is an acknowledgment on her part that in the home, the husband is the head. This relationship constantly represents Christ and the church, the church continually yielding to Christ as its head.

According to I Corinthians 11:5-6, if a woman cuts her hair, she might as well shave it all off as far as God is concerned. If a woman prays with her head uncovered (not having long hair) it is the same as if she were shaven! Why? Because as soon as she cuts her hair, she no longer has a covering. It is also a disavowal of her husband's place as her head. Since it is a shame for a woman to be shaven, she should wear long hair (verse 6). Some ask if it is acceptable just to wear a veil or a hat. No, for God said her long hair was given to her for a covering—the literal rendering in verse 15 "instead of a veil."

The same principle of the covered head applied to the priest. Absolute obedience was required of the high priest. Therefore, in the mitre, or headdress, we see Christ as the obedient One. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). The mitre also shows that the saints, God's priests on earth today, should be clothed with obedience, loving not their lives even unto death.

The Golden Plate

Upon this mitre was a golden plate, having engraved upon it the words "HOLINESS TO THE LORD." Our high priest is the holiness of those who serve Him. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6). Christ's becoming our holiness in no way gives license to a believer to commit unholy deeds. "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Romans 6:1-2). If our members are yielded to the Holy One, we will live holy lives. In fact, living holy before God is part of our worship, for we are to "worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (I Chronicles 16:29; Psalm 29:2). Those who follow the desires of the flesh, claiming that Christ is their holiness regardless of their lifestyle, will be disappointed at the coming of the Lord, for without holiness, "no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). The golden plate pictures Jesus as the Holy One—the same Holy One spoken of so many times in Scripture, especially in the Book of Isaiah. (See Isaiah 43:14; 45:11; Mark 1:23-24; Acts 3:14.)

Lesson 87

The Ringing of the Golden Bells

The robe of the ephod that the high priest wore was made of a blue woven material. It was one piece with a hole for the head, and it was bound in such a fashion that it could not be torn. (See Exodus 28:31-35.) There was a row of pomegranates and golden bells placed alternately around the hem. "And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not" (Exodus 28:35). Blue is the color of heaven. In the robe, we have a picture of Christ as the heavenly Man. His throne is in heaven; His kingdom, at present, is a heavenly kingdom.

As the priest moved about performing his service behind the veil, those standing outside the Tabernacle could hear the ringing of the golden bells. As the priest lifted the veil and entered the Tabernacle, he was hidden completely from the sight of the people. If God had refused to accept the sacrifice that the priest had made for himself and for the people, He would have struck the high priest dead, and all the people would have had to bear the guilt of their own sin. Their acceptance before God depended upon the high priest successfully ministering behind the veil on their behalf. At each movement of the priest, the bells pealed out the news that their high priest was alive, that the offering had been accepted, and that he was ministering before God to stay the hand of judgment from a guilty people. The people were assured that the transgressions of another year were "covered," although the priest was hidden from their view. Likewise, our high priest, the Lord Jesus, left this world at the time of the Ascension. On the Mount of Olives, the disciples saw their high priest disappear out of their sight as He entered into the Holy of Holies, that is, heaven itself.

Whether or not we can obtain forgiveness of sin depends upon whether or not Jesus is alive and in heaven. For two thousand years He has been invisible to His church. How do we know that He is alive, that God has accepted His offering, and that He is now in heaven? If Jesus fulfills in every way the high priestly types, then in some way He must send forth a testimony from the Holy Place in heaven that parallels the ringing of the golden bells on the high priest's garment.

He did exactly this on the Day of Pentecost! On that day, 120 people obeyed their Lord's command to tarry at Jerusalem for the power from on high. As they continued in one accord in prayer, suddenly there came from heaven the sound of a mighty rushing wind. Divided tongues like a fire sat upon each of them, and they all began speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4). Many of them had been eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus, but it was impossible for them to witness Jesus ministering in heaven for them. Although they could not see Him, they knew that the glorified Christ was alive in heaven, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit accompanied with tongues announced the fact, even as the bells had told of the well-being of the high priest.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound" (Psalm 89:15). The heathen who heard the sound of the bells were not overjoyed, for they did not understand its significance. Those who are unlearned in God's ways do not rejoice when they hear God speaking through His people in other languages, but when they understand the truth, they, too, rejoice when they hear the joyful sound from the Holy Place in heaven.

Lesson 88
The Five Offerings

The first five chapters of Leviticus are devoted to the description of the five offerings to be made unto the Lord: (1) the burnt offering, (2) the meat (meal) offering, (3) the peace offering, (4) the sin offering, and (5) the trespass offering.

The Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1)

Each offering pictures some phase of Christ's work for humanity. The burnt offering was to be a male bullock without blemish. No offering was allowed to have any blemish in it, for each pointed to Christ, who offered Himself "without spot" unto God. This offering was to be cut in pieces, and all the pieces were to be burned on the altar. This offering was not only to be made by fire, but was also to be "a sweet savour unto the LORD" (Leviticus 1:9).

In Leviticus 1:3, we see that it was to be a voluntary offering. The Scriptures are clear that no one took the life of Christ, but He voluntarily laid it down. That all the offering was burned and nothing kept back depicts the complete surrender of Christ as He gave Himself in death, "even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). (See Ephesians 5:2.)

The priests washed the innards with water, which not only shows Christ's inward holiness but also what is expected of the saints: "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts" (Psalm 51:6). Here, then, we have symbolized not only Christ's consecration to God, but ours also. (See Romans 12:1-2.)

The Meat (Meal) Offering (Leviticus 2)

This meat offering is better rendered "meal offering," for it was the only sacrifice without blood. It was made of fine flour that had oil poured upon it. Being offered without blood, it refers to the *life* of Christ, rather than to His death. The flour and the oil symbolize His humanity and His deity. The *fine* flour indicates the perfection of His humanity. When the frankincense was put on the oil and the fire was applied, it also made a sweet savor before the Lord. The fire of trials only served to bring out the purity and holiness of Christ's nature.

This offering was seasoned with salt. The Scripture directly connects salt with our speech: "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (Colossians 4:6). Christ was perfect in His speech. No one has ever spoken like him (John 7:46). His words are Spirit and life.

The Peace Offering (Leviticus 3; 7:28-36)

Both the guilty one and the priest received a portion of this offering. This one was to be eaten before the Lord and pictures our *communion* with the Lord. Just as the lamb or goat had to be killed and subjected to fire before it was eaten, so our fellowship with God is brought about only on the basis of the suffering and death of Christ. Our peace is brought about by faith in the peace offering that Christ made. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). (See also Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20.) Just as the high priest bore the names of the tribes upon his shoulders and chest, so the breast and the shoulder were man's portion in the peace offering, showing that God's strength as well as His love are exercised on behalf of every child of God.

The Sin and Trespass Offerings (Leviticus 4; 5)

The sin offering was for the *nature* of sin, while the trespass offering was for actual sins committed. We can see this division in the following passages of Scripture: (a) general sin, Romans 3:23; (b) specific sin, Leviticus 5:5; I John 2:1. The sin offering was taken *outside the camp*. (See Hebrews 13:10-13.)

Lesson 89
The Day of Atonement

Leviticus 16 and 17 describe the Day of Atonement. This special day was in addition to the five offerings discussed in the previous lesson. This portion of the Tabernacle worship is an outstanding object lesson, a silent sermon picturing in type for all time to come the central and most important theme of the Bible: the doctrine of the Atonement. This is, of course, only one of many such types, but the teaching here is brought forth with astounding clarity and in minute detail.

Let us come in our mind's eye and follow the high priest as he carefully obeys the great Jehovah and proceeds to carry out the instructions for that special day. In Leviticus 16, Moses warned Aaron that only in a special manner would he be able to approach the mercy seat and stand in the presence of the heavenly glory that hovered over the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place. He first had to make a sin offering for himself. (See Hebrews 5:1-3.) In this, he is a type of Christ only by contrast, as Hebrews 7:26-28 explains. However, in all that follows in the ceremony, which he performed *for the people*, he is a positive type of Jesus as our true high priest.

We observe that his dress for this special occasion was entirely different. He exchanged his beautiful priestly garments for garments of plain white linen: "He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired" (Leviticus 16:4). He then took from the congregation of Israel two goat kids and cast lots over them at the door of the Tabernacle. There had to be two goats, for there were definitely two sides to the Day of Atonement: first, to satisfy the wrath of God, and second, to carry away the sins of the people. The lots decided which goat was to be used for each purpose.

He then took a censer full of burning coals from off the altar, a supply of sweet incense, and a basin of blood from the bullock slain as the sin offering. He disappeared from the sight of the people, passed through the sanctuary, and went behind the veil into the Most Holy Place. There he put the incense upon the burning coals, so that a cloud covered the mercy seat, protecting himself from death. He then sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat and retraced his steps so as to appear again before the people.

He then killed the goat upon which the lot had fallen, took its blood within the veil, and made an atonement for Israel "because of their transgressions" (Leviticus 16:16). He reappeared and lay both his hands upon the head of the living goat and confessed over him "all the iniquities of the children of Israel . . . putting them upon the head of the goat, and [sent] him away . . . into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited" (Leviticus 16:21-22). Thus both sides of the Atonement were fully presented: the slain animal satisfying the wrath of God and the scapegoat showing what the Atonement accomplished for Israel in bearing away the sins of the people. Christ, however, took those sins away as far as the east is from the west when He died on Calvary. The typical sacrifice had to be offered once each year, but Christ's offering had to made only once (Hebrews 10:10). (See Isaiah 43:25; 53:5; John 1:29; Hebrews 9:28.)

Questions on Lessons 84–89

Lesson 84

1. What is the significance of Moses' putting the garments upon Aaron and his sons?
2. Name the four steps in the consecration of the priests.
3. Give the spiritual significance of each step.

Lesson 85

1. Name the different parts of the priest's garments.
2. Describe the coat of linen and explain its significance.
3. Describe the girdle and give its significance.
4. Describe the ephod, showing in what two ways the names of the tribes were carried on the garment before the Lord.
5. Whom do the jewels represent? Give a Scripture reference.

Lesson 86

1. Describe the mitre.
2. What is the significance of the covered head?
3. Why does the New Testament require Christian women to cover their heads?
4. What is the covering for a woman's head according to I Corinthians 11:15?
5. What trait of Christ's character does the mitre portray?
6. Describe the golden plate and explain its significance.

Lesson 87

1. Describe the robe of the ephod.
2. Why were golden bells placed upon the garment?
3. What fulfills the ringing of the golden bells in the New Testament?
4. Why did the heathen fail to rejoice when they heard the sound?

Lesson 88

1. Describe the burnt offering and explain its significance.
2. Describe the meat (meal) offering and explain its significance.
3. Describe the peace offering and explain its significance.
4. Describe the sin and trespass offerings and explain their meanings.

Lesson 89

1. Describe in detail how the sin offering was made with the two goats on the Day of Atonement.
2. Why was it necessary to use two goats?
3. Give the scriptural lesson taught by each one.
4. What other ceremony took place on this day?
5. Explain its spiritual significance.

Proclaiming New Testament Salvation

(4 Lessons)

Lesson 90

Water Baptism in the Name of Jesus

Jesus' Command

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

How the Apostles Obeyed the Command

Peter

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (RV).

Philip

"For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16).

Paul

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5).

Why Should We Follow the Apostles?

Jesus told His apostles, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:20). So the above words of Peter and Paul are the words of the Holy Ghost Himself.

"See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern" (Hebrews 8:5). We find the early church pattern in the Book of Acts.

Jesus told Peter, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19). Peter first used these keys in Acts 2:38. They were the right keys, for the door opened and three thousand entered the kingdom.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints'' (Jude 3). The apostles delivered this faith, or doctrine, unto the saints.

"Ye . . . are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:19-20).

Speaking of the apostles, Jesus said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). Therefore, Jesus wants us to believe on Him through the words of the apostles.

Paul said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). He could say this because he did not receive the revelation of the gospel from humans, but from the Lord (Galatians 1:11-12).

Scriptural Proof That the Apostles Obeyed Jesus' Command in Matthew 28:19

Many people *repeat* the command given in Matthew 28:19 to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But to *repeat* a command and to *obey* a command are two different things! To obey this command we must find out what the name of the Father is, what the name of the Son is, and what the name of the Holy Ghost is; we must then baptize in that name.

The apostles knew that *Jesus* is that name:

1. Jesus is the name of the Father. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43). In prophesying the birth of Jesus, Isaiah said, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

2. Jesus is the name of the Son. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS" (Matthew 1:21).

3. Jesus is the name of the Holy Ghost. Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). The Comforter is the Holy Ghost (John 14:26). The Holy Ghost in us is none other than the Spirit of Jesus. Paul said "Know ye not . . . that Jesus Christ is in you?" (II Corinthians 13:5).

The Scriptures teach that there is only one Spirit (Ephesians 4:4), and "the Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17). Colossians 1:27 calls the Holy Ghost "Christ in you." In John 14:23, Jesus said that He and the Father would come in. Ephesians 4:6 calls this Spirit both God and Father. When we receive the Holy Ghost, we receive Jesus in Spirit form.

Since Jesus is the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, we can see that when we baptize by invoking the name of Jesus, we are directly obeying Jesus' command in Matthew 28:19—as did the apostles.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16). Therefore, we cannot ignore the verses of Scripture on baptism in Jesus' name, or we deny that God inspired all the Scripture. Nor can we ignore Matthew 28:19. But when we correctly understand the subject, we will see that all the scriptural passages harmonize, and we need not omit any of them.

Can sprinkling rightly be termed water baptism? The Scriptures show that it cannot. The word *baptize* comes from the Greek word *baptizo*, which means "to bury, to plunge, or to immerse." Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12 command us to be *buried* with Jesus in baptism. Some declare that John sprinkled because there was a scarcity of water in the wilderness. That idea, however, is erroneous, for "there was much water there" (John 3:23).

Lesson 91

The Baptism with the Holy Spirit

In considering this precious Bible truth, let us search the Scriptures to answer three questions relative to being baptized with the Holy Spirit. First, what is the importance of receiving this experience? Second, is the baptism with the Holy Spirit automatically received when one first believes? And third, is it for us today?

In Acts 1:8, Jesus struck the keynote of the importance of this experience, saying, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Power for what? He continued, "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The Lord, knowing the darkness of the world and the weakness of human nature, understood the church's need for power from God to be the kind of witnesses His representatives should be.

Some people say, "I would love to be a Christian. It is the only life to live. But I have never made a start because I am afraid I would not have the power to stay true." Many people have resisted committing their lives to Christ because of this. Nevertheless, once they understood from Scripture that the Lord has provided the necessary power to live victoriously through the Holy Spirit, they have readily confessed Jesus and been born again.

Let us notice the contrast between Israel in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament. God chose Israel to be His witnesses in the midst of the idolatrous, heathen nations of the world. God gave them leaders of His own choosing, worked miracles in their midst, and provided them with a set of laws to follow. Yet they miserably failed as God's witnesses in the earth. They would renew their vows to God again and again, but in a few years' time they would be engaged in a wholesale breaking of God's laws. Consequently, God punished them through military defeat, captivity, and severe famines. What is the answer to this sad condition? The Holy Ghost had not yet been given, for Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:39). God's plan for power in each individual life had not yet come into effect.

But what a different description we read of the church in the New Testament. In this age of grace, God has chosen the church to be His witnesses in the midst of a world drunk with sin. Is the church going to fail in its mission as Israel did? Never! For we have the sure words of Jesus in Matthew 16:18: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

In past centuries, the church has weathered terrible storms. Attempts were made to destroy the Bible itself. Severe penalties were attached to the reading of any portion of the Word. During the early Roman persecutions, the Spanish Inquisition, and many other persecutions, those who stood for scriptural truths were slaughtered by the thousands, fed to the lions, and tortured in various other ways. Did the church or the Word fail? No. The God who inspired the pages of His holy Word preserved it in spite of human determination to put it out of existence, and now there are more copies of the Bible being sold than any other book. The great persecution of the church only served to fan the flame of revival into a brighter glow.

No, God's church did not fail as Israel did. And though the love of many waxes cold, and individuals drop by the wayside through an unwillingness to pay the price, God's promise to the church will be fulfilled when he presents "to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Ephesians 5:27).

What is the secret of the victory of the church? "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). It is not a question of whether the church will fail. The question is whether we will be members of His church. I Corinthians 12:13 gives God's own plan for

adding members to His church: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Colossians 1:18 makes it clear that the body is the church.

The prophets' foretold of a time when God would pour out His Spirit on His followers. For example, Ezekiel prophesized that God would put a new covenant into effect: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27). God knew the only way humanity would have power to keep His statutes was to be filled with His Spirit.

Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit is probably the most well known. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29). Was Joel definitely talking about the baptism with the Holy Ghost such as believers received on the Day of Pentecost? Yes, beyond a doubt, for on that very day Peter explained to the astonished multitude, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:16-17). When the multitude, seeing the manifestation of God's power, cried out, "What meaneth this?" Peter was quick to point out that this outpouring of God's Spirit was entirely scriptural—it was a fulfillment of God's own promise given through His prophet Joel.

Although God used the prophets to point toward the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, they themselves did not receive it. Hebrews 11 celebrates the most outstanding characters of the Old Testament, but concerning them it says, "And these all . . . received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us" (Hebrews 11:39-40). They died without receiving the baptism with the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given. But many people today die without receiving "the promise of the Father," even though God has it for every soul who will meet the conditions.

Another striking fact is that the gospel both begins and ends with this Holy Ghost message. In introducing the ministry of Jesus, John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11). We can baptize converts in water, but it takes Jesus, who came after John, to baptize them with the Holy Ghost and fire. When we introduce a speaker, we typically tell something of the person's importance and then announce the theme of his message. It was the office of John the Baptist to introduce Jesus. First, John said He was so great that he was not even worthy to carry his shoes. And what did he say Jesus was coming on the scene to do? To baptize men and women with the Holy Ghost and fire. If we do not receive this experience, the very mission for which Christ came into the world will not be fulfilled in us.

The gospel closes with the same message. At the end of Christ's ministry on earth a crowd of people gathered around Him on the Mount of Olives, for Jesus had told them that He must leave this earth for a time. Their blessed Master who had performed such mighty miracles would be taken away. He would disappear out of sight. How lonely they would be! Why could they not always have Him in their presence? they wondered. But this was to be the last and final message they would hear from the Master's lips. What would it be?

When loved ones are about to leave us for a better world we stoop low to catch their last words. We believe that surely they will whisper to us the thing nearest to their heart; they will tell us the one thing above all else they wish us to remember. Jesus was about to leave. What were His parting words? He said in Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." His last command to them was that they remain in Jerusalem until they were filled with the Holy Ghost and fire and endowed with God's own power.

Another question people often ask us is, "Is the baptism of the Spirit automatically received when one first believes?" The answer is a definite no. The Scripture makes it plain that many who believe in Jesus and have followed the light they have, have never received the gift of the Holy

Spirit. In Acts 19, Paul came across a group of believers at Ephesus. If he had been a modernist, he might have said, "They are believers, and even if they haven't received the Holy Spirit as I did, I will just leave them alone." But Paul, like all the other disciples, was not satisfied until the believers he ministered to had received the full New Testament birth of water and Spirit. "Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said to them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (Acts 19:1-2). But they all received this experience before Paul left. They were first baptized in Jesus' name, and Paul then laid hands on them and prayed for them. They received the Holy Ghost, spoke in tongues, and prophesied. (See Acts 19:3-6.)

Is this experience for all believers today? On the Day of Pentecost, Peter made it plain that this manifestation of God's Spirit was for succeeding generations. He said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). Has the Lord called us to follow Him? Then the Holy Ghost is for us today!

Lesson 92

Personal Evangelism

Part 1

We cannot overestimate the importance of personal evangelism in the work of God. Souls that eloquent preachers could never reach have been sought out and won through personal evangelism. Ecclesiastes 11:6 says, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." From morning until evening of each day, the Christian can be sowing the good seed of the Word of God in hearts who need salvation. Just which will fall on good ground we do not know, but we are assured of a harvest of souls, "if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

According to one source, eighty-five percent of all commercial sales are made by personal solicitation. Modern machinery has greatly increased production, and the demand for personal salesmanship is greater than ever. Merchants tell us that advertising cannot take the place of a personal interview. They say that personal work is what sells goods and makes contracts.

As we study the Word of God, we find that personal work is one of the primary means chosen by our Lord to extend the kingdom of God. Workers who visit the houses of strangers will often hear something like this, "Why, I have lived in this town for ten years, and you are the first person who ever invited me to church!" While some who have never engaged in such work may say, "The people of the world are so hard-hearted that they do not want the gospel," others who have been busy for the Master have found the very opposite to be true. They have found hungry hearts everywhere who have been starving for someone to show a personal interest in their soul's need.

And who is able to do personal work? Every earnest Christian can—and should. The chief tools are the Word of God and a heart full of love for lost souls. Some Christians claim they cannot do this sort of work because they do not have as great a personality as other workers, or that they have too timid a nature. But their very shyness and timidity can help them to reach some that others with boldness cannot reach. The Word of God in the hands of the weakest vessel is still "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). Jesus has commanded the timid as well as the bold: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

The Christian should fish for souls wherever and whenever he finds them, whether in the shop, the school, the office, or the kitchen. Constant witnessing for Christ helps the salt to keep its savor. Realizing the value of a single soul will give courage to the faintest heart to tell the simple story of the Cross. That souls without God are hopelessly and eternally lost should stir every Christian to follow Christ so closely that He can make them a fisher for the souls of people. To gain the wealth of the world would be vanity in the end, but to rescue the soul of one lost sinner would make the efforts of a lifetime worthwhile. What greater reward could the personal worker desire than to meet some soul in heaven who would testify, "I am here because you invited me to come and helped me to find the way"? It will enhance heaven to behold the glorified countenance of one redeemed soul whom we won to the Lord.

The personal worker prepares hearts to receive the gospel message when it is preached. It should encourage every Christian to know that Dwight Moody said near the end of his ministry that of all the conversions under his preaching, he did not know of one that had not been previously approached by a personal worker.

Some Points for the Personal Worker to Remember

1. The successful personal worker must spend much time in prayer. We will not be afraid to meet Esau if we have already wrestled with the Lord upon our knees. The Father who sees us praying in secret will reward us openly with the souls we approach. Above all, the Christian worker needs the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This comes from a deep prayer life.

2. No matter how strange the home may seem that we enter in order to witness or teach a Bible study, we must remember that we have the very thing that that home needs. We may not be able to answer all of the questions of the occupants, but we can point them to the One who can solve their every problem.

3. Diligent study of the Word of God is necessary along with a passion for souls if we would become a successful fisher of people. But we must first read the Word of God for our own soul's need before we study to bring it to others. The Bible has an answer for every question that someone can ask in regard to the way of salvation. If someone asks an unexpected question that the Holy Spirit has helped you to answer with Scripture, make a note of it. You may need it later, and your experience may help someone else in his work.

4. Consider every person you meet as a prospect. Look upon no person as hopelessly lost. Some of the hardest-hearted unbelievers have made the most zealous Christians. The indifferent front that some present conceals a heart that can be touched by the love of Christ.

5. Someone has said, "A happy Christian makes the best fisherman." The joy of the Lord is bound to attract those who have found bitterness and disappointment in the world.

6. Do not put off calling upon a soul that God has laid on your heart. No other business is as important as saving a lost soul, no matter how urgent it may seem. Tomorrow may be too late. A sad testimony was that of a minister who told of being asked to visit a sick man who was unsaved. Other duties crowded in, and each day he thought that on the morrow he would go and pray with this unsaved man. One afternoon he started toward his house, but on the way, a funeral train passed him. He asked someone who was to be buried, and the person gave him the name of the very man he was on his way to visit. He had come too late! He told how glad he would have been to have torn the lid off the casket and to have read and prayed with the dead body if it would have done any good, but his chance to help that soul was gone. If we wait until we are not busy to witness, it is likely that we will never call on the one who needs our help.

7. In doing house-to-house canvassing, do not stop for a cold wind or a little rain. Bad weather is a boon for the personal worker, for more people will invite him inside, and he will have more opportunities to lead souls to Christ.

Lesson 93

Personal Evangelism

Part 2

Keep Yourself Out of Sight

The soulwinner is not in the business of making himself an impressive figure, but of pointing souls to Jesus. Therefore, he must lay aside anything in his manner or in his dress that would make him more conspicuous than the message he brings.

One man was so taken up with a great evangelist that he urged his friend to go and hear him. The friend went, and when he returned, his friend asked, "Well, what did you think of the preacher? Wasn't he about the best you have ever heard?"

The man replied, "I didn't notice very much about the speaker—but, oh, the Christ that he preached."

The evangelist had learned the secret of keeping himself in the background and magnifying Christ. The same principle holds true for the personal worker. The Christian soulwinner should keep away from extreme styles of dress or from anything else that detracts from the Christ he wishes to present. How out of place it would be to walk into a humble shack in the poorest section of town in a velvet dress. On the other hand, it would be equally conspicuous to wear a housedress to call on a lawyer's wife in a palatial home. Without appearing worldly in any sense, one can adjust himself to his surroundings so as to become inconspicuous.

An artist who had just finished painting a picture of the Last Supper called in a number of his friends to view his work. Almost without exception his friends exclaimed, "Oh, what a beautiful chalice!" The artist had made the cup from which Jesus had drunk a beautiful creation adorned with jewels. To the dismay of his friends, he dipped his brush in some gray paint and obliterated the chalice from his picture. He explained that he could not allow anything in the painting to detract attention from Jesus, the central figure. The successful soulwinner will not allow anything to remain in his life that draws attention away from Christ and to his own person. At this point we are also reminded of the little boy who asked the old fisherman what the three best rules for fishing were. The elderly man answered, "The first rule is to keep yourself out of sight; the second rule is to keep yourself out of sight; and the third rule is to keep yourself further out of sight."

Avoid

It has been said, "There is only one way to get the best of an argument, and that is to avoid it." An argument cannot be won, because if you lose it, you lose it, and if you win it, you lose it. If the other person gains his point, you have lost much of your influence, and if you succeed in shooting his argument full of holes, you have made him resentful in the process. One of the rules of salesmanship is: "If you try to sell an article, and the other man mentions one of a different brand that he likes, never argue against it. The more you argue against it, the more your customer will argue for it, and the more he argues, the more he will sell himself on your competitor's product."

If someone differs with you on a scriptural point that you know is necessary to his spiritual well-being, what should you do about it? Tell him that it is foolishness to believe such stuff as he does? Make him feel as if you think he is a poor student of the Bible? No, for this will put him on the defensive. Instead, we can try this: "You have studied the Bible for years, and I have never met anyone yet who studied the Bible who could not give me some good things I never knew before;

now what do you say is the answer to this question?" Or, "I believe you sincerely desire to know the truth and so do I. Let's consider this question together." Those who are sympathetic with the other person's point of view have a much better chance of leading others into the truths God has revealed to them.

Correcting Mistakes

Many times the personal worker will call upon those who have made a great blunder in their Christian lives, some of whom have fallen away from the assembly altogether. We should approach such people in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. If the personal worker will first commend such people for what good they have done and what virtues they have displayed, their hearts will be better prepared to acknowledge the mistakes they have made.

The apostle Paul not only pointed out the failures of the Corinthian church, but he also told them of his honest appreciation for the things wherein they excelled. When Paul wrote to that church he had to correct them more than any other church. Nevertheless, He said, "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things" (II Corinthians 7:16). When he wished to chide them for their lack of giving, he began by enumerating the graces in which they did abound. "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also" (II Corinthians 8:7). We should also note how he commended the church at Rome in Romans 1:8 and the church at Philippi in Philippians 1:3-6.

Therefore, when you go to an individual who needs correcting, first let him know that you do not feel that he is completely bad, but point out the things that are virtuous in his life. Jesus used this method in chiding the churches in Revelation. "I know thy works . . . and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith. . . . But I have a few things against thee" (Revelation 2:13-14). He first commended them for the things that were honorable and then stated the things that needed correcting. (See Revelation 2:2-4, 19-20.)

When everyone seems to be doing his part, we are prone to take it for granted without commending anyone. Then when someone makes a mistake, we severely reprimand him for it. The Golden Rule is paramount when correcting people. Think of some blunder you have made in the Christian walk and ask yourself how you would like to have been dealt with concerning the failure. Would you have been eager to correct your mistake if someone had come to you with a "holier than thou" attitude and said, "I'm certainly surprised to hear of *you* ever doing a thing like that"? On the other hand, if you make the other person feel that you are sincerely interested in his soul's welfare and that you appreciate what God has done for him, you are in a position to be of real help to him.

One of the acid tests of spirituality is the ministry of restoration: "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). Any carnal or lukewarm person—in fact, any backslider, hypocrite, or sinner, for that matter—can point out blunders and failures, but only the truly spiritual person will lift up the fallen and bind their broken hearts.

Questions on Lessons 90–93

Lesson 90

1. Quote the verse of Scripture giving Christ's command concerning baptism.
2. Give four Scripture references that show how the apostles obeyed this command.
3. Give two Scripture references showing that we should follow the example of the apostles.
4. Give Scripture proving that Jesus is the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lesson 91

1. What is the importance of receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit?
2. How does the gospel begin and end with this truth?
3. Give Scripture proving that the Holy Spirit is not necessarily received when one first believes.
4. Is this experience for every believer today? Give a reference.

Lesson 92

1. What is the importance of personal evangelism?
2. Who is able to do personal work?
3. Where should the Christian fish for souls?
4. What attitude should we take when entering a strange home?
5. What is a good point to remember in house-to-house canvassing?

Lesson 93

1. How can a personal worker help to keep himself out of sight?
2. Why should we avoid arguments?
3. How could you start a conversation with someone who differs with you?
4. What is one important point to remember when correcting a mistake in another person's life?
5. What type of person can the Lord best use in the ministry of restoration?

A Prophetic View of History

(27 Lessons)

Lesson 94

The Babylonian Empire
The Gold Kingdom

(606–539 B.C.)

Babylon, a great and mighty city, was the capital of Babylonia. The king of the Babylonian Empire had his palace there. The city had vast wealth and power. It was strongly fortified by massive walls, and a strong army protected the nation from foreign foes.

The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, which arose to the north in the mountains of Armenia, enriched Babylonia. The warm sun ripened wonderful crops of wheat and barley. Sunny skies cheered the people by day, and starlit skies inspired them by night. Babylonia had an abundance of clay, from which they built splendid palaces and temples.

The king was an absolute monarch in Babylonia. Next to him were nobles and priests, who were supported by the income from landed property. The middle class included businessmen, skilled artisans, professional men, and independent farmers. A larger group of poorly paid laborers worked in shops and fields under overseers who often beat them.

The slaves formed a large group at the bottom of the social and economic scale. They consisted of conquered peoples and those sold for debt. Their lot was hopeless. They labored hard in constructing dikes, digging canals, and building great temples and palaces. They were branded to keep them from running away, and the Babylonian law imposed the death penalty on anyone who would help them escape.

The commercial and banking system of Babylon was much like that of modern nations. Money was kept on deposit in banks and temples and was loaned out at interest. Bankers held high positions of influence. Greece and later Rome adopted the Babylonian monetary system. Even modern nations use a similar system.

Babylonians worshiped gods of the sun, moon, stars, and nature. The priests had much land, from which they gained large incomes. From their income, they loaned money at interest. The priests were educated and had control of all education. The priests and others had to patiently study many years to master the difficult writing system of that time. Thus, most of the people remained illiterate and ignorant.

God called Abram to leave his country, Ur, later inhabited by the Chaldeans (Babylonians), and family and go to another place that God would show him. He left the idolatrous land so he could freely worship the one true God. Later, he became the father of a people through whom the whole earth was to be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3).

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, captured Jerusalem in 606 B.C. (II Kings 24:1-6). Nebuchadnezzar took most of the more wealthy and influential Jews to Babylon. Among them were Daniel and the three young Hebrew men (Daniel 1:1-6). The Jews remained in captivity for seventy years. (See Jeremiah 25:11; Daniel 9:2.)

Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that he could not remember. God gave the knowledge of the dream to the captive Daniel. In the dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image. The head was of gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet part of iron and part of clay. In the dream, a stone smote the image upon the feet and broke it to pieces. Then the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:31-35).

God showed Daniel that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was the head of gold. After him

came a silver kingdom (Media-Persia). The brass kingdom (Greece) followed. Fourth of the world powers was Rome, the iron kingdom. Then, last of all, God shall set up the stone kingdom—the kingdom of God, which shall never be destroyed (Daniel 2:36-45).

Later, in Belshazzar's time, Daniel dreamed of four great beasts that came up from the sea. The first was like a lion with eagle's wings. The wings were plucked, and a man's heart was given to the beast (Daniel 7:3-4). This foretold of the Medes and Persians conquering Babylon.

A bear with three ribs in its mouth followed (Daniel 7:5). This pictured the Medo-Persian Empire with three conquered provinces.

Next came a four-headed leopard with four wings of a fowl on its back (Daniel 7:6). This referred to Greece and the swiftness of her army. The four heads foretold of four generals who ruled the four parts of the Grecian Empire after the death of Alexander the Great.

A fourth beast, the most terrible of all, followed. It had great iron teeth and had ten horns. A little horn came up among the other horns and plucked up three (Daniel 7:7-8). This terrible beast represented Rome and her imperial rule.

Last of all, the saints of the Most High shall possess the kingdom (Daniel 7:9-27).

God judged Babylon severely for her sins, for her pride, and for the captivity of God's people. Some modern nations are persecuting God's people today. No nation can do this and expect to escape the heavy judgment of God. Babylon in time became a desolate ruin; it now lies under a desert wilderness. May modern nations profit by this example! (See Isaiah 13:17-22; Jeremiah 50:9-16.)

Lesson 95

The Medo-Persian Empire
The Silver Kingdom

(539-331 B.C.)

The Medes came from a rough country some distance north and east of Babylon; the Persians came from a desertlike region to the east and south of Babylon. These brave and hardy peoples united in a mighty army under Cyrus of Persia. (See Daniel 2:32; 7:5; 8:3-4.)

Marching into Babylonia, they laid siege to its capital. While the drunken king Belshazzar feasted with a thousand of his lords, Cyrus sent soldiers under the walls of Babylon by the dry bed of the river Euphrates, which had been temporarily diverted around the city of Babylon. The Medes and Persians sacked Babylon and killed its king. Cyrus won a complete victory.

Cyrus permitted some of the exiled Jews in Babylon to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:1-4). Isaiah had long before prophesied of Cyrus, even calling him by name. (See Isaiah 45:1-4.) This great Persian monarch openly acknowledged the God of Israel. Cyrus, although a great military leader, was just and kind by nature.

Cyrus appointed Darius the Mede to rule at Babylon. This Darius is not to be confused with Darius the Great, who ruled the empire from 522-486 B.C. Some scholars think Darius the Mede was another name for Gubaru, the man Cyrus put in charge of the newly conquered Babylonian territories. Others think Darius the Mede was Cyrus's throne name in Babylon. (See I Chronicles 5:26. The Assyrian king Tilgath-Pilneser is called "Pul" in Babylon.)

While Darius ruled at Babylon, evil men plotted against the prophet Daniel. They persuaded Darius to sign a decree, which stated that if anyone petitioned any man or god for thirty days, except the king, he would be thrown into the den of lions. Daniel, however, continued to pray three times a day to his God. He was discovered and reported to Darius. Since Medo-Persian law could not be revoked or altered, Darius was compelled to send his friend, Daniel, to the lion's den for a night. God, however, sent an angel who protected him. (See Daniel 6.)

One reason for the Medes and Persian's kind treatment of the Jews was the teachings of Zoroaster, who taught around 1000 B.C. He had taught the existence of one righteous Ruler of the universe and of his eventual triumph over the evil ruler of darkness. With this teaching, they could easily become sympathetic toward the Jews, who also believed in one true God.

Cyrus was followed by Cambyses, a more cruel ruler (529-522 B.C.) who took Egypt and ended the rule of the Pharaohs.

Under Darius the Great (522-486 B.C.), Persia rose to the height of her greatness and splendor

Persia had a fine postal system. The Royal Road from Susa, the Persian capital, to Sardis in Lydia was fifteen hundred miles long; but government couriers, by using fast horses in relays, could cover the distance within a week.

The common people had no voice in the laws but were merely subjects of the state. Under this great empire, Medes, Persians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Lydians, Syrians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Jews were under the rule of one great power.

During Darius the Great's rule, Persia came into conflict with the Greek city-states. A mighty Persian host invaded south Greece in 490 B.C., but a small Athenian army defeated them at Marathon, twenty-six miles from Athens.

After Darius's death, Xerxes ascended the throne of Persia. He collected a much greater army

than before in preparation for the second invasion of mainland Greece. Three hundred brave Spartans died at the pass of Thermopylae in an effort to check them. Marching into south Greece once more, the Persians spread desolation far and wide. However, a combined fleet of Athens and Sparta engaged the Persian ships in battle at Salamis and gained a hard-fought victory. The next spring (479 B.C.) the brave Greeks defeated the Persians at Plataea. These devastating defeats marked the decline of Persia's empire.

Lesson 96

The Greek Empire
The Brass Kingdom

(331-63 B.C.)

Alexander the Great was the son of Philip the Second of Macedonia. His father had subdued the city-states of Greece. Alexander took up the scepter and extended his father's conquests.

Alexander became king at the age of twenty. He was a handsome lad with powerful body, strong will, and vain imagination. Interestingly, Aristotle, one of the most famous of all Greek philosophers, tutored Alexander.

Crossing the Hellespont into Asia with an army of less than forty thousand men, Alexander amazed the world by the speed of his movements and the crushing power of his armed forces. He defeated the Persian hosts in one battle after another. The Jews and Egyptians readily submitted to his will. At the battle of Arbela in 331 B.C., near the site of Nineveh, Alexander crushed the Persians and forever broke their power. (See Daniel 8:5-7, 20-21.)

Pressing further east, he conquered wild mountain tribes and even took a part of India. Then, as his army had grown tired of the endless campaigns, he returned to Babylon, which became capital of the Macedonian (or Grecian) empire. There he died in 323 B.C., at the age of thirty-two. (See Daniel 8:8, 22.)

During his short life, Alexander accomplished a great work. He brought Europe and Asia much closer together. He established Greek culture in many cities of the old Persian Empire. He aroused admiration for Greek ways, and Greek became the language of educated people. The art, science, literature and philosophy of Greece became the heritage of many nations. A great university was established at Alexandria in Egypt, and an old sea route to India was rediscovered.

When Alexander died, his empire was divided into four parts—Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt. For a long time, Palestine became a battleground between the Syrian monarch and the Egyptian monarch. (See Daniel 11.)

Finally, Antiochus Epiphanes became king of Syria in 175 B.C. He determined to thoroughly subdue the Jews and even stamp out their religion, replacing it with the Greek. He set up an altar to the Greek god Zeus in the Temple at Jerusalem, offered swine as a sacrifice, and sprinkled swine's blood upon the holy place. No greater insult could have provoked the Jews. (See Daniel 8:9-14.)

An aged Jewish priest, Mattathias of Modein (a little town twenty miles from Jerusalem), was commanded to offer a sacrifice to Zeus. He refused and, being threatened, slew the Greek intruder. With his five sons, he fled to the mountains. There he was joined by a band of desperate men who preferred death to the heathenish sacrifice required by Antiochus.

For many years, the unequal struggle continued. For sheer heroism, it has no equal in history. Many Jews preferred torture and death to the violation of Jehovah's commandment. The little armies of Jews fought hosts of Syrians. The priest died, and his gallant sons fell in battle, one by one. Finally in 143 B.C., under Simon, the last of the brothers, Jewish freedom fighters won independence. (See Daniel 8:23-25.)

Later, the Jewish government became corrupted and the way was paved for the rising power of Rome to conquer Palestine. Rome invaded Syria and gradually destroyed the power of that strong nation. Finally, Pompey completed the conquest of the Syrian kingdom and took Jerusalem in 63 B.C., after a short war.

Lesson 97

The Roman Empire
The Iron Kingdom

(63 B.C.—A.D. 476)

Rome was originally a small settlement of farmers, traders, and shepherds near the Tiber River in Italy. The people were intensely patriotic. Obedience to Rome's authority was considered the highest of all virtues. The people were simple, industrious, frugal, brave, and proud. They worshiped many gods, including Janus and Mars. Janus was a house god; Mars was the god of war. From them we get the names of January and March.

From this small beginning, Rome gradually increased in power. At last all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea were controlled by her victorious legions. Fleets of Roman ships patrolled the waters from Spain to Italy, Greece, and Egypt. Roman authority extended over all the known civilized world. (See Daniel 2:33; 7:7, 19.)

In 63 B.C., a Roman army under Pompey captured the city of Jerusalem. Rome's rule, although stern and often harsh, brought order and peace to Palestine. However, the Jews chafed under foreign rule. Their hopes had risen high during the struggle and reign of the Maccabees, only to be dashed by the disorder and decay that followed. Now, under the iron hand of Rome, the future looked hopeless. A few still hoped for the coming Messiah.

The tramp of Roman legions echoed throughout Palestine. Greedy tax collectors exacted a heavy toll. Resistance to Rome was punished with utmost severity. An alien ruler sat on the throne. The voice of the prophet had long ago ceased.

During this dark period, Jesus was born in the obscure town of Bethlehem, near Jerusalem. His birth occurred in the reign of Augustus Caesar (Luke 2:1-7). Angels sang of his birth; some simple shepherds hurried to see the new babe (Luke 2:8-18). A star shone in the sky, and wise men came from the east, seeking the new King (Matthew 2:1-12). Haughty Rome paid no heed; life went on as before. The ministry and crucifixion of Jesus Christ occurred during the rule of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1-3, 21-23).

When Jesus was on trial, the bloodthirsty mob cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25).This was fulfilled when the Jews revolted against Roman rule in A.D. 66. Vespasian, the Roman emperor, sent his son, Titus, with five legions against Jerusalem. The city fell after a terrible siege in A.D. 70. It is said that the Romans slaughtered as many as one million Jews. Furthermore, they banished to foreign lands or sold into slavery around one hundred thousand survivors, and they razed the Jewish Temple, fulfilling the prophecy of Christ in Matthew 24:1-2 and Luke 19:41-44.

The Jewish Christians, remembering Christ's words of warning in Matthew 24:15-22, succeeded in escaping from the doomed city.

Lesson 98

Rome in Distress
The Iron Begins to Weaken

The first great persecution of Christians was at Rome during the reign of bloody Nero (A.D. 64-68), last of Julius Caesar's line. During Nero's reign, a great fire swept through the city and destroyed half of Rome. Nero accused the Christians of setting the blaze. Persecution erupted. Thousands perished on crosses, were burned alive, were beheaded, or were thrown to the wild beasts. (See Revelation 2:8-11.)

Roman armies took many thousands of captives back to Italy from conquered provinces. They became slaves and labored hard for the rich nobles on their vast estates. The small-time farmers could not compete against the slave labor and cheap grain. They gave up their small farms and flocked to Rome and other big cities. They lost their old sturdy independence and became dependent upon the government for food. The wealthy Romans lived in luxury and gluttonous pleasure.

Roman soldiers constructed splendid and famous roads from Rome to the distant parts of the empire. Armies followed these highways to fight against foreign foes. Merchants and traders went from town to town. The conquered adopted the Roman language, Latin, and Roman customs.

The unity of the Roman Empire was a help to the early Christians in spreading the gospel. Paul the apostle traveled over Roman roads and in Roman ships, claimed protection of Roman laws, and finally appealed to the Roman Caesar. He was imprisoned in a Roman jail, was guarded by a Roman soldier, had friends and converts in Caesar's household (Philippians 4:22), and gave his life for Christ in Rome.

The Christians, who would neither bow to heathen gods nor worship the Roman emperor, incurred the enmity of the government. Several bloody persecutions took the lives of thousands of noble saints, but this only increased the courage and number of Christ's people. Why fear death, they reasoned, when Jesus has promised us eternal life? (See Matthew 10:16-31.)

Finally, the Emperor Constantine recognized the new religion. He granted complete toleration and set aside Sunday as a day of rest. He presided over a great church council at Nicea, in Asia Minor in A.D. 325. The church had at last gained the friendship of Rome's empire, but it had become corrupted in the process. The purity of the early faith was adulterated.

German tribes beyond the Danube and Rhine Rivers, who had often engaged in combat with Rome's imperial legions, began to filter into the rich empire. Tribes settled here and there, plundered, and mingled with the native peoples. The empire, which had been growing weaker and more corrupt, could not successfully resist the barbarian tribes.

Banished missionaries had already brought the gospel of Christ to many of the German tribes beyond Rome's border. Others learned of the faith after coming into the empire.

In A.D. 410, Alaric, the young chief of the Germanic Visigoth tribe, captured the city of Rome. For three days and nights his warriors plundered that center of imperial might. Alaric ordered his warriors to respect the churches and their property and to harm no person. The Germanic tribe soon departed, and Rome was left in peace for a time. Alaric died of fever in southern Italy, and his tribesmen made their way northward through Italy and settled in southern France and in Spain. But his life's work was done; a rude chieftain had humbled the pride of mighty Rome. The spell of that great city was broken. She was no longer the invincible, the unconquered. The western Roman Empire, however, lingered on until A.D. 476, when at last the mighty empire's torch went out.

Lesson 99

The Five Kingdoms

King's Dream	Daniel's Dreams	Kingdoms	Characters	Scriptures
Daniel 2:26-45	Daniel 7:1-27; 8:1-27			
Head of gold	Lion with eagle's wings	Babylonia 606-539 B.C.	Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel 2:37-38; Isaiah 13:17-22
Breast and arms of silver	(1) Bear with three ribs in teeth (2) Ram with two horns	Medo-Persia 539-331 B.C.	Cyrus the Persian Darius the Mede	Daniel 7:5; Isaiah 45:1-4 Daniel 8:1-4, 20 Daniel 5:31
Belly and thighs of brass	(1) Leopard with four wings and four heads (2) He goat with great horn	Greece 331-63 B.C.	Alexander the Great	Daniel 7:6 Daniel 8:5-8, 21-22
Legs of iron; feet of iron and clay	Terrible beast with iron teeth and ten horns	Rome 63 B.C.–A.D. 410 To be revived	The Caesars	Daniel 7:7-8, 19-27
Stone	Ancient of days One like the Son of man	Kingdom of God	Jesus Saints	Daniel 2:34-35, 44 Daniel 7:22-27 Matthew 13:37-43 Matthew 25:31-46 Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:1-10 Revelation 19:11-16

Lesson 100
Rome and Constantinople

In A.D. 330, Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium, which the Turks later named Constantinople. Sixty-five years later, the empire was divided under two heads, one in the West and one in the East. Thus the two iron legs of the great image came into being (Daniel 2:33).

Within the city of Rome, a great church power gradually arose. (See Daniel 7:8.) Since Rome was the seat of government, the church leaders began to claim spiritual authority also. They said that the apostle Peter was the leader of the early church, that he had chosen Rome as his seat, and he had transferred his authority to successors in Rome, known as popes. Outlying churches ultimately recognized the claim of Rome.

Several Germanic tribes—the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, Burgundians, and Lombards—converted to the Arian Christian faith, which angered the Roman church authorities. However, Clovis, the leader of the powerful Franks, converted to the Catholic or Roman faith through the influence of his wife, Clotilda. The Franks became a powerful champion of the papacy (rule of the popes).

Thus, while the Roman Empire was breaking into pieces in the west, a new power was arising from the ruins. And today, after many centuries, the power of the Roman Catholic Church is still mighty.

In the East, the churches gradually recognized Constantinople as the spiritual ruler of churches. In time, the Greek Orthodox Church became organized with headquarters in that city.

As the churches increased in wealth and power, they decreased in faith and purity. Love faded out; greed and jealousy crept in. Heathen practices were mixed with church worship. Form substituted for spiritual power. People bowed before images. Priests claimed undue authority never given them by the Savior. The name of Jesus lost its early reverence in the hearts of church members. The cross became an object of superstitious awe and worship. Church authority claimed precedence over the Holy Bible. (See Revelation 2:13-29.)

The Eastern Roman Empire, known as the Byzantine Empire, with its capital at Constantinople, endured for about one thousand years and was a bulwark for Europe against attacks from Asia. Inconceivably, a strong "Christian" army of crusaders from northern France and Flanders en route to the Holy Land to fight Muslim armies laid siege to the city and captured it in A.D. 1204, after hard fighting. They massacred thousands of inhabitants, plundered the city of untold treasures in gold and silver, priceless statues, paintings, works of art, and valuable property of every kind. The Greeks recaptured the city sixty years later and held it until 1453, when the Ottoman Turks besieged the city and sacked it, thus ending the Byzantine Empire.

Lesson 101

The Holy Roman Empire

In A.D. 732, the Franks, under Charles Martel, saved Europe from the Saracens (Arab Muslims). The Saracens had invaded and conquered Spain. A great host of Muslim warriors poured through the Pyrenees Mountains, but Martel raised an army of Franks and allies and defeated the Saracens at the Battle of Tours in France.

Twenty-eight years later, Charlemagne, king of the Franks, knelt in prayer on Christmas Day, A.D. 800 in Rome. The pope approached and, placing the imperial crown on Charlemagne's head, proclaimed him emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

Charlemagne had already crushed the Lombard kingdom of northern Italy that had threatened the pope. He also conquered the pagan Saxon tribe of Germany after years of fighting. After defeating them, Charlemagne compelled the Saxons to accept the Roman Catholic faith and to be baptized.

In 843, the Frankish kingdom was divided among three grandsons of Charlemagne. One ruled the West Franks; this was the beginning of modern France. Another ruled the East Franks; this was the start of modern Germany. The older grandson ruled the middle kingdom. Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy sprang from it. Alsace-Lorraine, a battleground for the Germans and French over the years, was part of the middle kingdom.

The papal church increased in wealth, fame, and power. The pope often set up and tore down rulers. He was known as the "Holy Father." (See Matthew 23:9.) The Catholic Church considered those who disagreed with church authority as heretics. The law compelled everyone to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic Church stained the soil of Italy, France, Spain, and England with the blood of those who dared organize in separate churches. For example, Catholic forces exterminated the Albigenses of southeast France. The Waldenses of northern Italy and Switzerland fled to the mountains to escape the avenging hands of papal soldiers. (See II Timothy 3:12.) Papal authority replaced Scripture, and power replaced love. Fear gripped the hearts of many. (See I Timothy 4:1-3.)

The Inquisition's iron hand ruthlessly punished those who were unfaithful to the papal church. The Inquisition was especially bloody in Spain, which was finally won back from the Saracens. Jews also shared the fate of Christians. Only in the high and hidden valleys of the Alps did the light of religious liberty burn feebly.

Lesson 102

The Rise of Modern Nations

In 1076, a powerful people of Asia called the Seljuk Turks captured Jerusalem from the Arabs. These Turks were staunch Muslims. The pope and nobility of Western Europe wished to wrest the Holy Land from them. A hundred thousand knights from different parts of Europe marched overland and succeeded, after much suffering and loss of life, in taking the city of Jerusalem in 1099. However, the Crusaders could not permanently hold Palestine, although other armies were sent at various times. The Crusades, which lasted approximately two hundred years from A.D. 1100-1300, were ultimately a failure.

When the Crusaders marched into Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, they found a civilization that surpassed their own in many ways. They left castles or rude villages and found great cities, marble palaces, and a more cultured people with better manners. They had despised the Muslims as infidels but found many of them to be highly honorable men. They and their families learned to enjoy the products of the East, such as silks, perfumes, spices, and precious stones. Regular routes of trade sprang up again between Europe and Asia.

In 1227, the Turks appeared in Asia Minor. They had been driven westward by the Mongol advance. Before long they were occupying the best parts of Asia Minor. They crossed into Europe and conquered the Balkan states south of the Danube River. They conquered Constantinople in 1453 by their overwhelming forces. The Greek king, last of the Byzantine emperors, died defending his kingdom.

After the Turks captured Constantinople, the supply of luxuries from India was shut off. Therefore, Columbus proposed to reach India by sailing west. Many people at that time thought the earth was flat. Thus, many doubted Columbus's sanity. Undeterred, he, along with three small ships, sailed west. Columbus and his Spanish crews reached land on October 12, 1492. The journey took two months. Nevertheless, they did not arrive at their intended destination of India but on several islands, later named the West Indies. This event set off the explosion of European exploration and conquest of the New World. Spain and Portugal took South America; the English, Dutch, and French settled North America. Later, the United States and Canada became a refuge for the many of the oppressed peoples from across Europe.

Many technological advances occurred in Europe during this time as well. The most significant, as it relates to church history, was the German Johannes Gutenburg's invention of the printing press with moveable type around 1450. The first book printed on his press was a Latin Bible. Up to this point, the old method had been writing and copying books by hand on parchments. The printing press made it possible for the Bible and other literature, such as doctrinal tracts, to circulate widely across Europe.

The printing press was a principal reason, albeit a mundane one, why the Protestant Reformation came to and spread throughout Europe. Easier access to Bibles helped people see the many false doctrines and practices of the papal church.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) successfully precipitated the break from Rome. As he was reading Romans 1:17, the words leapt out at him: "The just shall live by faith." This insight was monumental, for he realized that salvation was through the atoning blood of Christ alone and not by works; that is, God's favor could not be earned, only received. The catalyst for his break with Rome was his denunciation of the sale of indulgences by representatives of the pope. The papal authorities claimed that indulgences, which people bought at a certain price, could secure the temporal forgiveness of sins.

After Luther attacked the sale of indulgences, the pope denounced and condemned Luther.

However, the prince of Saxony "kidnapped" Luther and protected his life. Thousands of people followed the light of Luther's teaching. Within a century, half the countries of Europe had become officially Protestant.

The Protestant Reformation was one factor leading to the rise of nationalism. Europeans began to develop a strong national consciousness. Boundary lines were established by war, by agreement, and by nature. Love of country was developed to a high degree.

Over the next several centuries, technological advances continued, culminating in the Industrial Revolution. Labor-saving machinery came into general use. For example, among the machines invented between 1750 and 1800 were spinning and weaving machines, the cotton gin, and the steam engine. The steamboat and the locomotive followed between 1800 and 1850. Between 1850 and 1900, better methods of manufacturing steel were invented, as well as many farm machines, the electric light, the wireless telegraph, and gasoline-driven automobile.

Great cities sprang up; many people left their farms and obtained work in factories and mines. Large-scale production followed. This made a higher standard of living possible for many.

Lesson 103

The Beginning of Sorrows

The nations of Europe formed alliances to keep strong and ambitious rivals from seizing too much power. In 1882, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy formed the Triple Alliance. To offset this power, England, France, and Russia formed the Triple Entente in 1907.

Germany had acquired interests in Mesopotamia (old Babylonia) and wished to control a railway line extending from Berlin, Germany, to Baghdad, Turkey. The proposed line ran through Germany, Austria-Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria, to Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey), and from there through Asia Minor (Turkey) down to Baghdad, Iraq, on the Tigris River. Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey were allies of Germany; only Serbia stood in the way. Trouble arose between Austria and Serbia. A Serbian student shot the heir to Austria's throne, and war soon followed on July 28, 1914. Russia came to Serbia's aid; Germany stood by Austria; France was drawn to Russia's side. Germany invaded Belgium to attack France. This brought England into the war on the side of France and her allies. (See James 4:1-4.)

A most destructive and terrible world war followed. In four years it cost the lives of ten million people; an untold amount of property lay in ruins, and distress settled upon the entire world.

The United States came into the war in 1917 against Germany. Germany acknowledged defeat after much fighting, and the warring countries signed an armistice on November 11, 1918. Peace came in the eleventh month, the eleventh day, and the eleventh hour. Was this a sign that peace was only a temporary affair?

Now anyone looking at the map can see that nearly all of the Allied nations formed parts of the old Roman Empire. They included Italy, France, Belgium, England, Serbia, and Greece. Furthermore, the English primarily settled the United States in the early days.

One important result of the war was the capture of Jerusalem by General Allenby of the English forces. He was a man of prayer. The Turks surrendered the Holy City without fighting, so the English did not bombard it. (See Isaiah 31:5; Luke 21:24.) England established a protectorate over Palestine and began encouraging Jews to return to the land of their forefathers (Isaiah 60:9-12). In twenty years, the Jews in Palestine increased from fifty thousand to about five hundred thousand. However, the hostile Arabs gave them much trouble. (See Genesis 16:12.)

Another important result of the war was the revolution in Russia (1917-18). The revolutionaries overthrew the czar's government and executed him and his family. The Bolsheviks crushed the upper classes of Russia and set up a government, ostensibly for the workers. The Communist Party, with Lenin as its leader, took control. When Lenin died, Stalin became dictator. The Communist Party placed all property in the hands of the government and adopted a hostile attitude toward Christianity. The Communists persecuted and killed many sincere and earnest Christians in parts of Russia.

In 1922, Italy was poverty-stricken, and anarchy threatened to engulf the country. However, Mussolini, a war veteran and leader of the Fascist organization, took charge of the government at Rome. His troops were called the Black Shirts. They did not, however, hurt King Victor Emmanuel. Mussolini proceeded to rule with an iron hand and built up a formidable army and air fleet. He advocated stern and patriotic qualities like those of old Rome and frankly admitted that his mission was to rebuild the Roman Empire. He granted a small tract of territory to the pope, who again became a temporal ruler. Mussolini made war on ancient Ethiopia in 1935, conquering that country within seven months. Following this, he declared in a grand speech at Rome in May 1936 that the new Roman Empire stood again upon the "eternal hills of Rome."

Furthermore, he sent many warplanes, much equipment, and many soldiers to assist General

Franco in his bloody war against the Loyalist government of Spain (1936-1939).

World War I humiliated Germany. The Allies took her colonies and much territory from her, took her fleet, and drastically reduced her proud army. The Allies also levied a huge war indemnity upon their vanquished foe. Hard times and much distress came to that country.

Adolf Hitler, war veteran and native of Austria, came to power in 1933 as dictator of Germany and leader of the Nazi movement. His main cry was "Germany for Germans." He blamed the Jews for defeat in World War I and also considered them as enemies and parasites in Germany. Hitler persecuted the Jews terribly.

Hitler built up a powerful war machine in defiance of the Allies, reoccupied the Rhineland, and took over Austria. He acquired much territory from Czechoslovakia and made that enterprising republic practically a dependent of Germany.

Hitler and Mussolini formed what was called the "Rome-Berlin axis." Each country demanded more colonies, while they kept England and France vexed and confused, wondering what would happen next.

Another prominent result of World War I was widespread depression and unemployment. Moreover, taxes greatly increased, while fear and anxiety gripped the hearts of businessmen, farmers, and laborers. (See Luke 21:25-26.)

Questions on Lessons 94–103

Lesson 94

1. Who was the head of gold in the image?
2. Why was the Babylonian religion bad?
3. Describe ancient Babylonia.
4. Why did God call Abram from Ur?
5. Why was Babylon punished so severely?

Lesson 95

1. How was Medo-Persia pictured?
2. How did Cyrus help the Jews?
3. Did Cyrus believe in God?
4. Describe the Persian Empire at its greatest.
5. Who sent Daniel to the lions' den, and why?

Lesson 96

1. Who was the great horn of Daniel 8:5?
2. Who was the teacher of Alexander the Great?
3. How did Alexander amaze the world?
4. What caused the Grecian Empire to break up?
5. Describe the struggle of the Maccabees.

Lesson 97

1. Describe early Rome and her people.
2. Where was the Roman Empire?
3. Describe conditions in Palestine at the time of Christ's birth.
4. During whose reign was Christ crucified?

Lesson 98

1. How did slavery harm the poor people of Rome?
2. How did the Roman Empire help to spread the gospel?
3. Why did Rome persecute the Christians?
4. What Roman emperor recognized Christianity?
5. Was the church hindered or helped by Constantine? Why?
6. Who captured and plundered Rome?

Lesson 99

1. Name one character from each of the five world kingdoms.
2. What did the ram with two horns represent?
3. What did the leopard with four wings and four heads represent?
4. Which kingdom had the greatest splendor?
5. Which kingdom was the strongest?
6. What is the fifth kingdom?

Lesson 100

1. What did the two iron legs of the great image represent?
2. Why did the church at Rome claim authority over other churches?
3. What powerful tribe accepted the Roman Catholic faith?
4. Why did wealth and power fail to help the churches?

5. How long did the Byzantine Empire continue?

Lesson 101

1. Who were the Saracens?
2. Who saved Europe from the Saracens?
3. What did Charlemagne do for the pope?
4. What were the beginnings of modern France and Germany?
5. Do you believe the papal church showed the true Spirit of Christ in its dealing with unbelievers? Why?

Lesson 102

1. What were the Crusades?
2. How did the Crusades cause trade between Europe and Asia?
3. What invention made the Bible easily accessible?
4. Who began the Protestant Reformation in Europe?
5. What did labor-saving machinery do for people?

Lesson 103

1. How did Serbia hinder the development of Germany?
2. Name the Allied nations that formed parts of the old Roman Empire.
3. Who captured Jerusalem from the Turks, and what were the results?
4. What were the results of the Russian revolution?
5. What did Mussolini do in Italy?
6. What did Hitler do in Germany?

Lesson 104

The Feet and Toes of the Image

A time of universal war, extreme distress, and tribulation came upon the world, culminating in World War II. While problems of trade, taxes, and unemployment were acute, nations devoted most of their energies in a hurried race for armaments. Sin fell like a heavy blight upon all lands, and the shadows of tribulation began to lengthen.

Heavy world judgment came to some churches. The Turks massacred a million or more Armenians (an Eastern Orthodox people) during World War I. The Communist Revolution of 1917-18 broke the power of the Orthodox Church in Russia, which was the national church but had become wealthy and corrupt.

Mussolini's venture in Ethiopia (1935-36) subjected the Ethiopian Orthodox Church to his power. The emperor of Ethiopia claimed descent from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba's alleged child. Nevertheless, he and his family were forced to flee from the land that was long ruled by his kingly ancestors. (See Ezekiel 30:1-9.)

The Spanish Civil War (1936-39) brought suffering to Catholics and Protestants alike. The Catholic Church long ruled with an iron hand in that country. The great masses of people remained poor and illiterate. During the 1930s a number of Catholic churches were destroyed, and some of the monks and nuns were put to death. The nationalist troops of General Franco slew a number of Protestant ministers in retaliation.

Many nations have hated and persecuted the Jews since their dispersion in A.D. 70. During Paul's time, the Roman emperor, Claudius, compelled the Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2). Russia, Romania, and Poland were guilty of many crimes against the children of Abraham. Spain cruelly treated the Jews during the Middle Ages. The most notorious example was Germany. Under Hitler, a wave of persecution swept the country, culminating in the Holocaust. The Arabs, although related to the Jews through Abraham, remained their determined foes. (See Jeremiah 29:16-19.)

Many have noted a noticeable falling away from the Christian faith throughout Gentile lands. (See Romans 11:21.) Modernism and unbelief have made great inroads into the churches, while many ministers no longer believe in Christ's miracles or His atoning blood sacrifice. On the other hand, God has poured out His Spirit in a marvelous way since 1900, in preparation for the coming of Christ. (See Joel 2:28-29.)

The new "Roman Empire," restored by Mussolini in 1936, steadily grew in power and prestige. Italy took Libya, in North Africa, from Turkey in 1912. They recovered disputed lands from Austria in 1918. They conquered Ethiopia (1935-36) and became the foundation for a new Roman Empire. Italian propaganda caused discontent among the Muslim peoples of Egypt and Palestine.

The Spanish Civil War (1936-39) was a world conflict on a miniature scale. Mussolini and Hitler openly supported General Franco in his war on the Loyalist government. The Loyalists received some help from Russia and France, while England tried to remain on the shaky fence of neutrality.

Before the war, the rulers of Spain divided the country into big estates, owned by wealthy landlords, the nobility, and the church. The small farmers and laborers worked on these big estates for a meager salary and existence. Depression after World War I brought lower prices and still harder times. The Loyalist government divided some of this land among the common people. The regular army under General Franco, with the help of Islamic Moors from Africa, revolted in 1936, and a most bloody war raged in that unhappy land.

Mussolini supported General Franco in his war against the "Reds." They declared that Spain must be saved from communism. It is true that Russia aided the Loyalists. Mobs were guilty of

destroying some Catholic churches and killing a number of priests. This was a reaction to the iron-fisted rule of the Roman Catholic Church and its heartless attitude toward the poor. Truly, the iron and clay could not mix in Spain. (See Daniel 2:41-43.)

Daniel prophesied that a power located in Rome would uproot three nations in the last days (Daniel 7:8). These three countries are located somewhere within the Roman Empire. Italy, undoubtedly, is one of the three subdued nations. Spain may prove to be another.

Lesson 105

The Lord of Hosts

The Gentile nations prepared for a great war. Vast armies were trained, equipped, and made ready for battle. The factories worked hard producing guns, shells, tanks, cars, airplanes, gas masks, clothing, and war supplies of every kind. Nations carefully monitored their supplies of oil, gasoline, and other necessities. New and deadlier weapons were devised for land, sea, and air. Nations were filled with hatred and fear, and no one knew when the next blow would come.

The result was World War II (1939-45), the largest and most devastating conflict in human history. On one side were the Axis powers, chiefly Germany, Japan, and Italy. On the other side were the victorious Allies, which included the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China, and France. The war took the lives of an estimated forty to sixty million people. Of these, at least twenty million were Russian, and six million Jews were slaughtered by the Nazis.

This war foreshadowed a coming world conflict in which God will judge the Gentiles. The prophet Joel prophesied of awful carnage that will soon visit this erring world (Joel 3:1-14). God will punish the Gentile nations for the wrongs they have done to the Jews and to the poor and needy. The crop of wickedness is ripe, and the harvest day is almost here. God is calling multitudes to the valley of decision.

Daniel 12:1-4 speaks of a great time of tribulation, from which God's people shall be delivered. At the time of the end, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Daniel 12:4). This prophecy is amply fulfilled in our time.

Nahum 2:3-4 tells of chariots with flaming torches that shall jostle one against another in the broad ways in the "day of his preparation." Nahum's prophecy is a good picture of the speedy cars, which crowd our broad highways at the present time.

Jesus warned His disciples in simple language of the tribulation that God would send upon the world (Matthew 24:28-31). Isaiah 26:20-21 prophesies of God's wrath and indignation coming upon this wicked earth but also promises a hiding place for God's people. Jeremiah said the slain of the Lord would be "from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth" (Jeremiah 25:33).

When Jesus stood up in Nazareth to read that wonderful prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3, He finished with the words: "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19). The time had not yet come for the "day of vengeance of our God." That day of vengeance will soon come.

James 5:1-8 tells of the rich and mighty who have oppressed and defrauded the poor. The cries of God's needy and mistreated people have "entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth" (hosts, i.e., armies) (James 5:4). The coming of the Son of God from heaven is near (I Thessalonians 1:10; James 5:8).

Ezekiel 38 and 39 prophesy that Gentile nations from the north will wage war against Israel.

Zechariah 14:1-5 speaks of the nations that capture Jerusalem, and how God, with His saints, will come from heaven to protect the Jews. (See Revelation 19:11-21.)

However, the child of God need not fear. He sees in present and future troubles the fulfillment of prophecy and waits hopefully for the coming of his Savior from heaven (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). His hopes, which are not based upon this life, look forward to the coming of Christ in the clouds (Acts 1:9-11). He will not despair, for Jesus has said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28.)

God promises deliverance for His people! No cry of "peace and safety" shall lull us to sleep (I Thessalonians 5:1-6). We are children of the day, not of the night! Let us be ready when Jesus comes! (See Matthew 24:42-51.)

Lesson 106
The Stone Kingdom

We have studied the gold kingdom of Babylon, the silver kingdom of Persia, the brass kingdom of Greece, and the iron kingdom of Rome, with its feet and toes of iron and clay.

Now we shall study the last and greatest kingdom. It shall overthrow all the other powers and shall stand forever. Daniel the prophet interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream about this kingdom: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:34-35).

Daniel further explained the world's condition preceding the coming of this kingdom. "And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:42-44).

Daniel 7:7-28 describes the terrible beast and its bloody reign (the Roman Empire). Many commentators think the ten horns represent ten kings who will arise within a new Roman Empire. A little horn will come up and uproot three of the ten horns. Thus, some say a power in Rome will subdue three nations within the revived Roman Empire.

Let us notice the description of this little horn. He is a man, for he has eyes and a mouth speaking great things. He is different from the other kings and his look is more stout than others. He even will dare to speak against the most High. He will wage war on the people of God, wear them out, and prevail against them. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Daniel 7:21-22).

"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Daniel 7:26-27).

The stone kingdom—the kingdom of God—shall prevail!

Lesson 107

Who Is the Stone?

The Bible tells us who the stone is. The first direct mention of a stone is in Genesis 28:11. Jacob, who was away from home and alone, slept with a stone for his pillow. He had a beautiful dream of a ladder reaching to heaven, with angels ascending and descending upon it. He saw the Lord above the ladder. The Lord spoke words of comfort and assurance. Jacob woke up, took the stone he used for a pillow, set it for a pillar, and anointed it with oil. He named the place "The House of God."

Moses said, in his song, "I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deuteronomy 32:3-4).

In prayer Hannah declared, "There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God" (I Samuel 2:2).

The psalmist David cried, "For who is God save the LORD*?* or who is a rock save our God? . . . The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted" (Psalm 18:31, 46).

Jesus, in His sermon on the mount, said that the one who hears and obeys Him is like "a wise man, which built his house upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24), where the storms could not destroy it.

Peter confessed to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). Jesus answered Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:17-18).

Who is the rock? Did Jesus mean He would build His church on Peter? The word *peter* means "a piece of stone." Let us read carefully, for the Word of God answers this question clearly and fully.

If Peter is the stone, surely his own testimony would confirm it! Peter declared in Acts 4:10-12: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Let us compare Matthew 21:42 with the preceding passage of Scripture. Jesus quoted from Psalm 118:22-23 when He said, "Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Peter also pointed out that the stone that was rejected by the builders became the head of the corner. He called Jesus "a living stone" and spoke of God's people as "lively stones" (I Peter 2:4-5). So we see that Jesus Himself, and not another person, is the stone foundation. The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20).

I Corinthians 10:1-4 speaks of the Israelites in the wilderness: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

The prophet Isaiah declared, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste" (Isaiah 28:16).

If any lingering doubt still persists, I Corinthians 3:11 settles the question: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The stone is none other than Jesus Christ!

Lesson 108
The King of Zion

We have traced the history of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. Now we turn to the revived Roman Empire, which many believe will arise with enormous power in the last days. It appears that ten kings, or rulers, will rule this restored Roman Empire. Daniel's vision revealed that this new empire will be a kingdom of iron mixed with clay. Since iron will not mix with clay, it may signify the rulers' power will not be absolute; that is, the democratic desires of the people will contest the rulers' power. Thus, struggle and turmoil will follow. Then, a power in Rome will rise up and subdue three of the rulers. God's people will suffer. Jesus will then come back from heaven and destroy the Roman power. He will reign over all the earth from Jerusalem, and He and His saints will possess the promised kingdom. (See Daniel 7:23-27.)

"The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:35). This verse of Scripture pictures the universal reign of Jesus over the whole earth, which will begin at His return with the saints.

David prophesied: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psalm 2:6-8).

"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Psalms 48:1-2).

The prophet Joel cried, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand" (Joel 2:1). Then he prophesied of a great time of trouble and called upon God's people to fast and pray.

Following this, he gave a promise of deliverance: "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 in the first month" (Joel 2:23). Joel prophesied of the plenty and restoration that would come with the pouring out of God's Spirit upon His people. Joel 2:32 declared deliverance in mount Zion and in Jerusalem for those who call upon the name of the Lord.

Joel prophesied of the Gentile nations gathering for a great war. "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:9-10). This call is going forth at the present time. Some of the weaker nations are becoming strong enough to defy the larger nations.

The heathen will assemble for war and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There the Lord will judge them (Joel 3:12).

"The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more" (Joel 3:16-17).

Who is the King of Zion? Let us read Isaiah 62:11-12 and Zechariah 9:9 and notice the description of Zion's King. He is just and lowly and bringing salvation; He rides into Jerusalem upon a young donkey, showing His humility. The daughter of Zion is commanded to shout and rejoice when the King comes into Jerusalem.

Jesus beautifully fulfilled this prophecy when He rode into Jerusalem! How the people praised Him (Matthew 21:1-11)!

A few days after Jesus' triumphant entry, sinful people unjustly tried, condemned, and crucified Him. But He arose from the dead, appeared to His disciples, ascended into heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples at Pentecost.

Jesus is King in the hearts of His people everywhere. Soon He will come to gather His saints, and afterward, He will return to this earth with them to set up His kingdom of righteousness. Sorrow will flee away, wars will cease, and nations will learn the ways of the Lord. How encouraging this is to those who are prepared to meet Him! May we find a place on His right hand at that time! (See Isaiah 2:1-4; Matthew 25:31-46.)

Lesson 109
The King Returns

When Jesus ascended to heaven from Mount Olivet, two men (angels) in white apparel appeared to His disciples as they watched Him leave. They said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

The disciples tarried at Jerusalem and received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. Subsequently, they spread the faith far and wide. But only a remnant of Jews accepted their message. The great majority stubbornly refused to accept Jesus. Tribulation came to God's earthly people, the Jews. The Romans destroyed their Temple and razed the Holy City to the ground. The Roman emperor commanded that the Jews be dispersed among the Gentile nations, where they later suffered great persecutions. The prophecy that our loving Jesus pronounced against them was literally fulfilled (Matthew 23:37-39).

But they are not cast off forever! "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:25). Some day, not far distant, God will soften their hearts; He will lift the veil from their eyes. Chastened and subdued, the Jews will call out, from honest hearts, for their Messiah. And, when they are ready, Jesus will return with the raptured saints to save them from destruction. (See Ezekiel 39:25-29.) The Jews will cry, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:39). What a wonderful day that will be! (See Isaiah 25:7-9; Micah 4:1-7.)

Zechariah 12:3-10 describes many nations coming against Jerusalem. Our Lord shall defend the Jews in Palestine at that time. He shall pour grace and mercy upon them. "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10). This will be fulfilled when Jesus returns and the Jews see the scars in His hands and feet. They will mourn because their fathers rejected and crucified Him.

Zechariah 14 elaborates on that great battle and the Lord's return. It reveals that nations will come against and capture Jerusalem. Furthermore, the Jews, in great distress, will flee from the mighty invader. The Lord shall come to save His people at that critical time. His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. The mount shall cleave in the middle, and the Jews shall flee into this valley. The Lord shall appear with His saints, turn the tide of battle, and annihilate the invading armies. The Jews shall gather much gold, silver, and other goods as spoil.

The remaining Gentiles will see God's glory. They shall accept Jesus as their rightful King as well, and He shall reign over all the earth. Jesus will bring peace, blessing, and prosperity to all the obedient—both Jew and Gentile. Wars and strife among humans and animals shall cease (Isaiah 11:1-10). God will bind Satan for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3.)

Then God's kingdom shall hold sway over all the earth. Jesus, the King, shall reign from Jerusalem. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Lesson 110

Jesus Outlines History

Luke 21 gives a simple account of prophetic events as outlined by the great Teacher to some of His disciples. In this discourse, Jesus gave an overview of the events to take place from the time He left this earth until He stands again on the Mount of Olives.

Jesus' disciples directed His attention to the mighty and glorious Temple in Jerusalem. He replied that not one of the Temple's huge stones would be left upon another (Luke 21:5-6).

Following this, He gave a historical outline. He spoke of deceivers who will come in Jesus' name and warned his followers not to go after them. He told of wars and upheaval yet exhorted them not to fear; these things must first come to pass. He warned that nations and kingdoms will battle against other countries, blood will flow, and desolation and misery will follow. Great earthquakes will shake various places; famines and pestilences will destroy multitudes; fearful sights will be displayed in heaven (Luke 21:8-11).

In the meantime, sinful people will persecute God's people. Authorities, kings, and magistrates will have Christians brought before them. Believers will use these opportunities, however, to give their testimonies for Jesus with inspired words from the Holy Spirit. Relatives and friends will betray them to the authorities; some of Christ's followers will be put to death. The world will hate them because they love the precious name of Jesus. But their unseen Lord will be near. Real harm shall not come to God's children (Luke 21:12-19).

Jesus spoke of Jerusalem being encircled by armies. Desolation will follow with vengeance falling upon the unbelieving Jew. Wrath and distress will overwhelm the children of Abraham. They will fall by the sword; other nations will lead them away captive. Jerusalem "shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Signs will appear in the sun, moon and stars; nations will be in distress; perplexity and grief will rack people's minds. Thrones and kingdoms will shudder and fall; then, the Son of Man will come in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:20-27).

Jesus exhorted His people to look up when these things begin to occur, for their redemption will be drawing near. When the fig tree buds, we know the kingdom of God is near at hand (Luke 21:28-31).

We must shun gluttony, selfish indulgence, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. God's day shall be a snare to carnal and earthly peoples (Luke 21:34-35).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). This is the bright gleam of hope for believers. May we remember and profit by these words.

Lesson 111
The Comforter

When Jesus knew He would soon go to the cross, He desired to comfort His disciples. Even though He would rise from the dead, He could only remain with them in person a short time. After He ascended to heaven, His followers would need special help; they would still need Him.

Jesus told His disciples of many mansions in His Father's house. He promised to go to prepare a place for them and to come back and receive them unto Himself (John 14:1-3).

Jesus exhorted His small band of disciples to keep His commandments, thus proving their love for Him. He promised that the Father would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to abide with them forever. The world could not receive the promise; the Spirit was only for believers (John 14:15-18).

Furthermore, Jesus told His people to love one another. In contrast, He said the world would hate them as it hated Him. He promised that the Comforter would testify of Him and that His people would bear witness of Him and His resurrection. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27).

Jesus said the Comforter would reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. He promised that the Comforter, or Holy Spirit, would guide His people into all truth and would show them the things to come. So we see that while the Spirit reproves for sin, He also guides and encourages the people of God. Jesus explained it was necessary that He depart, so the Comforter could come (John 16:7-13).

Soon after Jesus uttered these words, wicked people unjustly tried Him, condemned Him, and crucified Him upon a wooden cross. But the grave could not hold Him; He rose again and appeared to Mary Magdalene and His disciples. He restored joy to weeping Mary, gave full proof of His actual presence to doubting Thomas, restored confidence to brokenhearted Peter, and fed the toiling fishermen.

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the power from on high. He commanded them to carry the gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, after they had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Luke 24:46-49). "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

Acts 1:3-9 records the same command. This commission took place on the Mount of Olives, immediately preceding His ascension. Let us notice especially verses 4, 8, and 9: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. . . . But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."

Lesson 112

First Outpouring of the Holy Spirit Or The Birthday of the Church

As Jesus ascended to heaven, two angels appeared to the disciples. They promised that someday Jesus would come back to earth as He had left it. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11).

In obedience to the command of their departed Master, the disciples returned to Jerusalem and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren" (Acts 1:14; Luke 24:52-53).

On the Day of Pentecost, when the group was assembled together in unity, there came a sound from heaven that sounded like the blowing of a mighty wind. It completely filled the house where they were sitting. They could see divided tongues that looked like fire above each worshiper. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and words they had never learned came to their lips, inspired by the Holy Spirit of God—they spoke in unknown tongues (Acts 2:1-4).

Then a great crowd assembled from all parts of Jerusalem. They heard the Galilean believers speaking in languages that the great throng understood—they heard praise to God in the languages of their own countries. Amazed and perplexed, the crowd asked for an explanation of what they had just witnessed. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Peter stood up and, supported by the other apostles, preached a message to them with boldness and power. He explained how this wonderful scene fulfilled Joel's prophecy of old. He told the crowd how they had wickedly crucified Jesus of Nazareth, whom God had sent to bless them. He declared God had raised Jesus from the dead and had made Him Lord and Christ. Moreover, the risen Christ had sent the promised Holy Ghost to the believers, and the results were what the crowd had witnessed (Acts 2:5-36; Joel 2:28-32).

Conviction and remorse for sin seized many in the multitude. They cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter commanded them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). He then said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

That same day about three thousand people accepted the message and were baptized. They, too, became witnesses of the risen Christ. A church of prayer, praise, and power was established. God worked miracles and signs through the believers in the name of Jesus.

From Jerusalem, devoted men and women carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the different parts of the earth.

Thank God for Pentecost! It was the birthday of the church!

Lesson 113

Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

Cornelius, a Gentile who dwelt in Caesarea, a city on the coast of Judea, was an officer in command of one hundred Roman soldiers, called the Italian Regiment. He was a devout and just man; he feared God and frequently gave to needy people. He was a man of prayer and had an excellent reputation among the Jews. One morning, while Cornelius was fasting and praying, an angel of God appeared to him, calling him by name. The angel directed him to send for Peter, who was lodged with Simon, a tanner from Joppa (Acts 10:1-6).

Cornelius called two servants and a soldier, telling them of his heavenly vision. Soon the three men were on their way to Joppa (Acts 10:7-8).

At noon the next day, Peter was praying on the housetop and became very hungry. He fell into a trance and saw heaven open and a great sheet let down to earth before him. In the sheet were all kinds of animals, creeping things and fowls. A voice commanded Peter to kill and eat. He protested, declaring that he had never eaten anything that was common or unclean. The voice replied that he should not call anything common or unclean, since God had cleansed it. Peter saw the vision three times; then he awoke (Acts 10:9-16).

Meanwhile, the three men were approaching Simon's house. The Spirit informed Peter of the three men. They told Peter of their errand, and he invited them in for the night. The next day, Peter took six Jewish believers with him, and the entire group of ten men set out for Caesarea (Acts 10:17-23; 11:4-17).

Cornelius awaited their arrival, having called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter came into the house, Cornelius tried to worship him. Peter refused this homage, commanding the Roman officer to stand up. Peter declared to the assembled group that God had commanded him to come to them. Heretofore, this was unheard of, since the Jews considered the Gentiles unclean, and the law had forbidden the Jews to associate closely with them. Cornelius, then, declared his vision to Peter (Acts 10:24-33).

Peter confessed that he now realized that God would accept anyone who reverently came to Him in faith and obedience. He proclaimed that Jesus Christ was Lord of all. He spoke to them of John's baptism and the power of Jesus' ministry. He explained the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Peter told of his Lord's commission and declared that the remission of their sins was possible in Jesus' name (Acts 10:34-43). (See Matthew 16:18-19.)

While Peter preached, the Holy Ghost fell on the Gentiles. They spoke with tongues and praised God. After hearing the Gentiles speak in tongues, the Jews who had come with Peter were astonished that God had blessed them with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Then Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. After the baptismal service, Peter stayed at Cornelius's home for a time. (Acts 10:44-48).

Questions on Lessons 104-113

Lesson 104

1. Name some nations that have persecuted the Jews.
2. What will a power located in Rome do in the last days?

Lesson 105

1. Name Old Testament prophets who prophesied of tribulation in the last days.
2. Who warned the rich and mighty?
3. Why will the Gentile nations suffer?
4. Quote one Bible reference concerning tribulation.

Lesson 106

1. What do the ten horns of the beast represent?
2. What does the little horn represent?
3. Describe the little horn.
4. How will the little horn treat the saints?
5. When shall God set up the stone kingdom?

Lesson 107

1. What did Jacob call the place where he used stone for a pillow?
2. Who is the rock of the Old Testament?
3. Who is the stone of the New Testament?
4. Quote one solid Bible reference to show who the stone is today.

Lesson 108

1. What happened to the stone after it struck the image?
2. What is the name of God's mountain?
3. Who are the children of Zion?
4. What city is mentioned with Mount Zion?
5. Quote a Bible reference that tells who the king of Zion is.

Lesson 109

1. Why have the Jews received tribulation?
2. Are the Jews cast off from Jesus forever? Give a verse of Scripture for reference.
3. When will the Jews accept Jesus as their Messiah?
4. Will the Gentiles receive any blessings in Christ's kingdom? Give reference.

Lesson 110

1. What is the main purpose of Luke 21?
2. How long will Jerusalem be trodden down by the Gentiles?
3. Should we fear wars and upheavals? Why?
4. Of what are we warned to beware?
5. What is our bright gleam of hope?

Lesson 111

1. Why did Jesus want to comfort His disciples?
2. How did Jesus describe His Father's house?
3. What does the Comforter, or Spirit, do for a Christian?
4. What does the Comforter do for a sinner?

5. Of whom does the Comforter testify?

Lesson 112

1. What promise does Acts 1:10-11 give?
2. Who tarried in the upper room at Jerusalem for the power from on high?
3. How did the Holy Spirit come to the disciples?
4. What brought the great crowd?
5. What did Peter say of Jesus?
6. What did Peter tell the people to do?
7. How many of the people were baptized?

Lesson 113

1. Who was Cornelius?
2. Describe the character of Cornelius.
3. Who appeared to Cornelius as he fasted and prayed?
4. How did God tell Peter to go to the Gentiles?
5. Who gathered at Cornelius's house?
6. What did Peter say of Jesus?
7. How did the Jews know that God had given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles?

Lesson 114
Saul and Barnabas

Barnabas is first mentioned as a member of the early church at Jerusalem in Acts 4:36-37. To help the needy saints, he sold land and laid the profit at the apostles' feet. His name was Joses, but the apostles called him Barnabas, which means "Son of Consolation."

Stephen, one of the seven deacons in Acts 6, was full of faith and power. He witnessed fearlessly about Jesus. For this, a mob of angry Jewish elders stoned him to death. Saul, a young man, supported Stephen's execution and kept the coats of the angry men who murdered him (Acts 6:8-15; 7:55-60). (See Philippians 3:4-7.)

After Stephen's martyrdom, a great persecution arose against the Jerusalem church. Saul seized many saints and put them in prison. All the church, except the apostles, were forced to flee Jerusalem. They scattered to different parts of Judea and Samaria, where they preached the Word and won others to Jesus (Acts 8:1-4).

Saul went to the high priest and obtained letters to the synagogues in Damascus. These letters gave Saul permission to arrest and imprison any of the saints, whether men or women. Saul started on his grim journey with a number of men. As he neared Damascus, a bright light shone from heaven. Saul fell to the ground, and a voice from heaven said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "Who art thou, Lord?" (Acts 9:5) Saul inquired. The voice replied, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Trembling, Saul asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (See Acts 9:1-6.)

Saul's companions led him to Damascus. Saul fasted for three days, neither eating nor drinking. While he was fasting, the Lord spoke to a believer named Ananias and sent him to Saul. When he found Saul, Ananias laid hands on his head, and Saul received his sight, arose, was baptized, and was filled with the Spirit (Acts 9:8-18).

Saul, now converted, stayed with the Damascus saints for some time. He preached in the synagogues that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of God. Outraged, some of the Jews planned to kill him. They watched the city gates day and night, but the saints let Saul down over the city wall in a basket, and he escaped (Acts 9:20-25).

Saul then went to Jerusalem. He tried to join the disciples, but they feared him. Barnabas befriended Saul, took him to the apostles Peter and James, and told them what Jesus had done for Saul.

Saul stayed with Peter fifteen days. While in Jerusalem, Saul disputed with the Greek-speaking Jews about the Lord Jesus; they tried to kill him. Then the disciples took him to Caesarea and sent him back to his home city of Tarsus in Asia Minor (Acts 9:26-31). (See Galatians 1:13-24.)

Lesson 115
Saul Helps Barnabas

Some of the saints who had been driven from Jerusalem went north to the Gentile city of Antioch. There they preached Jesus, not only to the Jews but also to the Greeks (Gentiles). Many of the Gentiles accepted Jesus as their Lord (Acts 11:19-21).

The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch to lead the assembly. The Lord blessed the church, and many people were converted through its ministry (Acts 11:22-24).

After this, Barnabas went to Tarsus, found Saul, and brought him to Antioch. Saul helped Barnabas with the preaching and teaching for one year. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. *Christian* means "Christ-like" or "follower of Christ." Saul's help proved of great value to Barnabas, and the church prospered in that city (Acts 11:25-26).

Prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, Agabus, told the people of a great drought that would soon come to the world. Since the brethren in Judea were very poor, the Antioch church sent a liberal offering to them. Barnabas and Saul took the money to Jerusalem and left it with the church elders (Acts 11:27-30). When the two men returned from Jerusalem, they took with them a young disciple named John Mark to assist them (Acts 12:25).

The Antioch church, by this time, was well supplied with spiritual teachers, and they had a great burden for other regions where Christ had not been preached yet. While the elders fasted and prayed, the Lord revealed to them His will. He called Barnabas and Saul to be missionaries. The other elders laid their hands upon Barnabas and Saul, prayed for them, and sent them away on their first missionary tour. The two missionaries took John Mark with them. Directed by the Holy Spirit, they took a ship and sailed for Cyprus, a large island in the Mediterranean Sea (Acts 13:1-4).

While on the island of Cyprus, Saul assumed his Roman/Hellenistic name, Paul. Hereafter the Book of Acts refers to him to as Paul. Some believe he did this as a signal that he was now entering the Gentile phase of his ministry. Others think he did it for the gospel's sake since the Greco-Roman world would more readily accept the word of someone from their own culture (Acts 13:9).

Barnabas and Paul traveled and preached together for a number of years. They preached in cities of Cyprus and made a circuit through Asia Minor, witnessing of Christ's death and resurrection and establishing a number of churches (Acts 14:21-28). Finally they went back to Antioch.

When they started on their second missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas disputed sharply over whether or not to take Mark with them again, since Mark had deserted them on the first journey and sailed home. Barnabas wanted to take him; Paul refused. They could not reach an agreement, so they parted ways. Barnabas took John Mark and sailed to Cyprus (Acts 15:35-39). Paul chose Silas as a fellow worker. They traveled to Derbe and Lystra, where Timothy joined them (Acts 16:1-3). They went through Asia Minor, finally reaching Troas on the coast, east of Macedonia. At Troas, it appears that Luke joined Paul's company and traveled with them on their journey. Luke authored the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, and we notice at verse 10 that the narrative changes to the first-person "we" instead of the third-person "they."

God called Paul, in a vision, to carry the gospel into Macedonia. Thus, the gospel reached Europe for the first time. Interestingly, in Paul's vision, a man called out to Paul saying they needed help, but the first European convert was a woman named Lydia. After this initial conversion, Paul and his companions brought many to the knowledge of Christ.

Lesson 116

The Early Church

(A.D. 33-64)

The church began at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the group of 120 believers assembled in an upper room. Later, after Peter preached the first sermon of the church, about three thousand other people believed in Christ and were added to the church. Thereafter, the Lord added others to the church daily, as many more came to believe in Him and were born again (Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-38, 41, 47; Luke 24:49).

Around ten years later, the first Gentiles were added to the church when the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius, his relatives, and close friends. The Jews recognized that God had given the Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit when they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (Acts 10:44-48).

The biblical way to be saved is to be born again of the water and the Spirit. This occurs when we repent (confess our sins to God and declare that Jesus is our Lord), are baptized in Jesus' name, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in other tongues. (See John 3:3-5; Romans 10:9; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 2:38-39.)

The early Christians exhibited divine love and true consecration. They met often for worship, helped each other in times of need, stayed true to Jesus, and walked in the light of the Spirit. (See John 13:34-35; Acts 2:44-47; 11:27-30; II Corinthians 6:17-18; James 1:27.)

However, Jews and pagans alike persecuted the early church because of their faith in Jesus. Everywhere, the Christians were spoken against. Sometimes, unbelievers beat them or drove them from their homes or even killed them. (See Luke 21:17; Acts 5:40; 7:59-60; 28:22.)

Nevertheless, the early saints faithfully witnessed for Christ. (See Acts 4:33; 8:4; 13:46-49.) They proclaimed the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God. (See John 3:16; Acts 2:23-24; 3:13-15; 10:36-43; I Corinthians 15:1-8.)

The saints were a people for Jesus' name. (See Matthew 24:9; Acts 4:10-12; 15:14, 26.) And in His name, God wrought healings, miracles, and signs through the church to confirm the truth of the gospel. (See Mark 16:17-18; Acts 3:6; 4:10; 6:8; James 5:14-15.)

Finally, the second coming of Jesus to earth was the bright hope of the early church. (See Acts 1:10-11; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13.)

Lesson 117

Doctrine of the Early Church

I. The invisible God is one Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; I Timothy 1:17).

1. He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible (I Timothy 1:17).
2. No person has seen God (John 1:18).
3. God is a Spirit (John 4:24).
4. Heaven is God's throne; earth his footstool (Isaiah 66:1; Matthew 5:34-35).
5. God is the father of Jesus (Luke 1:31-32).
6. The Holy Ghost is the father of Jesus (Matthew 1:20).
7. There is one God and Father of all (Ephesians 4:6).
8. He is God of heaven and earth (Acts 17:24).
9. God was manifest in flesh (I Timothy 3:16).

II. Death and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God.

1. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16).
2. Jesus was a man approved of God (Acts 2:22-24).
3. God raised up Jesus from the dead (Acts 2:32).
4. God has glorified His Son, Jesus (Acts 3:13-15).
5. God raised Jesus on the third day (Acts 10:40).
7. Christ died for our sins (I Corinthians 15:3).

III. We find God only by coming to Jesus.

1. The Son reveals the Father (Matthew 11:27).
2. Jesus is the mediator between God and humanity (I Timothy 2:5).
3. Jesus is the door (John 10:7-9).
4. He that believes on Jesus will not abide in darkness (John 12:46).
5. No one can come to the Father but by Jesus Christ (John 14:6).
6. Paul's testimony (Acts 26:14-18).
7. If we deny the Son, we do not have the Father (I John 2:22-23).

IV. Trust in Jesus' name.

1. In His name shall the Gentiles trust (Matthew 12:21).
2. Jesus came in His Father's name (John 5:43).
3. The Holy Ghost came in Jesus' name (John 14:26).
4. Jesus Christ is the foundation (I Corinthians 3:11).
5. The whole family in heaven and earth is named after the Father (Ephesians 3:14-15).
6. The name of Jesus is exalted above every other name (Philippians 2:9).
7. We are to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:17).
8. We are a people for God's name (Acts 15:14).
9. We are persecuted for Jesus' name (Matthew 24:9; Luke 21:17; Acts 5:40-41).
10. The revealed name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is Jesus (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5).

Lesson 118

The Falling Away

(A.D. 64–325)

The early church loved both God and humanity. The saints were baptized in the Holy Spirit, loved the name of Jesus, loved the Word, lived consecrated lives, and witnessed for Jesus. However, Paul and others forewarned of a falling away in the church. (See II Thessalonians 2:3-12; I John 4:1-3; Jude 3-4.)

Human wolves did not spare the flock. (See Acts 20:28-32.) Love gradually left the church; ardor cooled. (See I Corinthians 13:1; Jude 17-19; Revelation 2:4-5.)

In the last half of the second century the church began to abandon baptism in Jesus' name only, in favor of a trinitarian formula. This new formula, first propagated by Justin Martyr, was not identical to the wording of Matthew 28:19, for ministers invoked the name of Jesus along with the titles "Father" and "Holy Spirit." Furthermore, some began to use sprinkling instead of immersion, and many adopted infant baptism. During the ministry of the apostles, their immediate successors, and the post-apostolic writers, ministers immersed converts once and used the Jesus Name formula exclusively—no one was baptized any other way. By the fourth century, baptism was typically in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The rejection of the apostles' method of baptizing their converts along with a general spiritual decline heralded the great falling away. (See Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 58, 95.)

By the fifth century, speaking in tongues and the other miraculous gifts of the Spirit almost died away completely. Ceremony replaced spiritual power. For example, anointing with oil (a legitimate practice) substituted for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (See Walker, 87-88, 96.) Cold formality replaced the liberty of the Spirit. (See II Corinthians 3:17).)

Whereas, persecution had previously purified the church, favor now corrupted it. As worldliness increased, Christians began to ambitiously seek and hold public office and engage in war. (See Matthew 6:24.)

The Roman emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325. It was unique because, for the first time, both state and church power were joined together. The bishops in attendance adopted a doctrinal statement supporting an early form of the doctrine of the trinity in opposition to Arianism. Constantine had hoped that this council would bring unity to the church, and by extension his empire, but it only fanned the flames of doctrinal strife over the Godhead. Those who refused to sign the adopted statement were banished.

Lesson 119

The Dark Ages: Rome Asserts Control

(A.D. 325–800)

The Roman Catholic Church gradually gained ruling power over the churches of the Roman Empire in the west. Rome's position as capital of the Roman Empire helped this claim. Bishops of the Roman church claimed the apostle Peter had transferred spiritual authority to them. In A.D. 445 the Roman emperor officially recognized the pope's authority.

The doctrine of the trinity, or three persons in one God, was established as the orthodox view of God. Another influential development was the monastic movement. Seeking to escape the evils of the world and live in communion with God, men and women fled to the deserts of Syria and Egypt and built monasteries to live in. Later monks and nuns built monasteries throughout Europe. (See John 17:14-16.) Monks took three vows: (1) poverty, (2) chastity, and (3) obedience to their superior. They established the custom of celibacy, or refusal to marry. Monks made copies of the Bible and other literature and preserved them. This was a worthy service in that rough, destructive time.

Jerome translated the Bible from the original languages into Latin in c. A.D. 390. His translation, the Vulgate, is still the official version of the Roman Catholic Church. During this time, theologians from Alexandria began to call Mary the "Mother of God." The Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) officially endorsed this teaching. Many people who disagreed fled to Persia and other distant lands.

Pope Gregory I established three important doctrines from A.D. 590 to 604.

1. The doctrine of purgatory, or an intermediate place between heaven and hell, was declared true (A.D. 593). (See Romans 2:7-11.)

2. He said that the bread and wine used at the Lord's Supper became the actual body and blood of Christ. (See I Corinthians 11:23-26.)

3. He declared that dead saints could help a person be saved. (See I Timothy 2:5.)

Standardized written prayers largely replaced genuine prayer. Moreover, the seventh general council at Nicea (A.D. 787) authorized the use of sacred relics in churches. Worshipers also began to venerate holy pictures, statues, and the cross. (See Exodus 20:4; I Corinthians 10:14.)

Finally, Pope Stephen II and Pepin, king of Franks, formed an alliance. One result was that the pope got possession of lands in central Italy.

Lesson 120

The Later Middle Ages

(A.D. 800–1517)

Charlemagne, king of the Franks, and Pope Leo III of Rome entered an alliance with each other. As a result, Charlemagne's armies protected Rome and extended Catholic rule over the Lombards of northern Italy and the Saxons of Germany. The pope crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Holy Roman Empire on Christmas Day, A.D. 800. Later popes also allied themselves with different kings.

Priests performed church services in Latin, making it impossible for the common people to understand what was said. The Catholic Church became wealthier through tithes, gifts, and the seizure of treasures and lands. (See I Timothy 6:17-19.) The priests and monks became more corrupt and worldly. Simony, the buying of church positions, became widespread.

Pope Gregory VII, or Hildebrand (1073-85), enforced celibacy for all clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. Priests were required to renounce their wives and children or give up their offices. This was the end of open marriage among the Catholic clergy. (See I Timothy 4:1-3.)

Pope Gregory claimed that the Roman pope was the rock of the church, responsible to God alone, and above all earthly sovereigns. (See A. H. Newman, *A Manual of Church History* 1:505-7).

Catholic popes made war upon unbelievers. (See Luke 6:27-36.) They destroyed multitudes of the Albigenses or Cathari, a heretical group in southern France (1209-29), and finally exterminated them around 1300. The Catholics persecuted the Waldenses, who taught that the Bible was authoritative instead of the pope, and forced them to hide for centuries in mountain valleys of the Alps.

The Catholic Church instituted the Inquisition to root out "heresy" (1208, 1215, 1252). Catholic authorities established a system of courts to punish alleged heretics (people who did not believe in the Catholic faith). The inquisition tortured and killed untold numbers of people, especially in Spain, Italy, France, and the Netherlands.

The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) required confession to priests at least once a year. (See I Timothy 2:5.) Transubstantiation, the changing of bread and wine to Christ's body and blood, was upheld.

Though the Catholic Church dominated Europe's spiritual life during this age, God raised up men to challenge its doctrine and practice. These challenges ultimately flowered into the Protestant Reformation.

John Wycliffe (died 1384) has been called the "Morning Star of the Reformation." He lived in England and was educated at Oxford. He attacked the greed and selfishness in the church. He taught that the Bible was the highest law of the church, even above the pope. He said the church could have a sole leader if he lived a life like Peter and the early church. Importantly, he was primarily responsible for translating the Bible from Latin to English.

John Huss of Bohemia (1373-1415) studied at the University of Prague, where he read the teachings of Wycliffe. Huss taught that the true head of the church was Christ and not the pope. He said the law of the church was the New Testament, not ecclesiastical tradition. He believed in a life of Christ-like poverty. The Council of Constance condemned him to death, and he was burned at the stake. Nevertheless, Huss kept his faith to the last breath.

Other factors also paved the way for the Protestant Reformation.

The printing press. Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the printing press, around 1450, in Germany was probably the most influential development in the period before the Reformation. He

first printed a Bible in Latin, but this led to the printing of the Bible in the languages of the people.

Columbus's discovery of America in 1492. This gave people new courage and hope. Furthermore, America became a refuge for those who were oppressed because of their religious views.

Growth of religious discontent in Germany. Many protested against the luxury and corruption in the Catholic Church. There was an increasing demand that people follow the teachings of Christ.

Sale of indulgences by the pope. To support the building of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the pope instituted the sale of indulgences. Church officials told the people that their money and gifts could obtain temporal forgiveness for their sins. This practice met much resistance in Germany. Martin Luther led the resistance that resulted in a break with Rome and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in Europe.

Lesson 121

The Reformation

(A.D. 1517-1722)

Martin Luther (1485-1546)

Luther was the son of a Saxon peasant miner, but he received a university education. Later, he became a Catholic monk and did works of penance for his sins. God revealed to him that "the just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). Luther visited Rome and was disillusioned by the worldliness displayed there. (See Revelation 3:1-5.)

The pope's agent sold indulgences in Germany. Luther declared that the indulgences, which were letters of pardon signed by the pope, could not help in salvation for the living nor release souls from purgatory. The Roman pope arranged for Luther to appear before a great assembly of princes and church officers at Worms, Germany, in 1521 and ordered him to retract his statements. Luther refused to retract his statements unless shown to do so by the Bible.

Thus, the pope denounced Luther; however, the Saxon prince protected Luther's life. While hiding in the prince's castle, Luther translated the Bible into the German language. Most people of north and central Germany, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden followed his teachings. They became known as Lutherans.

Lutheran doctrine included the belief that the Bible is for everyone and that salvation comes through faith in Christ. (See Galatians 3:11; John 3:16.) Furthermore, Luther taught that all people could pray directly to God without a priestly intermediary. (See Luke 11:1-4.) The Lutherans opposed indulgences, purgatory, works of penance, celibacy, and the authority of the pope over the Bible. But the Lutherans did not grant full liberty to others and they retained the unbiblical doctrines of the trinity, sprinkling, and infant baptism.

John Calvin (1509-64)

Calvin was an educated French lawyer who converted to Protestantism in 1532. Soon thereafter, the Catholic opposition in Paris drove him from the city in 1534 because of his Protestant views. He went to Geneva, Switzerland, where he stayed the greater part of his life. Later, he became the ruler of that city but was very stern and harsh. He forbade worldly amusements and luxuries in Geneva, and the people were compelled to go to church. The slightest offences were punished with great severity. He ordered the execution of some people who disagreed with his views.

Calvin organized churches with local presbyters (Presbyterian). These churches observed communion, or the Lord's Supper, as a memorial of Jesus' sufferings and death. Calvin taught individual predestination, that is, God has determined in advance who shall be saved or lost. His greatest services were translating the Bible into French, raising a higher moral standard for Europe, returning to a local church government, and fostering a respect for the Bible. His teachings were accepted in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, and in parts of France, England and Germany.

Henry VIII of England

Henry VIII of England wanted to divorce his queen, Catherine of Aragon, because she failed to produce a son, and he wished to have an heir to the throne. In addition, he wanted to marry Anne Boleyn. The pope refused his request, however. King Henry then obtained a divorce from

the English court and married Anne. The pope responded by excommunicating King Henry.

Following this, the English Parliament (1534) declared Henry VIII to be the head of the Church of England (Anglican Church). As the head of the Anglican Church, he ordered the closure of all Catholic monasteries and confiscated their wealth. For a time, English kings appointed all high officers of the church.

Menno Simons (1492-1559)

Simons was a Dutch priest. After reading Luther's tracts and studying the New Testament, he began to oppose infant baptism and finally left the Catholic Church in 1556. He taught a spiritual new birth (John 3:1-8) and baptism for believers only by affusion, that is, by pouring water on the head. His followers, today, are called Mennonites.

John Smyth (1570-1612)

Smyth, an Englishman, joined the Separatist movement—a group dissatisfied with the Church of England. He went to Holland in 1607 with other Separatists, and through Mennonite influence, he embraced believers' baptism. He baptized himself first, then others. In 1612, Helwys, a member of the group, returned to England and formed the first Baptist church there.

The Confession of Faith by seven Baptist churches of London (1644) recognized baptism by immersion as the only biblical mode for this ceremony. (See Matthew 3:16; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12.)

Roger Williams (1604-84)

Williams was born and educated in England but came to Massachusetts with his wife in 1631. He preached in Salem for a time, but the Puritan leadership forced him to leave the colony because he believed in complete religious toleration. He made his way through the wilderness in midwinter; friendly Indians fed and sheltered him. Finally, he started a settlement in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1636, on land the Indians gave him. Later, his wife and two children joined him there. Full religious liberty was granted in Rhode Island, and the church and state were completely separate.

Separatists came to Providence and started the first Baptist church in America in 1639. Roger Williams and eleven others were baptized and united with the church, but Williams remained in the Baptist church for a short time only, since he wished to be independent in belief.

Lesson 122

Revival Movements

(A.D. 1722–1900)

The Moravians

In 1722, Count Zinzendorf welcomed a small group of Moravian refugees to his estate in Saxony. The group was a part of the Moravian Brethren. They accepted teachings of Wycliffe, Huss, and the Waldenses. The Moravians started a little settlement at Herrnhut, and under Count Zinzendorf's protection, the small colony grew rapidly.

The Moravians were a people of prayer, had a real experience from God, and maintained a zeal to spread the gospel. Their church had been established in Moravia in 1467, with the help of Waldensian bishops. Many people of Moravia, Bohemia, and Poland accepted the faith. By 1517, they numbered nearly 200,000 members. Persecution arose afterward, and they suffered exceedingly from the Thirty Years' War. For a time it seemed their church would be blotted out, but a remnant remained.

Many Moravian preachers went from Herrnhut to different parts of the world. They had the greatest missionary zeal since the days of the early Christians, and their missions are still found in many remote parts of the earth.

John Wesley (1703-91)

John and his brother Charles were younger sons of an English minister, Samuel Wesley. John's mother was a woman of strong character and deep piety. Although her family numbered nineteen children, she took time to instruct each one in God's Word and brought them up to fear and honor the Lord.

John and Charles were members of a group of young men who met often for the study of the Bible and other books. This society gradually became more religious: the young men fasted twice a week, prayed much, and visited prisons and the sick. Other students at Oxford began to call them "Methodists" or the "Holy Club."

The two brothers sailed for Georgia on a missionary journey in 1735, and they met a number of Moravians on the ship. The Moravians had an uncommon peace, calmness, and gentleness. Wesley learned from them the necessity of a personal experience with God. Unfortunately, the Wesleys were unsuccessful in Georgia and soon returned to England. John had a definite experience with God on May 24, 1738. Thereafter he was a changed man with new joy and power.

Wesley visited the Moravians at Herrnhut and also met Count Zinzendorf. He met George Whitefield again on returning to England. (Whitefield was an Oxford friend who had made a successful missionary tour of Georgia.) Whitefield began to hold open-air meetings; Wesley hesitated but soon joined him. He began preaching at the Foundry, an unused government building, in 1739. After the building was enlarged and repaired, it became the Methodist headquarters in London until 1788. Wesley separated from the Moravians, and Whitefield separated from Wesley because of doctrinal differences. Wesley taught full and free salvation, while Whitefield preached the doctrine of predestination.

Wesley, a small man, worked hard and possessed great powers of endurance. He had no permanent residence and often made long journeys on horseback. He preached sometimes four or five times a day and studied and wrote much. Bad weather never halted his progress. Wesley's preaching drew great throngs of people, and the power of God rested on the services in a marked

degree. Thousands of men and women were wonderfully blessed. Significantly, his teaching and preaching raised the moral tone of the English nation, while joy and zeal replaced bitterness and gloom in the hearts of many. However, Church of England authorities frowned upon the noisy meetings, and churches closed their doors to him. Generally, John preached in the open fields to large crowds. And though ruffians often endangered his life, God protected him.

John's brother Charles, who could not stand the incessant journeys, lived a more quiet life. He was also an able preacher and evangelist, but his main work was the writing of beautiful hymns. For example, once, while hiding in a barn from a mob of his pursuers, he wrote the song "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

John Wesley married a widow with four children in 1750, but their life was not happy and they finally separated. His wife did not cherish his ideals, and he would not change his preacher habits to please her.

Wesley also wrote many books, which brought him a large income. Nevertheless, he would use only a small amount for his personal needs and he would use the rest to spread the gospel and to help the needy. John taught the necessity of a holy life and a genuine conversion experience. Perhaps no other Englishman ever did more for his country spiritually than this small, talented, hard-working evangelist.

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-92)

Charles was the son and grandson of ministers. He joined the Baptist church in 1851 and became pastor of Waterbeach Church the following year. He became a widely known boy preacher. He later preached in the New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, at the close of 1853. Great crowds came to hear the young man. He drew such large crowds that a huge tabernacle was built for his use, and it was completed on March 25, 1861. Spurgeon preached every Sunday and Thursday.

Spurgeon was a Nonconformist, that is, he believed in the great fundamentals of Christian faith, such as the virgin birth of Christ, the resurrection from the dead, and cleansing through the blood. He appealed to the emotions of the individual conscience and flavored his talks with humor. He also wrote, and one of his more popular books was a book of sayings entitled *John Ploughman's Talks, or Plain Advice from Plain People*.

Lesson 123

Revival in the American Colonies

(1734-83)

Jonathan Edwards (1703-58)

Jonathan Edward's father was a minister, and his mother was the daughter of a minister. He was born in Connecticut in 1703. He was a bright child who was fond of serious study. Jonathan married Sarah Pierrepont in 1727. His wife was a girl of deep piety and sweet cheerfulness. They had twelve children, for whom the parents felt the deepest affection.

Edwards became a minister in the Congregationalist church of Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1727 and remained there until 1750. He was a strict Calvinist, and his most famous sermon was *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. The doctrine of predestination was sweet to him; in fact, he said that God was perfectly just in saving one person and condemning another as He chose. He declared that little children were like vipers in God's sight unless found in Christ.

Under Edwards' fiery preaching, a stirring revival broke out in the small town of Northhampton in 1734. Fully three hundred people converted to Christianity. From Northhampton, the revival spread to different parts of New England.

Two or three years later, however, many reacted against Edward's extreme teachings, and large numbers of the converts fell away. Nonetheless, the New England colonies felt the influence of his work for many years.

Jonathan Edwards devoted most of his time to deep study or preaching; he visited the members of his flock infrequently. The sweet spirit of his wife partly compensated for this; however, his congregation became dissatisfied. They were tired of so much preaching on man's general depravity; they longed for something to lift them from their gloom. Finally, the church overwhelmingly voted out Edwards as pastor in 1750.

He then became the pastor at Stockbridge and also a missionary to the Indians. Later, Princeton University called him to be its president in 1757. However, Edward's unexpected death, in 1758, cut short his service to the university.

Jonathan Edwards did a splendid Christian work in many ways, and undoubtedly, he won a large number of people through his heated, earnest preaching. One wonders, however, what he might have done if he had mixed more love and compassion with his strong doctrine.

George Whitefield (1714-70)

George Whitefield of England visited the American colonies seven times, preaching in different communities from Georgia to New England. Although a friend and one-time colleague of John Wesley, he was a strict Calvinist. The American colonists welcomed him, and many people accepted Christianity through his preaching.

Whitefield separated from the Church of England and founded the Calvinistic Methodist Society in 1743. Whitefield's gift lay in the forceful delivery of his sermons. He was not gifted, however, in organizational management; thus, many of his followers joined the Wesleyan Methodists after his death. He died in Massachusetts in 1770, while on his seventh visit to America.

Questions on Lessons 114-123

Lesson 114

1. When was Barnabas first mentioned in the Bible?
2. When was Saul first mentioned in the Bible?
3. Why did Saul go to Damascus?
4. Why was Saul led into Damascus?
5. Why did the Jews in Damascus try to kill Saul?

Lesson 115

1. Who preached the gospel in Antioch?
2. Why did Barnabas come to Antioch, and who sent him?
3. How was Barnabas of help to Saul?
4. How was Saul of help to Barnabas?
5. Where did Barnabas and Saul go on a missionary journey?

Lesson 116

1. Where and how did the church begin?
2. How did the Jews know that God had saved the Gentiles?
3. What is God's way for us to enter the church? Give Scripture reference.
4. Where the early saints popular? Why or why not?
5. Should we live today for the world's praise? Why or why not?

Lesson 117

1. Quote a Bible verse that describes the nature of God.
2. Are God and the Holy Spirit one and the same? Why?
3. Who died upon the cross to save us from sin?
4. How can we find God? Is there any other way to find Him?
5. Why do we trust in Jesus' name?
6. Who raised Jesus from the dead?

Lesson 118

1. Describe the character of the early church.
2. What caused the church to have a falling away?
3. What did the church lose initially?
4. What changes were made in water baptism?
5. What took the place of the Holy Spirit baptism?
6. In what ways did the Council of Nicea harm the church?

Lesson 119

1. How did the bishops of the Roman church claim authority over other churches?
2. What good work did the monks do?
3. What was Jesus' mother called by the Alexandrian theologians?
4. What false doctrines were established by Pope Gregory I?
5. What took the place of spontaneous, heartfelt prayer in the Catholic Church?

Lessor 120

1. What did the pope do for Charlemagne?
2. Describe the work of Pope Gregory VII. When was he the pope?
3. Describe the way Catholic Church treated unbelievers.

4. What was the Catholic Inquisition?
5. Describe the teachings of John Wycliffe.
6. Why did the many people become dissatisfied with the Catholic Church?

Lesson 121

1. Describe the work of Martin Luther.
2. What countries accepted Luther's teachings?
3. What were Calvin's biggest faults?
4. What were Calvin's greatest services?
5. When did the Baptist churches recognize baptism by immersion?
6. When and where was the first Baptist church in America established?

Lesson 122

1. Who were the Moravians?
2. What did the Moravians do for John Wesley?
3. How did John Wesley help the English people?
4. Describe the work of Charles Wesley.
5. Who was Charles H. Spurgeon, and what was his best-known work?

Lesson 123

1. Describe the character of Jonathan Edwards.
2. Describe the character of his wife.
3. Why was Jonathan Edwards voted out of his church?
4. In what way might Edwards have improved his work as pastor and evangelist?
5. How many times did George Whitefield visit America?
6. Where did Whitefield preach?

Lesson 124

Revival in the United States

(1783-1860)

Peter Cartwright (1785-1872)

Peter Cartwright was born in Virginia but went to Kentucky early in life. He was a man of average height but powerful frame. He began to preach in 1801, was ordained in 1806, and was appointed presiding elder in 1808. He became the most outstanding backwoods Methodist preacher of his time. As a circuit rider, he traveled throughout Kentucky and Tennessee, preaching in the settlements. In 1824, he moved to Illinois and was once a political opponent of Abraham Lincoln.

Life was hard and dangerous in those frontier days. Cartwright was constantly on the go for fifty years. He made his journeys on horseback; he sometimes forded dangerous streams and slept under the stars, with his saddle for a pillow. He often met tough and boisterous characters, but he could always hold his own. His homely, powerful preaching and ready wit endeared him to the hearts of frontiersmen.

God blessed his revivals and thousands were stirred; sometimes more than a hundred people repented in one meeting. He often preached four or five times a day. As a result, rough, drunken, and quarrelsome communities became quiet and God-fearing. The revivals were usually noisy, and many people fell to the floor as God's Spirit rested on them.

Peter Cartwright had little formal education, but he diligently studied his Bible and hymnbook and often prayed. Therefore, it was common for Cartwright to preach for two hours or more under the Spirit's anointing. Such was his humility that after a long life of faithful service, he could only say of himself, "Unworthy, unworthy."

Charles G. Finney (1792-1875)

Charles Finney was born in Connecticut, but his family soon moved to western New York. Later, he studied and practiced law from 1818 to 1821. However, he converted to Christ in 1820 and decided to preach. After some difficulty he was licensed by the Presbyterian Church in 1824. He taught against predestination and proclaimed the good news of full and free salvation.

Finney became a fiery evangelist. His most remarkable revivals were in Rochester, New York, where nearly three thousand were converted. He preached throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, the New England states, New York City, and Boston. Many Presbyterian and Congregational ministers vigorously opposed him, however, because they thought his meetings were too emotional.

In addition to preaching, Finney taught theology at Oberlin College, Ohio, in 1835 and became president of that school in 1837. That same year, he was appointed as the Congregational pastor in Oberlin. During his vacations, he went on revival trips throughout America and made two gospel tours of England and Scotland.

God especially used Finney to stir up dead churches. His messages renewed conviction, zeal, and joy in dead church members. Finney proclaimed everywhere Christ's saving grace and ability to help one live a clean, holy life. However, he opposed baptism by immersion, advocating sprinkling as the better method. The influence of his revivals was felt for miles when he came into a community.

Lesson 125

Later American Revivals

(1860–1900)

Dwight L. Moody (1837-99)

Moody was born in the village of East Northfield, Massachusetts. Dwight's father died when the boy was only four years of age. Dwight did not like school or study and was mischievous and independent. Therefore, his mother was obliged to discipline him often.

At seventeen he became a shoe salesman in Boston. A year later he was converted to Christianity. At nineteen, he started in business in Chicago. There he gathered a group of poor boys from the streets and became their Sunday school teacher in the church he attended. In 1858, Moody opened a mission Sunday school, which soon developed into a church. The young Christian worker had a great burden for the lost. He literally went after people and brought them to the gospel services.

Moody felt called to preach, but his church's leaders did not encourage him. Undeterred, he tried it, and God used him. He was never ordained, however. But he did have several strengths; namely, he understood human nature and his messages were simple, precious, and inspiring. Moody preached freely of God's love for sinners and of the salvation provided through Jesus. His messages warmed the heart; they made one desire to live a better life.

Moody gave up his business in 1860 to devote all his time to gospel work. Shortly thereafter, the Christian Commission appointed him to minister to the soldiers fighting in the Civil War. During this time, he married a good wife in 1862. He also served as president of the Chicago Y.M.C.A. from 1865 to 1869.

In 1871, the revivalist singer, Ira D. Sankey, joined him. They held revival meetings in the principal cities of the United States and made gospel tours of England and Scotland. God accomplished amazing things through them. Moody is said to have personally prayed for and pleaded with 750,000 sinners.

Though he was a renowned evangelist, Moody still retained a charming simplicity. Many called him the "One Book Man'' because of devotion to the Bible. There was little time for meditation in his busy life. History, science, art, and poetry did not appeal to him. His one aim was to reach people with the message of God's love.

A. B. Simpson

Simpson organized the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1881. He preached divine healing (See Mark 16:18; James 5:14-15; I Peter 2:24). He also preached the soon coming of Jesus in the clouds to receive His church to Himself. (See Luke 17:33-36; 21:36; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 19:1,7-9.) The main purpose of the Christian and Missionary Alliance was to send missionaries to foreign and non-Christian countries.

The nineteenth century was a time of much Christian activity. In addition to the famous preachers mentioned, many humble ministers also labored faithfully in the U.S., Canada, England, and other countries. As a result, the morals of people were generally good, and many people showed pity and understanding toward the weak and unfortunate. But it was also a time of great material progress. Ease, wealth, and leisure multiplied; with it came increased pride and worldliness.

Lesson 126
Other Religious Leaders

George Fox (1624-91)

George Fox, the son of a weaver, was born in England. As a boy, he was very serious and sensitive to right and wrong. At twenty, and for two or three years after, he was distressed about his spiritual condition. He was at last delivered when an inward voice directed him to Christ as the only one who could help him. However, in 1646, he ceased attending church, but he still preached to many people and won numerous converts from the lower middle class. His central doctrine was that all people have within them a divine "inner light." He got this idea from John 4:24: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

He was first imprisoned at Nottingham in 1649 after interrupting a preacher's sermon with a passionate appeal, based on the Scriptures, to allow the Holy Spirit to act as our authority and guide for living. In all, he spent eight terms in English prisons. Fox and his friends were first called Quakers in 1650. The Quakers, or Friends (as they called themselves), received much persecution for a long time. Often a thousand or more would be in prison at once. A number were put to death.

George Fox taught a type of Spirit baptism and sanctification, but he renounced water baptism as mere form. He made provision for the poor and encouraged free education. He was against war and also opposed undue severity in laws. He visited the West Indies and America in 1671-72, followed by a visit with William Penn and others to Holland and Germany in 1677, where the people welcomed them warmly.

William Penn (1644-1718)

William Penn was the son of a wealthy English admiral. At the age of eleven, a strong conviction of God's presence came to him. The family moved to Ireland in 1656, where his parents gave him private instruction. Later, he was sent to Oxford College in 1660. There, a Quaker, Thomas Loe, influenced him. In an effort to counteract this influence, William's father sent him abroad.

After his tour, his father called him home in 1664. He then studied law and practiced law as a profession. In 1666, his father sent him to Ireland to manage the admiral's large Irish estates. Thomas Loe again found Penn, and Penn once more became a Quaker—this time for life. He was driven from home, but afterward he was reconciled with his father. William Penn was in prison at times, and he also labored diligently to help liberate other Quakers. He married at the age of 28. In 1688 he made a trip to Holland and the Rhine Valley of Germany with George Fox and others.

In 1681, Charles II granted William Penn the colony of Pennsylvania in order to settle a large debt he owed Admiral Penn, William's father. William Penn came to America with about one hundred others in 1682. He met different Indian tribes in 1683, bought land from them, and made treaties of friendship. He was soon called back to England, however. Thousands of English Quakers settled in Pennsylvania, and large numbers of "Pennsylvania Dutch" (Germans) came from the Rhine Valley in the eighteenth century and gratefully settled in their new home of liberty.

Alexander Campbell (1788-66)

Alexander Campbell was born in Ireland. His father, Thomas Campbell, was a clergyman and teacher. His mother was of French Huguenot descent. The father came to Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1807, and Alexander and the rest of the family came in 1809. The young man

prepared for the ministry under his father's direction.

In 1811, he married Margaret Brown at West Liberty, Virginia. He stayed at the home of his father-in-law, who later deeded him the home property. Campbell took steps to become naturalized and also began a series of preaching tours.

In 1812, he took the lead in organizing the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church), based on the doctrine that the Bible, and especially the New Testament, should be the only creed. Water baptism by immersion was adopted as the only scriptural mode. Campbell's father, mother, wife, sister, and others joined the movement. Campbell aimed to restore primitive Christianity as the way to unite all Christians, which, he contended, was essential for the conversion of the world. The Lord's Supper was observed as a memorial on the first day of every week. (See John 17:20-21; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 11:23-26.)

The Baptists and the Disciples of Christ received considerable opposition from other churches at that time because of their insistence upon complete immersion in water as the only scriptural mode of baptism. The Disciples of Christ, or Christian Church, today forms one of the larger Protestant denominations in the United States.

William Miller (1782-1849)

William Miller was born in Massachusetts. He obtained most of his education through the books he purchased with the income he earned by chopping wood. He became a farmer in Vermont in 1803 and moved to Low Hampton, New York, in 1816. He was captain of a company of militiamen in the War of 1812. Miller became a member of the Baptist church at Low Hampton. He became convinced, about 1818, that the second coming of Christ to the earth would occur in his lifetime. In 1831, he began to lecture on Christ's soon coming to the earth, setting the date at 1843 and later at 1844. The time came, but Christ did not appear. Many of his followers became discouraged and joined other churches, but about fifty thousand remained under his direction. Miller assured them, from the Bible, that the coming of Jesus was near, although he made a mistake in setting the date.

The Adventists organized as a sect in 1845. Today there are six branches of this church. The most numerous is the Seventh-day Adventist, followed by the Advent Christians, or First Day Adventists. The Seventh-day Adventists believe in strict observance of the Sabbath, or seventh day, and obedience to the Ten Commandments. They also forbid the eating of unclean meats, such as pork. They deny natural immortality and declare that immortality can only be gained when Jesus comes to gather His people in the air. They believe sinners will be destroyed in the lake of fire, not punished there for eternity. Finally, they believe the earth will be desolate for a thousand years while Jesus and the saints are in heaven. (See Malachi 4:1; Romans 6:23; I Corinthians 15:50-54; Revelation 20.)

Lesson 127

The Pentecostal Revival

(1901-)

Many church people became dissatisfied and uneasy in the closing years of the nineteenth century. They saw that the professing church was too formal and that it had lost its power. Worldliness and lack of faith were prevalent. Some of the people began to pray for more spiritual food and for God to make a change in the churches and in their individual lives. They did not know just what to pray for, but they recognized their need of special help. (See Malachi 3:16-18; Matthew 5:13-16; 25:1-13; Luke 11:1-13.)

In 1900, a small group of Bible students and their teacher at a small Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, read in the Book of Acts how God poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. They believed God would give them a similar experience, so they began to fast and pray. They met for a New Year's Eve watchnight service. On the first day of the new century, a young woman began to speak with tongues as evidence that God had given her the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Mighty manifestations of God's power were present among them. (See Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:1-4.)

Later, others spoke with tongues as inspired by the Spirit, and others gave the interpretations of the messages. In each case there was a deepening religious experience, new power, zeal, joy, and love. The new Pentecostal revival then spread to Galena, Kansas, and afterward to Joplin, Missouri. Then, a great stirring in Houston, Texas, followed. Smaller revivals broke out in other parts of Kansas, Missouri, and Texas, as well as in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

A group of people in Los Angeles, California, heard that God was again pouring out the gift of the Holy Ghost. They began to gather and pray. W. J. Seymour, a humble black preacher from Houston, Texas, had been invited to Los Angeles. Even though he had not yet received his own baptism, he told the people what God was doing. He met opposition, however, and church doors were closed against him. Therefore, he and a group of both white and black believers met in prayer in cottage meetings. On April 9, 1906, God poured out the Holy Ghost in a marvelous way. One after another spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The believers then met in an old livery stable at 312 Azusa Street. It was only an old, white-washed wooden building, but God's Spirit was there, and scores of people received the Holy Spirit as in the days of the apostles. Preachers and other people from around the world came to inquire and pray. They, too, received the baptism of the Spirit and went home to preach the blessed message.

In the years 1906 and 1907, news of the Pentecostal revival came to most nations of the world. The British Isles heard the message; hundreds of Pentecostal missions are now scattered over Wales, England, and Scotland. Scandinavian countries heard the good tidings. Central Europe and the Balkan states were slower in receiving the message, but the Word went forth now with good results, although the believers suffered real persecution at times. Russia has its band of Pentecostal overcomers who will receive the crown of life from Jesus on that day. Of recent years, there have been encouraging results in France, Italy, and other nations in Western Europe.

The Holy Ghost outpouring came early to India, with marvelous signs. Some reported seeing fire above the heads of young girls as they knelt in prayer. Many people in China received the Spirit and spoke in beautiful tongues, inspired by the power of God. Missionaries labored faithfully in Japan; often, whole families of Japanese people accepted Jesus and received the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit visited Egypt as well. A great revival placed the Pentecostal work in that land

between 1912 and 1914. Then, in April 1927, revival began in Assiout Orphanage. Hundreds of children were blessed.

The gospel call reached the people of South Africa. Many of the English, the Dutch, and the black Africans gladly accepted God's best gift. Hundreds of Zulus were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Zulus historically were one of the most powerful tribes in Africa. But the Lord planted a precious work among them. The repentant and baptized Zulus showed a most humble and self-sacrificing spirit, often giving much help to spread the gospel of Jesus.

God raised up workers who pushed into India, China, Australia, the Philippines, South America, and even into the neglected places of the United States and Canada.

It is apparent that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Wherever He sees a hungry, yielded heart, He fills, and the good work is going on.

Some Spirit-filled people have grown cold or indifferent; some have gone back to formal churches or into the world. Others, though, have kept their love for Jesus, realizing they must keep true to the end to receive the reward promised by our Savior. Persecution, trials, temptation, hard times, and discouragement have strengthened them. Many of the older preachers have died; God is calling new workers to replace them and enlarge the work. Misunderstanding and division cannot permanently hold back God's power and blessing. He is illuminating His Word and giving new visions. He is empowering the saints to endure trials and ministering a deeper spiritual peace and blessing to them. God will have a people; the good work goes on; the Good Shepherd is leading His flock.

Lesson 128

Doctrine of the Early Pentecostal Revival

The Pentecostal people came from many churches including Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Christian, Adventist, and Catholic. They carried many ideas into the Pentecostal movement from their original denominations. Some beliefs, though, were shared in common by all Pentecostal saints. People who came directly into Pentecost from the world readily accepted the teachings presented them by their pastors and teachers.

People came for the main purpose of being filled with the Holy Ghost as in Acts 2:4, 10:44-46, and 19:6. They considered the baptism of the Spirit both an essential and a privilege.

Each person who received the Spirit spoke with tongues as evidence that God had granted him the baptism or gift of the Spirit. Genuine repentance was necessary before God gave the baptism to the seeker. (See Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38.) The seeker believed in the cleansing of his sins through the blood of Jesus, which was shed for him. (See John 3:16; I Peter 1:18-20; I Peter 2:21-25; I John 1:7-9.)

Baptism by immersion followed confession of Christ and repentance. (See Acts 2:38; Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 28:19-20.) In some cases, people received the Holy Spirit before baptism in water. They were baptized afterward, as was the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:45-48). At first, the usual formula for baptism in water was in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Light on baptism in Jesus' name had not been given to more than a very few.

They anointed the sick and prayed for them to be healed. (See James 5:14-15.) And God healed numbers of people of various diseases and ailments through their prayers. They also recognized the value of fasting as an aid to prayer. (See Matthew 17:18-21.)

Furthermore, they regarded holiness in life as essential for salvation (I Peter 1:13-16), and they believed that the fruit of the Spirit was part of the saints' heritage (Galatians 5:22-24). The early Pentecostals forsook the pleasures of the world that they might find true joy in serving Jesus. (See I John 2:15-17.) God granted the different gifts of the Spirit to the believers, as He willed. (See I Corinthians 12:1-11.)

As a group, the Pentecostal people were happy and anointed of the Lord, serving Jesus with joy and zeal. They witnessed of Jesus' love to others and met often for worship and praise. One of their favorite verses of Scripture, next to Acts 2:4, was Hebrews 13:8. The Bible was their supreme authority; they believed that the Book of Acts was a true account of the early church and a pattern for the people of God to follow. (See II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:16-21.) They believed the Tribulation was coming to the earth but that Jesus would come and take His people out of it. He would descend from heaven; the graves of departed saints would open, and the living saints would be caught up with them in the air to meet Jesus, their Lord, and they would be given immortality. (See I Thessalonians 4:13-18.)

Lesson 129

The Jesus Name People

(1914-)

When Jesus was with His disciples, He told them He had many things to say that they were not yet able to bear and He promised that the Spirit would guide them into all truth (John 16:12-13). Before Jesus left the earth, He commanded His disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19). He also said that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name (Luke 24:47).

On the Day of Pentecost, when Peter preached under the anointing of the Spirit, he commanded the Jews to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). Moreover, the people of Samaria were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16). Later, Peter baptized the household of Cornelius in the name of the Lord, shortly after he had explained that Jesus Christ was Lord of all and that God granted the remission of sins in His name (Acts 10:36, 43, 47-48). Several years later, Paul rebaptized the disciples of John the Baptist from Ephesus in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5).

Not a single verse in the Bible describes anyone being baptized using the formula "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Baptism was always performed in the name of Jesus Christ or the Lord Jesus. From a careful study of the Book of Acts we conclude that the name to be invoked in water baptism is the name of Jesus.

Scripture commands us to do everything, whether in word or in action, in the name of the Lord Jesus (Colossians 3:17). Furthermore, Scripture declares that the whole family in heaven is named after the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:14-15). And we are told that God has given Jesus a name which is above every name and that every knee shall bow to the name of Jesus and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to God's glory (Philippians 2:9-11). Finally, Matthew 12:21 reminds us that the Gentiles shall trust in Jesus' name. There is only one name above all others, and that is the name of Jesus. It is a privilege and an honor to be baptized in Jesus' name.

Jesus foretold that His followers would suffer persecution and that others would hate them above all people for His name's sake (Matthew 24:9; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:17).

In the early days of the Pentecostal revival, some believers received the light on baptism in Jesus' name. Most, however, were content with the formula of the trinity, or baptism in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As time went on, these people began to regard with suspicion those who advocated baptism in Jesus' name. Finally in 1915, some of the saints who refused to give up their faith in Jesus' name baptism began to meet in churches of their own. There they enjoyed spiritual liberty. The Jesus Name saints were especially numerous in the South, including Texas and Louisiana; in the Midwest, including Indiana and Illinois; in California; and in the Northwest. Soon the movement grew strong in other parts of the United States and in Canada.

We believe that water baptism in the name of Jesus is one of the latest truths God has restored to prominence. All churches should consider this question with prayer and a careful study of the Bible. The name of Jesus is helpful in resisting the attacks of Satan as the Tribulation draws nearer.

There is one God, who is one Spirit. (See Deuteronomy 6:4; John 4:24; Ephesians 4:4-6; II Corinthians 3:17.) God is invisible (I John 4:12), and because of His love, He desired to reveal Himself to the world. He did this through His Son, Jesus (John 3:16; II Corinthians 5:19). Jesus was born in Bethlehem and suffered on the cross, that we might be redeemed from sin and death. (See Luke 2:4-21; 23:33-38; Romans 5:8-11; I Corinthians 2:2; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 6:14.)

Lesson 130
A More Excellent Way

God has done wonderful things for His people since the days of Martin Luther. He has shown us justification by faith in Jesus, water baptism in the name of Jesus, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. He has also widely restored healing for the sick through prayer. He has shown us how to live a holy life by constant dependence on the Lord Jesus and how we may be relieved from worry and strain by committing our way to Him. He has revealed to us the beauty of living in unity through the Spirit and how our united prayers help one another. He has shown His love for the weak saint and the backslider. He has given us the bright hope of escaping the terrible Tribulation soon to come upon this earth and of meeting Jesus in the air when He comes to take His people.

We thank God for these blessed truths. Many people suffered and died that we might have this heritage. We praise Jesus our Lord who died on the cross and arose again to defeat the power of Satan and bring us eternal life.

Isaiah received a new vision of the kindness of the Lord. He said, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Isaiah 12:2). Then he told of the joy and praise that God will give His people. He told of the Savior who was to come with the good tidings of peace; he told Jerusalem to sing and prophesied that all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. (See Isaiah 52:7-10.) He followed with a description of the lowly and suffering Savior with His marred visage and how He carries our griefs and sorrows. He saw the final triumph of the meek and gentle Messiah. Our hearts rejoice as we read this beautiful description of our Jesus. (See Isaiah 52:13-15; 53:1-12.)

Jesus revealed the Father's love for sinners and backsliders in the parables of the lost sheep, of the lost coin, and of the prodigal son. (See Luke 15.) In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (tax collector), he revealed that God hates pride and loves a humble, contrite person. (See Luke 18:9-14.)

A lawyer asked Jesus to tell him what the greatest commandment is. Jesus said we must love God and we must love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:35-40). Jesus explained what real love for our neighbor means in the story of the good Samaritan who helped a wounded man on the road to Jericho. A priest and a Levite passed by the poor, injured stranger, but the despised Samaritan had love in his heart for humanity. (See Luke 10:30-37.)

Paul said, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (I Corinthians 12:31). Our knowledge of Bible doctrine, our experience, our gifts and blessings are of no avail if we lack divine love. We must keep the compassion, which Jesus gives, within our hearts. It is easy to get hard and critical. We live in violent, deceitful, and troublesome times. But one day Jesus will come, and our earthly troubles will be over. Then we shall be glad for the little acts of kindness and the encouraging words we gave our neighbors and friends. We do not know the load of sorrow our fellowman is carrying. But we can direct him to the great burden bearer, Jesus, as we have the opportunity.

A spirit of revenge is hurtful and unwise for anyone, especially for a Christian. It is better to suffer wrong than to plot vengeance, even though the one who wronged us might prosper. Our Father knows all, and the right will win in due time. (See Matthew 5:43-48; 6:9-15.)

Jesus said, "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (John 15:17). Peter wrote, "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (I Peter 2:17). Jude said, "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21). John declared, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (I John 4:11). The world's spirit is greedy, hard, and possessive; Jesus shows us a more excellent way, even the way of the cross, which leads to life and peace.

Questions on Lessons 124-130

Lesson 124

1. Describe the character of Peter Cartwright.
2. What made the people like him?
3. What was the effect of his revivals?
4. Where did Charles Finney hold his greatest revivals?
5. Why did some ministers oppose Finney?
6. How did God especially use him?

Lesson 125

1. Describe the early life of Moody.
2. How did Moody get people into the church?
3. Where did Moody and Sankey hold revivals?
4. What was Moody's one aim?
5. State the main purpose of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.
6. What truths did A. B. Simpson preach?
7. What changes came in the nineteenth century?

Lesson 126

1. What was the central doctrine of George Fox?
2. What kind of treatment did the Quakers get in England?
3. How did William Penn help the Quakers?
4. What church was organized by Alexander Campbell?
5. Name some doctrines of Alexander Campbell.
6. When did William Miller become convinced of Christ's second coming to the earth?
7. When did the Adventists organize as a church?
8. Name some doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventists.

Lesson 127

1. Where and when did the latter-day Pentecostal revival begin?
2. How did the people know when God had given them the Holy Spirit?
3. Describe the Pentecostal revival at Azusa Street in Los Angeles.
4. Give an account of the Pentecostal outpouring in a country that has proved of special interest to you.
5. How can we, as individuals, help to carry the gospel message that Jesus has given us?

Lesson 128

1. What was the main purpose people had in coming into the Pentecostal movement?
2. What was necessary before one could receive the Holy Spirit?
3. Describe the attitude of Pentecostal people toward holiness in life.
4. Write a Scripture reference on healing.
5. What was the highest authority for Pentecostal saints?
6. When and how did the Pentecostal revival reach your community?

Lesson 129

l. Give a Bible reference on the name of Jesus.
2. How did Peter and Paul baptize their converts?
3. How is remission of sins granted? Give a Bible reference.
4. Why did Pentecostal people who baptized in the name of Jesus begin to meet for worship

in churches of their own?
5. Why do we believe that baptism in Jesus' name is an important truth?

Lesson 130

1. Name some truths that God's people have learned since the days of Martin Luther.
2. What does Isaiah say of Jesus?
3. How does Jesus tell of the Father's love?
4. Describe the more excellent way.
5. Give a Bible reference on love.

Pentecostal Bible Study COURSE

Volume 2

Pentecostal Bible Study Course

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Lesson 1

Consecration

The purpose of this training course is not merely to learn more about the Bible but to equip Christian workers to go into the harvest field and labor successfully for souls.

It is necessary for the worker to realize what a high calling the work of the ministry really is. The ministry is the highest office that people can fill. One day President Abraham Lincoln was interviewing a number of men who were seeking to fill various political offices. When he asked one of them what line of work he had previously followed, the man answered that he had been in the ministry. Mr. Lincoln then replied that he did not have an office high enough for this applicant to fill. He stated that the ministry was a much higher office than that of the presidency and exhorted the man to continue in his high calling.

The most important qualification of a successful worker in the vineyard is to be filled with the Holy Ghost as described in Acts 2:4. The Holy Spirit will make the Word come alive as it is taught. We must completely surrender to the whole will of God in order for the Holy Ghost to really use our lives.

However, we may have been filled with the Spirit and yet not be fully consecrated to God and His Word. Even if we have been filled, we need to examine our consecration. We need to be sanctified by the Word. Jesus said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Psalm 119:9 says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Sanctification means setting aside something for a holy purpose or work, and the Word of God is necessary for sanctification.

The vessels in the Temple were sanctified for use during Temple worship. They were to be used for no other purpose. Have we left all to follow Jesus, or is there still some selfish ambition that hinders us from saying yes to the whole will of God?

God's Word will test our desires. Jesus said, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:38). Do we have a desire to go into the harvest fields to win souls? Would we be willing to be missionaries to a foreign country? If we are sanctified, we will allow the Lord to set us apart for any service.

The deeper things of God come to us when God illuminates His Word to us. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Corinthians 2:10). Here we see the great necessity of being filled with the Spirit of God. Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). God's language is that of revelation. This is a language that the world cannot understand.

To have the Spirit alone is not sufficient. We must be doers of the Word of God: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). I Thessalonians 4:3 declares, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The Word of God is the truth. Moreover, Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Now if we "walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). So to be cleansed, or to be set apart as holy, we need to walk in His Word. Then, and only then, will we be walking in *the will of God, for the will of God is the Word of God*.

Romans 12:1-2 says that if we are to prove and know God's will, we must present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in His sight. Some people that say Romans 12:1-2 was written to those who need to be sanctified by a second work of grace, which they say takes place prior to receiving the Holy Ghost. But this is not the case, for verses 4 and 5 demonstrate that this chapter was written to members of the body of Christ, and the only way one can be a

member of the body is to be baptized into it by the one Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). In fact, every one of the twenty-five or more verses of Scripture on sanctification in the New Testament was written to believers who had already received the Holy Spirit.

There is no experience in this life that eradicates the sinful nature. If there were, then all our troubles would be over forever. For if the old man were gone "root and branch," as some say, there would be no spirit but God's Spirit to invite him back, and he would get no such invitation! The truth is that when we are tempted we are drawn away by our own lusts (James 1:14), and it is the old man that lusts. However, there is a Bible way to remain victorious in our lives. We can be a temple of God, a place that God inhabits through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). I John 4:4 proclaims, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Our way of overcoming sin is to keep filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). If the Spirit dwells in our heart, He is able to overcome the old man.

II Timothy 2:20-21 states that in a great house, there are some vessels of honor and some of dishonor. Then I Timothy 3:15 reveals what this great house is: "the house of God, which is the church of the living God." Therefore, if we are members of the true church, but lack a wholly sanctified life, we can purge ourselves and become a "vessel of honor" in this great house. Then we will truly be sanctified and fit for the Master's use.

Lesson 2

Blessings of the Word

God's Word never fails. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89). God put His approval on His own Word by declaring that at the throne of God the Word is forever settled, for heaven is God's throne. Jesus declared the infallibility of the Word when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

Peter emphasized this same thought and declared that the preaching of the gospel brings the never-failing Word to us. "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1:25).

Since God's Word never fails, we will never lack spiritual food, for the Word is food for the spiritual man. God said that a person "doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD" (Deuteronomy 8:3).

One man of God declared that he esteemed the words of God more than his necessary food (Job 23:12). We know that natural food is necessary to keep the body alive, but Job regarded the Word of God more highly than natural food!

Eating the Word brings joy and rejoicing to the heart. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (Jeremiah 15:16). (See Psalm 119:103; Matthew 4:4; I Peter 2:2.)

The Word of God will *prove itself* to any *obedient* person. In John 7:17, Jesus explained, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." In other words, if we do what we know, then we will know what to do!

The Word of God is our judge. If we let the Word judge us now, we will not be judged hereafter. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (I Peter 4:17). The house of God is the church of God, according to I Timothy 3:15. We are given the wonderful privilege of *judging ourselves* to escape the judgment of God. I Corinthians 11:31 makes this clear: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."

However, he who rejects God's Word will be judged by the Word. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

The truth of the Rapture (I Thessalonians 4:13-18) proves that we do not have to wait until a future judgment to know that we are right with God. If we wonder how we stand before God, we can use the Word to examine our heart and life. *It is our New Testament privilege to know that we are right with God here and now.*

The Word furnishes our weapons of warfare. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (II Corinthians 10:4).

God would not send his soldiers to battle without equipping them to fight. Paul said, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). He did not say that the sword was ours but that it is the *sword of the Spirit*. The only way we can effectively use the Word is to be directed by the Spirit of God.

In Peter, we find a man who exchanged a carnal sword for a spiritual one that was powerful in the kingdom of God. After Jesus told Peter to put up *his* sword into its sheath (John 18:10-11), Peter had no other weapon to fight with. We can imagine how helpless this man felt in the face of that armed multitude with his only weapon denied him. Peter, however, did not always remain helpless and empty-handed! For God had another sword sharper and more powerful than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). God entrusted this sword to Peter on the Day of Pentecost. We can follow the ministry of Peter in the first chapters of the Book of Acts and see how successful he

was while possessing this mighty weapon of warfare.

Since the Word of God is the *Spirit's* sword, those who do not have the Spirit are often unfruitful and weak when they try to use and preach the Word. On the other hand we see how God honors His Word when preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The anointed prophet Jeremiah knew this and said, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29).

We notice also that God's Word, with few exceptions, was given to God's people. Scripture is given so "that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:17) (See Psalm 119:11, 130, 165.)

It is true that the Word of God warns the wicked and commands them to repent. But otherwise the Word of God was written to the people of God. This truth settles many questions that arise. Too often some people try to judge the world by laws that were given to the saints. The Sermon on the Mount was for God's people. It is impossible for these things to be practiced by sinful people.

It is equally important not to apply to the saints of God some Scripture passages that refer to sinners. For instance, Romans 3:10 says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Some take this verse and teach saints that it is impossible to live holy lives. However, verses 9 and 19 indicate that Romans 3:10 refers to unbelievers who have not been justified and sanctified by Jesus Christ.

Lesson 3

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

In this lesson, we identify some simple distinctions in God's Word that are important to understand in order to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ accurately. We can classify Scripture into two categories, based on whether or not a full explanation is given within the specific passage: the *revealed* and the *unrevealed*. By the unrevealed, we mean the types and shadows of the Old Testament, the parables of the four Gospels, and the symbols of Revelation. None of these are self-interpreting; that is, they need an explanation from other portions of the Word. By contrast, the teachings in Acts and the Epistles are intended to be understood without necessary reference to other writings.

We can identify divisions of the New Testament: the four Gospels, the Book of Acts, the Epistles (Romans to Jude), and Revelation, a book of prophecy.

The first four books, called the Gospels, are really preparatory to the preaching of the gospel. These books describe the birth, life, and death of John the Baptist and the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They end with the record of His ascension.

The New Testament gospel is the preaching of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1, 3-4). Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Again in reference to the gospel, Paul said, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

The gospel was not preached until the Day of Pentecost when Peter preached it to the multitudes as recorded in Acts 2. Jesus had informed the disciples of the gospel plan before His death, but they could not receive it. "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). In the next two verses we see that Peter did not believe this message: "And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men" (Mark 8:32-33).

Mark 9:9-10 reveals that at this time the disciples did not understand the meaning of the gospel and therefore did not preach it before Christ's resurrection. "And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." Similarly, Mark 9:31-32 says, "For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him."

Even after Jesus had risen, the disciples would not believe the gospel when told of the resurrection by the eyewitnesses who had seen Him. "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mark 16:14). Thomas did not believe the other

disciples who had seen Jesus. "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe" (John 20:24-25).

Later, Thomas became a believer when he saw the risen Lord. "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:26-29).

Luke 22:31-32 shows that Peter was not yet converted to the gospel. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." As soon as Peter became a believer in the new covenant, he did that very thing!

The fact is the new covenant could not have been in force until after Jesus died. "For where a testament [will] is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:16-17). After the testator of the new covenant died and rose again, He ascended into heaven as our high priest. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:11-12). Hebrews 9:24 tells us that heaven is now the Holy Place: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

Jesus, as the administrator of His own testament, poured out His Spirit upon the waiting disciples on the Day of Pentecost and sealed them for the day of redemption. Jesus is the only One who ever became the administrator of his own will. The way into the new covenant, having once been opened, was left open to all who would receive the gospel. In sum, the first division of the New Testament—the Gospels—leads us to Jesus' ascension and prepares us for the preaching of the gospel of New Testament salvation.

Now we come to the second division of the New Testament—the Book of Acts. Here we find one book in a class all by itself. No other book in the Bible is in the same class, for this book, which could rightly be called the Acts of the Holy Ghost, records the preaching of the gospel by those whom Jesus had called and prepared. Here we have the true pattern to follow for preaching the gospel as well as entering into the New Testament church. The Book of Acts shows the *way into* the true church, and the Epistles explain how one should act *after he is in* the church.

In the Gospels, Jesus did much teaching in parables, which need to be interpreted in light of the full understanding of the gospel. Indeed Jesus told His disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:12-13). On the Day of Pentecost the Spirit of truth did come to them, and they, through the Spirit of truth, gave us the true gospel. Shortly before His crucifixion, Jesus prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). Therefore, when we read the Book of Acts, we find the revealed Word of God. We can rest assured that the doctrine of the apostles is the true interpretation of the Scripture concerning the gospel plan, and any interpretation of Scripture contrary to the apostles' teaching cannot be the truth.

Jesus not only entrusted the preaching of the gospel into the hands of His disciples but also the writing of the New Testament Scriptures, for Jesus Himself did not leave us any written documents. His followers wrote the entire New Testament. How absurd it is when someone says that they would rather follow the words of Jesus than the words of Peter, when one can only read the words of Jesus through the pens of His followers!

Understanding that the Book of Acts is the true pattern for all time of entering into the church and remembering that we are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 2:20), we now consider the third division of the New Testament—the Epistles. The Epistles teach God's people how to act after they come into the church. Here, too, we find the revealed word as explained in Ephesians 3:2-5: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)." The Epistles were written *to the church*; that is, to men and women filled with the Spirit of God.

Failing to understand to whom these books were written explains why some people confuse the speaking in tongues in I Corinthians with the speaking in tongues in the Book of Acts. The two books are in separate divisions: the Book of Acts records how people enter the church, and I Corinthians teaches people how to act in the church.

Suppose that we were given a book that gave us directions to find and enter some great hall of fame. When we entered the place another book was given us to instruct us how to act while inside the building. Later, if someone asked us how to get into the building, we would not think of giving them an answer from the second book; it would only confuse them. So it is with the Bible. If people would rightly divide the Word, there would not be so many debates on the meaning of Scripture. For example, people would understand that the tongues that believers speak when entering the church need no interpretation, while the gift of tongues used to edify the church by a public message does need an interpretation.

We are greatly protected from false doctrine when we understand the various divisions of God's Word. We can compare any teaching to the revealed Word, and if it harmonizes with the Bible, we are safe in accepting it as truth. But if it is not in harmony with the Bible—and, when dealing with the doctrine of the New Testament church, particularly if it is not in harmony with the teaching of Acts and the Epistles—we can reject it, knowing we are not turning away a truth. When we are searching for truths in the types and shadows of the Old Testament, the parables of the Gospels, and the symbols of the Book of Revelation, we have a sure foundation on which to test our interpretations—the clear teachings of the New Testament, particularly the truths revealed to the church in Acts and the Epistles.

Most of the great doctrines that have caused so much controversy are easily settled by the revealed Word. Until people are willing to lay down all contrary doctrine and accept the simple, revealed teaching of the apostles as given in the Book of Acts and the Epistles, there will not be unity among professing Christians. For if the apostles were not right, where can we turn to find someone who is right?

But we know the apostles were right, for "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21). Therefore, we must "be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (II Peter 3:2). Knowing this truth, we shout for joy in the freedom that only truth can bring!

Lesson 4

The Two Covenants

Just as there are two seeds of Abraham, the natural and the spiritual seed (Israel and the church), so there are also two covenants. One of the clearest explanations of the two covenants is found in Galatians 4:22-26: "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Paul said that Hagar and Isaac were types of two covenants. An "allegory" in this context is a story used as a type or a shadow. Paul said that Hagar foreshadowed the first covenant, which was Sinai, and which corresponded to Jerusalem that went into bondage with her children. Isaac, on the other hand, foreshadowed the children of the second covenant, which is the Jerusalem from above, even the children of promise. At the time of Paul's writing this, the Romans had not yet destroyed Jerusalem. It was still standing and was in bondage with her children, for she had rejected Christ. But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of all of us. In other words, the church is the New Jerusalem. Since the Day of Pentecost the church has been the mother that travails and brings forth children.

Some say the first covenant was only the ceremonial law of Moses. We find the truth, however, in Deuteronomy 4:12-13: "And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Likewise, Exodus 34:27-28 says, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments." What clear statements that the Ten Commandments were the basis of the old covenant!

The writer of Hebrews said: "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord" (Hebrews 8:7-9). He then explained the nature of this new covenant. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Hebrews 8:10). These verses quote from Jeremiah 31:31-33.

The Ten Commandments were the old covenant; they were never intended to be the law of the church in themselves. II Corinthians 3:6-11 says, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by

reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

It would be difficult for anyone to deny that what was "written and engraven in stones" (verse 7) was any other than the Ten Commandments, and verse 11 plainly says that they were done away with. The reason is that the new covenant is for a spiritual people. When Paul mentioned "the ministration of condemnation," he referred to the law's bringing a knowledge of sin and therefore condemnation. If this law was glorious, how much more is the new covenant glorious!

We find the law of the new covenant in the Epistles, which are called the law of Christ. Paul said, "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law" (I Corinthians 9:20-21). Paul was careful to explain that although he was not in bondage to the old covenant, he was not out from under law altogether. He was now under the law of Christ.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24-25). So we, as the children of promise, are not under the laws of the old covenant, which would hold us in bondage. Immediately following Paul's discourse in Galatians 4 concerning Hagar being a type of the law given on Mount Sinai, Paul said, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1)

In Acts 15, we find that certain of the Jewish brethren had troubled the Gentiles, trying to bring them under the law. Therefore, the apostles and elders met in Jerusalem to settle the issue. Certain of the Pharisees who had been converted contended that the Gentiles had to be circumcised and had to keep the law of Moses. After much disputation, Peter rose up and said, "Men and brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" (Acts 15:7-10). He put the final touch to his message when he said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11).

James declared the final decision: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well" (Acts 15:28-29). This council's decision demonstrates that the church is not under the old covenant.

Once when a scribe asked Jesus what the first commandment was, Jesus answered, "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:29-30). Let us notice the contrast between Jesus' answer and the first commandment in the Ten Commandments: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). When Jesus went outside the ten to find the greatest commandment, He quoted from Deuteronomy 6:4. When He gave the second commandment, which was "Love thy neighbor as thyself," He quoted from Leviticus 19:18.

The new covenant took the *moral* part of the old and *magnified* it. For instance, under the old covenant a person had to commit an act in order to be guilty, but under the new, if the sin is only in a person's heart, he is guilty already. Under the law one actually had to commit murder to be guilty of transgressing the law that said, "Thou shalt not kill." But under the new covenant, if a person hates his brother in his heart, he is a murderer (I John 3:15). If the love of God works freely out in our hearts, then we will not break the new covenant, or the law of Christ. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false

witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Verse 10 sums up the matter: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:8-10). If a person loves his neighbor, he will not lie about him, steal from him, kill him, or covet what his neighbor has!

Lesson 5
The Sabbath

One of the questions that the child of God must settle when he begins his search for the truth of God's Word is: "What day shall I keep for worship?" The person who attempts to prove that God has set aside the first day of the week for the Christian Sabbath will find that the seventh-day believer has headed him off before he gets far. And the person who attempts to prove that the seventh day is the Christian Sabbath is just as helpless before the person who has the truth.

Many Christians have failed to see that the old covenant, which God made with Israel (Deuteronomy 4:12-13) has been set aside for a new covenant. The new covenant is a spiritual kingdom founded upon the law of Christ Jesus and is far removed from the old covenant.

Not one verse of Scripture given after the new covenant came into force shows that Christians ever kept the seventh day, or the first day, as a Sabbath. Furthermore, they were not commanded to keep either day as a Sabbath. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

Paul, speaking of foods and of the Sabbath, which were under the first covenant, said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [substance] is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17). In other words, the Sabbath was a shadow of something to come, and the *body* or the *substance* that made the shadow was Christ!

Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Also, "If Jesus [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." The Israelites kept the Sabbath when they were living in the land of Canaan. But even while living there under Joshua, they did not have the rest of God in their souls. They were told of "another day," even this day of grace, or this dispensation of the gospel, when the Spirit of God would fill the hearts of believers bringing them true rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (Hebrews 4:9-10). Titus 3:5 is a good explanation of the person who has ceased from his own works: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Those who have ceased from their own works have ceased trying to get this rest by any good works that they can do, but they enjoy this rest *through the new birth of water and Spirit*.

''One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Romans 14:5). If we are to keep a twenty-four-hour Sabbath day, *we have no other instructions on how to keep it but the rule laid down for the seventh day in the old covenant*. Few professing Sunday keepers live by such a rule. Nevertheless, some of us esteem the first day of the week above the other days, not as a day of rest, but as a day of worship. We find our rest in Jesus because we have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ. Having ceased trusting in our own good works, we rest in Him.

Some teach that the Ten Commandments are moral law and, therefore, binding on the Christian. No one would dispute that these commandments contain moral law, but to merely refrain from working on one day of the week is not a moral act and has nothing to do with a person's character. Among the many moral laws of the new covenant, particularly in Acts and the Epistles, there is no mention of keeping a twenty-four-hour Sabbath. Surely if such a Sabbath had been in order, some verses, such as Romans 13:9, would have mentioned it. Again we refer to the council of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, which determined what laws would be binding for Gentile believers. The apostles said, "Certain which went out from us have troubled you with

words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment" (Acts 15:24). This would have been the proper place for the apostles to inform the Gentile believers that they must keep a twenty-four-hour Sabbath by refraining from work. They did not do this. So we conclude that the Old Testament Sabbath was a shadow of Christ, as Colossians 2:16-17 declares, and not binding for Christians.

God said that the Sabbath was a sign, or seal, between God and the Israelites throughout their generations, *that they might know He was the Lord and that He was the one who sanctified them* (set them apart). "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13). Likewise, our New Testament experience of rest in the Holy Ghost is a seal that we might know that Jesus is the Lord and that He sanctifies us. "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30). "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (I Corinthians 12:3). "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit" (I Peter 1:2).

When we receive this rest in the Holy Ghost, then we can say that Jesus is Lord (master or ruler) of our lives. Furthermore, Exodus 31:14-15 reveals that the *penalty* of breaking the Sabbath was *death*. So in our New Testament Sabbath, the penalty of breaking faith with the Holy Spirit in our lives, thus breaking the seal, is *death*. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).

Lesson 6

The Righteousness of the Law And The Righteousness of God

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:3). In this lesson, we wish to show the great contrast between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness that comes by faith. "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness" (Romans 9:31). "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them" (Romans 10:5).

Similarly, Galatians 3:12 says, "And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them." Those who desire to be under the law must remember that if they break one law they are guilty of the *entire law.* "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Since everyone has broken some part of God's law, Paul said, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). This statement was written first to Israel, which was under the law, showing that the law could not make them righteous. (See Psalm 53:3.) "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10).

Romans 4:6 describes the blessed state of the person who has received the righteousness of God: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Abraham is the classic example of God imputing righteousness to someone who has not performed the works of the law. Romans 4:3 states, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Because of his faith, Abraham became the father of all who believe (Romans 4:16.)

Sadly, many Christians still think that their righteousness consists of keeping a code of laws, even though they are not under the old covenant law any more. They have never completely understood that Jesus is our righteousness, and if we believe and trust in Him, God covers us with Jesus' righteousness. Contrariwise, if we do not believe and trust in Him, all our attempts to be righteous by keeping the law—even New Testament laws—are vain.

The prophet foretold of this new and living way when, in speaking of our day, he said, "This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jeremiah 23:6). It seems unnecessary here to prove that the Lord is Jesus. (See Acts 9:5; 10:36.) Paul also said that the Lord is the Spirit, therefore, the Spirit-filled person has the Lord, who is his righteousness, on the inside. Romans 13:14 exhorts, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Likewise, Galatians 3:27 says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Again, Christ, whom we put on when we are baptized into Him, becomes our righteousness. One of the most outstanding verses of Scripture supporting this truth is I Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Titus 3:5 declares, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his

mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Paul said he desired to be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, which was of the law, but that which is through faith (Philippians 3:9).

Abraham had a good report through faith, having not received the promise, God having provided something better for us (Hebrews 11:39-40). This "better thing" is the promise of the Father, that is, the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:4-5). When we receive this Holy Ghost experience, we are sealed unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). Furthermore, Ephesians 1:13-14 says that this Holy Spirit of promise is the earnest, that is, the guarantee of our inheritance. God's promises were made to Abraham and his seed (singular), and that seed is Christ (Galatians 3:16). Thus, as children of God, we are baptized into Christ through faith (Galatians 3:26-29) and, therefore, we put on Christ, making us the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:14). Now this gift of God is eternal life (Romans 6:23), and we find in Ephesians 2:8 that we are saved by grace, God's unmerited favor and gift. Moreover, in Romans 5:17, we see that if we receive God's grace and the righteousness of Christ, we will one day reign with Him.

When Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33), He meant for us to seek Him, for He *is* the righteousness of God.

When we believe, we will rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible and glorious, having received the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls (I Peter 1:8-9). The "end of our faith" is the result of our faith. In other words, if we believe, we will receive something that will cause us to greatly rejoice. It is Christ, who is our righteousness, dwelling on the inside that causes us to rejoice.

We are reminded of Jesus' parable concerning the wedding garment in Matthew 22:11-12. A certain man had come in to the marriage without a wedding garment, and when asked how he came in there without it, he was speechless. He was without excuse. This parable refers to the oriental custom of weddings. The host furnished wedding garments for the guests and appointed keepers to see that everyone was properly dressed. Likewise, our Lord furnishes believers with a wedding garment, which is the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 30:1). He also has keepers, or ministers, who admonish those who wish to attend the marriage supper of the Lamb to be clothed with the covering of His Spirit.

Lesson 7
Law and Grace

We begin our lesson on law and grace with John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This is an important truth that is woefully misunderstood and incorrectly taught by many teachers. One of the most wonderful and blessed truths in the Bible is that people are saved by God's grace (unmerited favor) through faith apart from the law and even apart from their own good works. Grace is a gift of God. People are not saved by works, lest they should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

To fully appreciate the grace of God, we must understand what a great tragedy occurred when Adam sold the entire human race into sin when he transgressed God's command. Eve, being deceived, was in transgression, but Adam was not deceived (I Timothy 2:14). With full understanding of the step he was taking, he joined Eve in her transgression. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). It is true that sin is not imputed where there is no law; nevertheless, because of the sin of one man, death reigned over those who were without law from Adam to Moses (Romans 5:14).

God proved to people their utter helplessness to redeem themselves from the curse of sin over a period of at least four thousand years. Even after He called out His chosen people, Israel, and gave them the most perfect set of laws that could be written, they still could not make themselves righteous, because they were carnal and sold under sin (Romans 7:14). The law was holy and the commandment holy, just, and good. But because the penalty of sin is death, the commandment that God ordained to bring life actually brought death (Romans 7:10). "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and no law that pronounces death upon a condemned person can pardon and save that person from death.

Weak human laws are often set aside, and through bribery or other influence a penalty may be altered, but the law itself cannot reverse its decision. The just law of a holy God could not be tampered with. The claims of the law had to be satisfied, and the law demanded death for sin! But Jesus, not willing that any should perish, paid the ransom price, suffered death in our stead, and satisfied the claims of the law: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (I Peter 3:18). We were not redeemed by silver or gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without spot (I Peter 1:18-19). This substitution occurred by the *grace* of God: "That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9).

Romans 3:24-26 shows that the redemption plan is the result of the grace of God: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood . . . to declare . . . at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." This message of grace, which caused Jesus to give His life in our stead, excludes all boasting: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:27-28).

Paul was careful, throughout all his writings, to make clear that even though Christ died for the entire world, only those who have faith in Christ have access to the grace of God. Some teach that since Christ tasted death for everyone, all people will be saved. But for the grace of God to be available to us and for us to actually take advantage of the grace offered are two different things. Most assuredly His grace is *for* all, but we can have access to it only through faith—a living faith that compels us to obey His Word.

The following example illustrates this truth. Suppose that a group of people in a certain town had their homes mortgaged, with no possible way of paying it off. If a rich man, having mercy on

them, deposited in the local bank enough money to cover all the mortgages, his action would not automatically pay off the debts. Suppose that the rich man sent his servants out to tell the people the good news that if they would present their claim at the bank, their mortgages would be paid off. Some would believe and act upon this promise, receiving the benefit of the rich man's mercy. But others would not believe and would possibly even ridicule the servants sent to them. Some might not go to the bank to claim the money, arguing, "If that rich man is as good as you say he is, he won't let us lose our homes, although we are not there at the day appointed."

But suppose that one day the mortgage holder forecloses on every home where the mortgage had not been canceled. This same mortgage holder would have to pass by the homes of those who believed and had claimed the money, which canceled their mortgage.

Similarly, God has sent out His ministers to proclaim the message that if people are born again, they can be redeemed from the mortgage Satan has on their soul. Some believe, turn to Christ, and receive the seal of their canceled debt, which has been paid by Christ. This "seal" is the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30). Others, through unbelief, reject God's mercy. Satan will one day foreclose on his mortgage, and they will lose their soul, even though Jesus died as much for them as for any one else. Jesus said in John 7:38-39 that all those who believe shall be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The law is very different from this wonderful message of grace. The law could not make any person holy, for it could not *change* the nature of humanity. However, what *the law could not do*, grace did. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:3-4).

"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Galatians 3:21). God gave the promise that brought this grace 430 years before the law, so the law did not change the promise. Rather, "it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Galatians 3:19). So the law, bringing the knowledge of sin, was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster (Galatians 3:24-25).

Lesson 8
Grace Abounds

"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). As we taught in lesson 1, our victory is not in the eradication of the old sinful nature, but we have victory because Jesus is in us and is greater than the one who is in the world (I John 4:4). Grace abounds because Jesus dwells in us, making us the temple of God (II Corinthians 6:16). Grace abounds in those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1). For Jesus condemned sin in the flesh; that is, Jesus pronounced judgment on sin. Jesus who is now Lord of His house, the temple of God, has placed sin under lock and key, awaiting the time of its execution.

Yes, it is the unmerited favor of God to have One so holy and powerful take up His abode with us, after paying our debt by bearing our sins in His own body on the cross. Because He rose again, He has been able to fill us, conquering for us. And because Christ abides in us (John 14:16), and we let him rule our lives, we are then servants of righteousness unto holiness, with the end result being everlasting life.

Those who teach that one can have the grace of God and still continue in sin are far from the truth. Grace itself teaches us to live holy in this present world: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12). Therefore the secret of the victorious life is to keep Christ abiding within, so that we may bring forth fruit unto holiness, for we cannot bring forth fruit except we abide in the vine (John 15:4-6).

If we take the grace of God for granted and fall into sin, we should take heed lest we are broken off like dead branches (Romans 11:18). While our bodies are the temple of God and are the vessels that hold the treasure, the greatness of the power is not of us, but of God (II Corinthians 4:7).

This body will die because the sentence of death is upon it (Romans 8:10), but at the second coming of Jesus, He will transform our vile body to be like His glorious body (Philippians 3:21).

The grace that abounds in us by the indwelling Spirit of God makes possible this change. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the deed dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). If Jesus should tarry the body will die because of the sentence of death pronounced upon it. But by the grace of God, the sting of death has been taken out of our lives, and thus we will triumph over the grave. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin" (I Corinthians 15:55-56). But if we are alive when Jesus comes, we will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, and be caught up to meet Jesus in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord (I Corinthians 15:51-52; I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6). In Christ we can be partakers of this glory with all the saints such as Peter, who said he was a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed (I Peter 5:1).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:18). Now, because we have believed, we "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8).

Therefore, if we have this glory, we can rest in the hope of being changed to that glory which will be revealed. How important, then, it is to possess this grace and glory, if we are to partake of that which is to come! This is the mystery that has been revealed to the saints, which is Christ in

us, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). By comparing Colossians 1:27 with Romans 5:2, we see that God gives this grace to us only as Christ dwells in us. So Christ in us is the hope of the glory to come.

This teaching glorifies Christ in every respect, for any righteousness in the life of a Christian is the result of the grace of God abounding in his heart, causing him to bring forth fruit unto holiness. Let us notice that even when fruit is produced, it is not *our* fruit, but the fruit of the Spirit! (See Galatians 5:22.) Nor can we emphasize the truth too strongly that the grace of God is not a license to sin or an excuse for us to become careless in our Christian life. (See Romans 6:1-2.) Rather, if the grace of God in our lives is the indwelling Spirit of God, this Spirit, when allowed to rule, will cause us to walk in the light of the Word. In contrast, we will fall from grace if we continue to sin and do not live in obedience to God's Word by faith (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 10:38).

Some teach that grace cannot abound in our lives unless we keep the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath. One paper supporting this point of view gave the illustration that if a person were found guilty of breaking the law and was pardoned, he could not remain free if he proceeded to break the same law again. But this illustration hides the real truth of the grace of God. When we are saved by grace, *we are given a different covenant and a new nature by which to keep it*. Under grace, we are freed from the old covenant's laws and placed under the new covenant. The abounding grace of God brings a wonderful liberty from the old covenant, yet it does not give a license to transgress the new covenant.

Lesson 9
Falling from Grace

Since many teachers claim that "falling from grace" is impossible, we shall consider carefully the Word of God on this subject. II Corinthians 6:1 says, "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." If a person, once in the grace of God, could not fall from grace and be lost, then the writers of Scripture would not have penned verses like II Corinthians 6:1. There is only one way that the Corinthian saints' faith would have been in vain, and that was if they had fallen from grace and were lost. For if it is impossible, after receiving the grace of God, for one to be lost, then the work bestowed upon a person to bring him into grace could not be in vain.

Paul said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Galatians 4:11). Although they had begun the Christian life in the Spirit (Galatians 3:3), these people had turned away from Paul's teaching and sought to be justified by the works of the law. Again in I Thessalonians 3:5, he said he was anxious about the believers lest by some means the tempter had tempted them and his labor had been in vain. We find that these same people had received the Word with joy in the Holy Ghost (I Thessalonians 1:5-6). Surely no one would deny that these people mentioned in Galatians and Thessalonians had been saved by grace; yet it was possible that the apostle's work among them had been in vain. The only way Paul's ministry could have been in vain was if his converts had fallen away from God and were lost.

Galatians 5:4 declares, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." We wonder how some can teach to the contrary, having set aside such clear statements. One argument is that since the gift of God is eternal life, how after once receiving it can a person lose it? But those who say this have not understood that this gift, whether it is called the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38), the gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17), the gift of grace (Ephesians 2:8), or the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23), is Christ in us, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). Let us notice carefully that Jesus is our eternal life: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Therefore, *only as we have Him* do we have eternal life: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:12). It is plain to see that if we put Jesus out of our lives, we are putting away eternal life, and any work that ministers have bestowed upon us to bring us to Christ has been in vain. If we lose Christ, we do not have grace, righteousness, or eternal life, for they all come to us through Him.

The truth concerning security in Christ is wonderful, for as long as we keep Jesus, we are just as secure as if we were already in heaven! But *it is sad for men and women to lean upon a false security when there is a real one to lean upon*. Yes, our eternal life is conditioned on us receiving *and* keeping Jesus in our lives. How some dare to ignore all the warnings in God's Word and teach contrary to Paul's instructions is hard to understand. This doctrine has made many people loose and careless in their moral lives and has caused many who once lived holy lives to say, "No matter what I do, I can't be lost, for I have once tasted of the grace of God." We should reject every doctrine not conducive to a holy walk with God.

Colossians 1:24 says that Paul suffered for the church. We could ask, "Why suffer for the church, Paul? Why don't you just get folks filled with God, making them partakers of the grace of God, for then they will be eternally secure?" Let Paul answer in his own words to the Corinthians: "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (I Corinthians 15:1-2). Like the Corinthians, we must keep in memory

what has been preached to us, lest we have believed in vain. Colossians 1:23 declares, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." We are the house of Christ "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Hebrews 3:6). We are told, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Hebrews 3:13-14).

The natural branches (Israelites) were broken off, and Gentiles, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in (Romans 11:17). God grafts all Gentiles into Christ the same way He grafted in the household of Cornelius. (See Acts 10:44.) Romans 11 continues, "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Romans 11:21-22).

In order to believe the doctrine of "once saved, always saved," a person would have to take one of the following three stands: (1) Someone who professed a conversion to Christ and later fell away from God really was never saved to begin with. (2) A saved person could backslide and die in his sinful state yet enter heaven despite the stain of sin upon his life because he had been once saved. (3) If a person was once saved and fell into sin, he will get back into grace some time before he dies.

If we took the last position, we would be teaching that if a person backslid, as long as he lived in sin he could not die. If he wanted to live a long life, he could simply put off getting back to God! And if he continued to sin, God would have to let him live forever in his sinful state. We cannot see how anyone would be willing to hold to any of these three positions, and one of the three would have to be right if the doctrine of eternal security were true.

Thank God for the harmony of the Scriptures that proves so clearly that our salvation depends not only upon receiving the grace of God but also upon remaining in Christ and allowing His Spirit to dwell in us.

Lesson 10
The Children of God

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). In the spiritual sense, we are not children of God by nature. Jesus only gives believers the power to become the children of God (John 1:12). Verse 13 continues, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This is a clear statement that not all born of the flesh have a right to be called a child of God, but only those who are born of God. The teaching we wish to arm ourselves against is that since God is the Father of the human race then we are all the spiritual children of God by nature. However, if we are all heirs of God by nature, we would not need the Bible to show us how to become the children of God.

What a contrast there is between the people of the world (those born of the flesh) and the true children of God! In fact, the world does not know them: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (I John 3:1). The world does not even know the children of God; therefore, the world cannot possibly be children of God automatically. The same world did not know the unique Son of God, even our Lord, for we read in John 1:10, "And the world knew him not."

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2). While these verses of Scripture defeat the teaching that all people are the spiritual children of God, they also defeat the theory that no one can be a child of God until after Jesus comes again, for John said that *now* we are the children of God.

Jesus, of course, is the only begotten Son of God, and God gave Him on the cross that through His death and resurrection God might have many children by adoption through Him. God sowed one seed, His Son, and reaped a harvest of children. If this seed had not been planted, no one could have been saved. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24). A person born of water and the Spirit is a child of God. To become a child of God, one must be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Jesus had to die, then rise from the dead, and ascend into heaven as our high priest, there to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 9:24). Hebrews 9:7 describes His work: "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." As the levitical high priest took the blood of an animal and offered it for sin, so Jesus, as our high priest, entered into heaven by His own blood (Hebrews 9:11-12).

After Jesus entered into heaven, God filled the disciples with His Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The work of Jesus as high priest in making us children is not complete until we have received what He sent from the Holy Place. This is what Jesus referred to when He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you" (John 16:7). He had to go to the Holy Place as high priest, and His express purpose for going there was so that the Comforter might come! How then can we say that we are the true children of God if the very thing for which he entered the Holy Place has not yet been fulfilled in our lives?

Now if a person is a child of God, he is an heir of God, and a joint heir with the Son of God, Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). In order to be a child of God, one must be led by the Spirit. God has promised those who receive His Spirit that He will guide and lead them into all truth (John 16:13). Here again we have proof that not all people are children of God and also that one does not have to

wait until Jesus comes to be a child of God.

The children of God are in the world *now*, shining as lights in a dark place: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15).

The Spirit of God's Son comes into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father," and thereby announces our adoption as children of God. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:4-6). The children of God are not still-born, but when the Spirit comes in, the Lord speaks for Himself. Jesus Himself said, "But when the Comforter is come . . . he shall testify of me" (John 15:26).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:15-17). Because we are children, we are heirs of God to the glory that shall be revealed.

Romans 8:19 speaks of the "manifestation of the sons of God." "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Some teachers, by taking this verse of Scripture out of its context, have attempted to prove that the children of God should be manifested now, and some go so far to say that if we are children of God, we should have our redeemed bodies here and now. They have failed to note such Scripture passages as Philippians 3:20-21, which says, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." We will have *vile* bodies until Jesus comes and changes them. Then, and not until then, will our mortal bodies put on immortality (I Corinthians 15:51-53).

Questions on Lessons 1-10

Lesson 1

1. What outstanding qualification is needed to be a successful Christian worker?
2. How are we sanctified?
3. How can we know the deep things of God?
4. How can we prove the will of God?
5. How can victory be kept over the sinful nature?

Lesson 2

1. What verses of Scripture uphold the Word of God as infallible?
2. What Scripture verse teaches us that the Word of God is our food?
3. What is the difference in the judgment of saint and sinner?
4. What is the Word in our weapons of warfare?
5. With few exceptions, to whom is the Word of God written?

Lesson 3

1. How many divisions do we find in the books of the New Testament?
2. How many books are in each?
3. Explain the difference between what we have called the “unrevealed” and the “revealed” Word of God.
4. What three types of passages can we speak of as “unrevealed” Word?
5. What are the four major divisions in the New Testament? Explain the difference between these four divisions.
6. How can we prove the disciples did not preach the gospel before the Day of Pentecost?
7. What had to happen before the new covenant could come into effect?

Lesson 4

1. What persons foreshadowed the two covenants?
2. Whom did God use to give the first covenant?
3. What was the old covenant?
4. On what was the old covenant written?
5. Is it true that what was written on stone was done away? Give Scripture reference.

Lesson 5

1. Of what was the seventh day given as a sign or seal?
2. What was the penalty for breaking the Sabbath?
3. What is the New Testament Sabbath of rest?
4. Of what is it a seal?
5. What is the penalty for breaking this seal?

Lesson 6

1. How did Israel fail to obtain righteousness?
2. How did Abraham get a standing of righteousness before God?
3. How do we put on righteousness?
4. Does the righteousness that God accepts consist in our living a good life and performing good works? If not, what is it?

Lesson 7

1. Give Scripture verses that describe the basis of our salvation.

2. How did we come to be sinners?
3. Give verse of Scripture for the penalty of sin.
4. Who can be saved?
5. For what reason was the law given?

Lesson 8

1. How can we keep from condemnation?
2. What does grace teach us?
3. When do we get rid of our vile bodies?
4. What hope does grace give us?
5. What greater thing does grace give beside the forgiveness of sin?

Lesson 9

1. Why was Paul so anxious about the welfare of the saints?
2. What caused these saints to fall from grace?
3. Why is teaching that one cannot fall from grace a dangerous doctrine?
4. What Scripture passage do you think is the best proof that the doctrine “once saved always saved” is wrong?
5. What three possible positions must be taken by those who believe in unconditional eternal security? Give Scripture references showing the fallacy of each.

Lesson 10

1. Who are the spiritual children of God?
2. How can one become a child of God?
3. When can we be the children of God?
4. What great benefit do we enjoy by being a child of God?
5. When will the children of God be manifested?

Lesson 11
The Church

The word *church* in the New Testament means the "called out ones." The first mention of the church in the New Testament is in Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." At the time these words were spoken, the church was still in the future, for Jesus said, "I *will* build my church."

The church was born on the Day of Pentecost. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). We find from this verse that the church was in existence only beginning on the Day of Pentecost, and God was continually adding to it.

If the Holy Ghost outpouring upon the disciples at Pentecost formed the church, then it was not a man-made organization but an organism of God. And if it took the Holy Ghost to form that church and put the first members into it, it still takes the same Spirit to put us into the church today. From this we can clearly see that the only way into this church is to be born into it.

The Church Is Christ's Body

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:22-23). "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Colossians 1:24). These verses of Scripture clearly establish that the church is the body of Christ.

How to Get into the Church

Some might say, "How can I get into this church?" "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:13). Those who claim that this is not the baptism of the Spirit should listen to Paul: "And have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Moreover, Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37). John further explained in verse 39 that Jesus was talking about believers receiving the Spirit.

Some say that the only way to get into the church is by receiving a minister's right hand of fellowship. They use Galatians 2:9 to support their point: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." But by their claim, Paul and Barnabas, who had been converted for seventeen years, were not yet in the church! However, Acts 13:1 tells us that they were in the church, and this was many years before the apostles in Jerusalem extended the right hand of fellowship to them. Thus, there is no scriptural support for this teaching.

From the context of Galatians 2:9, we find that the apostles at Jerusalem gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship as fellow apostles that they might go to the Gentiles. The point is that no human can put us into the church, and no human can take us out of God's church. Only God can write or blot out a name from the Book of Life. (See Revelation 3:5.)

Some use III John 10 in an attempt to prove that a minister can put a member out of God's

church. But here a false leader had cast some of the saints out of the church, not a genuine man of God. No doubt they were barred from coming in to worship in the church, but no leader, false or otherwise, can cast a true saint out of the body of Christ, if the Holy Ghost has baptized him into the body. If it were possible for false leaders to cast true members out of the church, then the gates of hell could prevail against the church, the very thing Jesus said would never happen!

The Name

Is the term "church of God" the name of the church? No, the name is "the church." The term "church of God" simply means it is God's church, or that the church is of God.

In this regard, let us note the following verses of Scripture: "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). This simply means that the church belongs to God because He has purchased it. "The churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16). Again this means that the churches belong to Christ. Hebrews 12:23 mentions the church of the firstborn, meaning that the church is made up of the firstborn, but in any case the name is always "the church."

The important question is this: Have we personally been baptized into the church by water and the Holy Spirit? If the Lord has added us to His church by filling us with His Spirit, and we follow on to know the Lord, abiding in Him and He in us, then He will catch us up together with the other saints at his glorious appearing.

Let us, who have had the seal of His Spirit upon us, labor as Paul did for the advancement of the great church of which Christ is the Head.

Lesson 12

Pentecost

(Acts 2:1-4)

Some have objected to using the name "Pentecostal" for the baptism of the Holy Ghost, since Pentecost means "fifty." Specifically, Pentecost was the name of the feast that began on the fiftieth day after Passover. However, when we understand that this feast was held in celebration of the harvest, we realize that it has a much greater significance than merely being the fiftieth day after Passover.

"Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread . . . and the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field" (Exodus 23:14-16).

"Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baken with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD" (Leviticus 23:17).

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty" (Deuteronomy 16:16).

From the above Scripture passages we see that Israelite males were obligated to keep three main feasts unto the Lord each year:

First, the Feast of the Passover or Unleavened Bread. Jesus' death was the fulfillment of this feast.

Second, fifty days after the Feast of Passover was the Feast of Harvest (Pentecost), the first fruits. It is also called the Feast of Weeks. Some see the birthday of the church as the fulfillment of this feast.

Third, the Feast of Ingathering or full harvest. It is also called the Feast of Tabernacles. The fulfillment of this feast is still in the future.

When we speak of Pentecost, we are speaking of a feast. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the New Testament feast; indeed, it is a feast for all those who eat of it. And it is not a feast that is over in twenty-four hours, but we have this feast every day in the year. We are in harmony with God's thought when we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and call it "our Pentecost.'' Thousands of people have enjoyed this feast during the past century, and God is still filling souls with the Spirit evidenced by their speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance. When God fulfilled this feast with about 120 believers on that day about two thousand years ago, He left the door open to whoever desires it. In Acts 2:39 Peter said, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And that door is still open. Jesus said, "I have set before thee an open door" (Revelation 3:8). This feast was fulfilled at its appointed time: "When the day of Pentecost was fully come" (Acts 2:1).

The Passover was eaten with unleavened bread, but the Feast of Pentecost was eaten with leaven. In New Testament teaching, leaven is a type of sin. So we see how Jesus, the sinless (unleavened) One, fulfilled the Passover for us. But the Feast of Pentecost, eaten with leaven, is ours, the sinful, leavened ones. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just [unleavened] for the unjust [leavened], that he might bring us to God" (I Peter 3:18). II Corinthians 5:21 says, "For he hath made him to be sin [leaven] for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness [unleavened] of God in him." Now that we are in Him, we are unleavened: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover

is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (I Corinthians 5:7-8).

Some teach that Pentecost is a kind of side dish; one may take it or leave it. They say that if we take it, it will taste good to us and give us power for service. But Pentecost is not a side dish, it is the main dish. We cannot take a detour around the city of Pentecost and get back on the main highway on the other side of the city. We must go through it. All who go some other way have a sub-Christian experience.

The following is a list of some of the things this Holy Ghost experience is and what it does in the life of the believer:

It gives power to witness (Acts 1:8).

It is the earnest of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14).

We are sealed by it unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30).

By it we are added to the church, which is Christ's body (I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:22-23).

It is the oil that allows us to go into the marriage of the Bridegroom (Matthew 25:10).

It is the wedding garment of the bride (Revelation 19:7-8).

It is our Sabbath (Isaiah 28:11-12).

It is our Lord Jesus (II Corinthians 3:17; 13:5).

It is our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6).

Pentecost, as found in the Book of Acts, is the only gateway into the Epistles, for they were written to born-again believers. Many after receiving the Holy Ghost have exclaimed, "Oh! I never saw it so clearly before!" Getting the Pentecostal experience, as it is taught in the Book of Acts, reveals to us the true teaching contained in the Epistles.

God planned, before He created the world, that we would be filled with the Holy Ghost, feasting upon the Spirit of God, and made worthy to share the throne someday with Him in glory.

Lesson 13
Promotion

"For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Psalm 75:6-7).

It is normal for a person to desire promotion. In fact, he should desire advancement in every walk of life. But in most cases, there is a condition one must meet to be promoted. The purpose of this lesson is to teach the secret of getting into a place where God can promote us, for promotion comes from God. It seems, however, that we are slow to learn the lesson of what is required of us so that God can promote us.

James and John were two ambitious brothers whom Jesus called "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). "Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Matthew 20:20-23).

These two ambitious brothers were seeking a place of prominence in the kingdom. They wanted to be next to Jesus. But Jesus showed them that the way to promotion was through suffering, as He suffered. When Jesus asked, "Are you able to drink of this cup?" He was asking if they were willing to endure suffering humbly. He did not promise them the place of honor in the kingdom, but He did show them the secret of obtaining promotion from the Lord.

Examples of Some Whom God Promoted

Saul

"And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?" (I Samuel 15:17). When the Lord chose Saul to be king, Saul was not some big fellow filled with his own ways, but he was a humble young man out hunting his father's donkeys that were lost. When Samuel met him, Saul was on his way to the seer to ask God about the donkeys; he was seeking after God. Saul's demise began when he became proud and disobediently offered a sacrifice without waiting for Samuel's arrival (I Samuel 13:12-13). Later, he rejected the word of the Lord again and refused to utterly destroy the Amalekites, sparing king Agag. Therefore, the Lord told him through Samuel, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (I Samuel 15:23). The example of Saul is an excellent example of one whom God set up when he was humble but brought down when he became filled with pride.

David

The Lord sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons as king to replace King Saul. As Eliab came before Samuel, the prophet said, "Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:6-7).

When Jesse saw that Samuel had not chosen Eliab, he had his other sons pass before Samuel, but the Lord refused them all. "And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said,

There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (I Samuel 16:11-12).

Did God choose David because of his good looks? No indeed, for God said, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will" (Acts 13:22; see I Samuel 13:14). David had his heart set on doing God's will. While David's brothers were parading in the army and making a great show before people, David was seeking the presence of the Lord and His approval. This is the secret to being promoted by God.

Moses

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:24-27).

These verses reveal why God raised Moses to a prominent place of responsibility. He was an Israelite raised in the house of Pharaoh and had a right to all the riches and treasures of Egypt, but he refused them all, for there was a cry in his heart for his people.

Many would like to have Moses' place of prominence, but they are not willing to go through what Moses did to get it. He was placed on the backside of the desert to herd sheep for forty years, but all that time there was a cry in his heart for God to deliver His people. Forty years was a long time to wait for God to answer his prayers, but God is faithful. After forty years, the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush and assured him that He had heard the cries of His people and had come down to deliver them. Before Moses had a place of authority, he had a place of humility.

Joseph

When God chose Joseph from among the twelve sons of Jacob, it was not because he was good looking or was Jacob's favorite son. Joseph no doubt was a godly boy and had his mind on the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God gave him dreams which revealed that one day he would rule over his brethren. However, before he could reach that place of prominence, he, too, had to endure suffering. His brethren sold him into slavery to the Ishmaelites. Later, the Ishmaelites sold him to Potiphar. Finally, he was imprisoned, though he had done no wrong.

While he was in Potiphar's house and in prison, he faithfully followed the Lord. The Lord was with him and caused all that Joseph did to prosper (Genesis 39:3, 21-23). These hard experiences that Joseph went through were only steps to the throne. A life of humility and a determination to please God preceded the place of great authority that Joseph finally held.

This was also true in the lives of Daniel and many others. When we research their background, we find that each met a condition that brought about their promotion from God. This is not only true in the lives of people such as Moses, David, and Daniel, but it is true of all those who will meet God's condition today. If we find ourselves in a hard place because we have been true to God, we need not fear, because God will bring us out so that we can be of service to Him. When we learn the blessed secret that it is the Lord who puts one down and lifts another up, we then can get busy doing the little things we can find to do for God, with the only motive being to please God. Then, if it is God's will, He will give us positions of greater responsibility. If we can catch the secret of what God will do with a humble heart, we will have a rich life of service before us.

Another thing we must learn is that God will make a way for the gifts He bestows on us. We do not have to push or crowd or force ourselves into the limelight. God will make a way for us. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men" (Proverbs 18:16). God does not promote by the same rules used in the secular world. In the world, a person works faithfully in order to get a promotion, but in God's kingdom, our desire should be to please God, not

earn a promotion. If God promotes us, fine; but if not, fine. It is all for God anyway.

Psalm 23 is filled with wonderful promises, but they are conditioned on our making the Lord our Shepherd. He will prepare a table for us in the presence of our enemies. In other words, the Lord will promote us, if we are one of His faithful sheep.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10). Voluntary humility causes God to lift us up. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Peter 5:6). And God is never late! "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

In God's economy, the way up is down! And only God's people can understand such language.

Lesson 14
One Body

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4).

Acts 2 shows that God's people were unified after being baptized into the body of Christ.

We shall now consider some of God's "togethers" in the Bible. In light of all these Scripture verses, it is difficult to see how anyone can conceive of more than one body, or church.

The believers were together (Acts 2:44). Following the Day of Pentecost, all the believers were together and had all things in common.

God has quickened us together (Ephesians 2:5). God saved us from sin and made us alive spiritually together in Christ.

God has raised us up together (Ephesians 2:6).

God has made us sit together (Ephesians 2:6). Christ's sacrifice broke down the middle wall of partition that separated the Jews and the Gentiles and created one body out of these two groups (Ephesians 2:13-16).

We are a building together (Ephesians 2:21-22). "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

We are knit together (Colossians 2:2, 19). Paul desired "that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love" and that the body might increase "with the increase of God." This body is constantly growing (Ephesians 4:16). It is like a snowball that is small when it first starts rolling, but as it rolls, more and more snow clings to it, and it increases in size. This body had a small beginning on the Day of Pentecost, but as it has rolled down through the years, it has increased and increased.

We are to strive together (Philippians 1:27). With one mind we are to strive together for the faith of the gospel.

We shall be caught up together (I Thessalonians 4:17). We have the promise of being caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

We shall live together with Him (I Thessalonians 5:10). Whether we live or die, we shall live together with Him.

We are to live together here and go to glory together. That leaves no place for more than one body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:12-13). "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. But now are they many members, yet but one body" (I Corinthians 12:18, 20). "That there should be no schism [division] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another" (I Corinthians 12:25).

The body is tempered (composed) together. "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. . . . For our comely [graceful] parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked'' (I Corinthians 12:21-22, 24). God has not only declared that there is only one body, but He has spoken against it being divided and has urged all Christians to consider one another to be part of the body, particularly the weaker Christians. Indeed, we should bestow honor on them, so they will not lack. In the natural, if we have a crippled arm, a bad ear, or a sore foot, we do not cut off those afflicted parts, thus dividing our body and leaving one part strong and

healthy while the cut off part dies. No, if one part is not as strong and as healthy as it should be, we give more attention to it to bring it back to health. The same should be true in the spiritual realm.

Jesus prayed for us: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their [the disciples'] word" (John 17:20). And what was the burden of His prayer? "That they all may be one" (John 17:21).

These verses of Scripture should be sufficient to prove that there is only one body of believers in this gospel age.

Lesson 15

The High Priest and the Holiest of All

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 6:19-20).

There are many types in the Old Testament with antitypes in the New Testament. A significant type in the old covenant was the levitical high priest and his ministry in the Temple. The Epistle to the Hebrews beautifully explains that the ministry of Jesus is the antitype of the old covenant's high priestly ministy.

"But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:7-12).

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:24-26).

The high priest of the old covenant entered into the Holiest of All with the blood of animals. He offered the blood for *both* his own sins and the sins of the people. (See Leviticus 16:11-12, 15.) That was only a shadow of the true, for "by his own blood [Jesus] entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). Unlike the levitical high priest, Jesus did not have to offer the blood for Himself, since He was sinless.

When Jesus died on the cross, God rent in two the veil that separated the Holiest of All from the sanctuary (Matthew 27:50-51). The very manner in which the veil was rent shows that God tore it in half; if man had torn it, it would have been rent from the bottom to the top. Here we find that the type and the antitype meet. The rending of the veil in the Temple was a type of the rending of the flesh of Jesus. After that, unholy eyes could look beyond the veil of the Temple, and no longer did God honor it as the Holiest of All. The priests continued to minister, but God did not meet them as He did before. After God tore the veil, He never again accepted a sacrifice offered on a Jewish altar. The sacrifice was only a dead thing.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:19-20). The new and living way into the Holiest of All in heaven was not made manifest while the old veil was standing.

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which

are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:13-17).

This passage clearly shows that the new covenant was not in force until after the death of Jesus. Jesus came to a world that God had sentenced to death because of sin; furthermore, the world could not save itself. Death was the only penalty for sin, and the world could not be released from the penalty of sin until Jesus paid the debt with His death. We also see that Jesus, our high priest, had to enter heaven before He could minister in His office of priesthood. When He ascended, He not only took His place as our high priest, but He also became the administrator of His own will.

While the old Temple was a type of the new order of things, the levitical priesthood could not be a type of our high priest, for it was composed of mere men who died. "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death" (Hebrews 7:23). Hebrews 5:6 says that our high priest is after the order of Melchisedec: "As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Melchisedec was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Hebrews 7:3). From these verses of Scripture we see the contrast between the levitical priesthood, which was changeable by reason of death, and that of Melchisedec, which is an unchangeable priesthood.

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Lesson 16
Resurrection

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

We are glad that in giving the message of the resurrection, we do not have to attempt to explain away anything, but we can give the simple teaching from the revealed Word. Some think that Paul only believed in the resurrection of the just, and that the Pharisees taught a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. But there is no way that we can analyze the text in order to justify such teaching. In this verse, we find a foundation to believe in two resurrections, one of the just, and one for the unjust. When we follow the rules of sound biblical interpretation, we find that the Word of God clearly teaches that there is a resurrection of the just and unjust.

Jesus taught this doctrine: "And [the dead] shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29). Daniel 12:2 harmonizes with this teaching also: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

It appears that there is a great period of time between the two resurrections. In speaking of the first resurrection John said, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. . . . Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:5-6). Verses 12 and 13 say that after the thousand years are finished, the unjust will be resurrected and judged from the books according to their works. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). From this, we teach that a person born once must die twice, but a person born twice dies only once. He is blessed and holy, and the second death has no power over him.

People who teach there is no resurrection of the unjust often emphasize that the Word many times speaks of the resurrection as a single event, as in I Corinthians 15. Here the apostle Paul spoke only of the resurrection of the just. He was writing to the "blessed and holy," and they will be in the first resurrection. That is the only resurrection they are interested in. Therefore, Paul did not mention the resurrection of the unjust.

Lesson 17

The Coming of the Lord

First Phase

The Word of God plainly teaches that the Jesus will come again for His church. The coming of the Lord is not only the hope of the Christian, but it is his *only* hope. At a time when the disciples of Jesus were sorrowing because He was going to leave them, He comforted their hearts by telling them that He was coming back again. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

When the time came for Him to ascend to heaven to take His place as our high priest, He gave His disciples their final instructions concerning their work on earth. He then led them out to the Mount of Olives and ascended to heaven. It was hard for His disciples to let Him go, and just at the time when they needed to be comforted, two men in white apparel appeared and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

They promised that "this same Jesus"—no other, no stranger—but the same loving, sympathizing, gracious, unchanging Friend, was coming again. It was not the unconverted, unbelieving world who saw Jesus go. The last sight the world had of Him was as He hung on the cross, a spectacle to angels, humans, and demons. During the forty days after His resurrection, He appeared several times to His disciples, but the world did not see Him. Likewise, when He catches away His saints into the sky, only those who look for Him will see Him, and not the rest of the world, which does not look for His coming.

We cannot attempt in this brief lesson to present all the proofs in the New Testament concerning His second coming. We have considered one verse of Scripture in the Gospels and one in Acts, but I Thessalonians gives the most blessed account of all. We would never understand the two phases of His second coming if we did not have the Epistles. It is said that the first epistle to the Thessalonians was one of Paul's earliest writings and was addressed to a company of very young converts. Some say the message of the Lord's second coming is too deep for new converts, but when a new convert is filled with the Holy Spirit, God will help him to understand the Word. (See John 16:13; I John 2:27.)

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. . . . And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thessalonians 1:5-6, 10). These believers received the gospel in the power and rejoicing of the Holy Ghost, which caused them to wait for Jesus, the Son of God from heaven, who had delivered them from the wrath to come. If we had asked a Thessalonian Christian what he was waiting for, what would have been his reply? Would he have said, "I am waiting for the world to improve by means of the gospel that I myself have received," or "I am waiting for the moment of my death when I shall go to be with Jesus"? No. His reply would have been simply this: "I am waiting for the Son of God from heaven." This, and nothing else, is the proper hope of the Christian.

Paul closed each of the other four chapters in I Thessalonians with the thought of this blessed hope. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our

Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (I Thessalonians 2:19). "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (I Thessalonians 3:12-13). "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" (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). Paul used this message to comfort the saints (I Thessalonians 4:18). When their loved ones fell asleep in Christ, they could shout for joy through their tears, knowing that when He returns, Jesus will bring back with Him those believers who have died (I Thessalonians 4:13-14). I Thessalonians 5:23 says, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:2-3). From this Scripture passage we learn that the Christian's hope is a purifying hope. In other words, if we truly believe that Jesus is coming again, we will walk in holiness before Him until we see Him face to face. We are not to look for a great tribulation to come upon us, but we are to look for Jesus to come for His saints. (See Hebrews 9:28.) God revealed the mystery of Jesus' second coming *for* His saints to the apostles, and it is not to be confused with the second aspect of His coming, when He comes *with* His saints.

Lesson 18

The Coming of the Lord

Second Phase

In the first phase of the Lord's second coming, there is no hint of judgment. The saints who are caught up to meet the Lord in the air and have been made immortal, in the twinkling of an eye, have already judged themselves by the Word. Some have used the illustration of the magnet in explaining the Rapture. If you move a magnet over a pile of metal, everything made of steel will be drawn to that magnet and cling to it. It will be the same at the Rapture of the saints: those who have judged themselves by the Word of God and have the life of Christ abiding in them will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isaiah 26:20-21).

Some have said that God did not clearly reveal the first phase of the Lord's second coming in the Old Testament, but this passage of Scripture brings out both phases. First, it explains that His people are to be hidden away during the indignation. This will no doubt take place at the Rapture. Second, the Lord will come and punish the inhabitants of the earth.

Isaiah 61:1-2 clearly brings out the second aspect of His second coming: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn." When Jesus read this passage in the synagogue, He read up to the clause that mentions "the day of vengeance of our God" but did not include it in His reading. He then closed the book, sat down, and said unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). He could not include the words "the day of vengeance of our God," for that portion of the verse was not then fulfilled. At His first coming He came as a lamb, not as a judge.

In his message on the Day of Pentecost, Peter quoted from Joel 2:29-30: "And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke" (Acts 2:18-19). Joel 2:30 speaks of blood, fire, and pillars of smoke, and verse 31 says, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood." If we do not clearly understand that Joel spoke here of the second phase of the coming of the Lord, we will be waiting for the sun to be darkened and the moon turned into blood, rather than for the Rapture.

The apostle Paul said, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Romans 13:12). "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (II Thessalonians 2:3).

These two verses of Scripture seem to be a contradiction if we do not understand the two phases of His coming. In the first verse we see that the Rapture of the saints is at hand, or in other words, it may take place at any time, while certain events must transpire before the coming of the Lord *with* His saints.

Two other verses of Scripture would seem to contradict each other if there were not two phases of the Lord's second coming. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14); "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall

see him" (Revelation 1:7). Only holy people will be raptured, while both the good and the wicked will behold His literal second coming.

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:7-8). This passage of Scripture clearly brings out the second phase of His second coming when He comes with His saints to execute vengeance on the ungodly. We should not confuse this with the first aspect of His second coming when He comes to catch His waiting saints away.

If we teach that the saints will go through the Tribulation, then apparently we must also teach that the Lord cannot come now. We would then seemingly adopt the thought of the unwise servant who said, "My lord delayeth his coming" (Matthew 24:48). The faithful servant is the one continually watches and expects his Lord to come at any time. In Revelation 3:10, the Lord promised to keep His people "from the hour of temptation" (Revelation 3:10). Thus, it appears that God will take His people away before the Tribulation, which is soon to take place upon the earth.

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14-15). "And the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee" (Zechariah 14:5). These verses of Scripture explain that when the Lord comes to execute judgment upon the earth, He will have His saints with Him. It would be impossible for them to come back to the earth with Him, if He had not first come and caught them away.

There is also a beautiful picture in Revelation 19:7-16. When the Lord comes from heaven to execute judgment, He has His saints with Him. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. . . . And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Lesson 19

Judgment of the Nations

In our present lesson, we will show that there will not be simply one general judgment, but several end-time judgments. We shall use a number of Scripture references to demonstrate this point.

The great news is that God's people (the church) have no future judgment for sin. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned [judged]" (Mark 16:16). "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [judgment]" (John 5:28-29). We have showed in a former lesson that these two resurrections are distinct and have a period of one thousand years between them. (See Revelation 20:5, 12-13.)

The Bible does describe the separation of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25:31-46. Many Christians have used this passage of Scripture as the foundation to teach a general resurrection. But if we reflect on the two aspects of the second coming of the Lord, we will see that it is erroneous to say that the sheep, or those on the right hand, are the church. The church will be caught up in a moment without any such judgment occurring, since she has made herself ready by judging herself by the Word of God. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (I Peter 4:17). "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Corinthians 11:31).

If the saints have already been judged, what, then, is this judgment of Matthew 25? If we read carefully, we find that this is a judgment of nations (Matthew 25:32). It will no doubt take place at the return of Jesus with His saints. These are the Gentile nations gathered before Him, for Numbers 23:9 tells us that Israel "shall not be reckoned among the nations." Israel will not be judged here, since Israel is the nation that Jesus will return to spare when they cry out for Jehovah to come and save them. "So all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:26), or all of Israel will be allowed entrance into the kingdom (the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth). But to establish His church, God took out a people from both the Jews and the Gentiles for His name. The church is a distinct body, not to be confused with either unbelieving Jews or unbelieving Gentiles: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (I Corinthians 10:32).

The language of Matthew 25 is not like the language used in reference to the members of the body of Christ, the church. When the Lord speaks of "one of the least of these my brethren" (Matthew 25:40, 45), He is speaking about His people. If the sheep class were the church, then He would have said, "Inasmuch as you have done it to one another, or among yourselves." So we conclude that this must be the judgment of the Gentile nations at the coming of the Lord with His saints. The basis of this judgment is the way these nations, made up of individuals of course, have treated God's people. The goats will say, "When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" (Matthew 25:44). The Judge will answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matthew 25:45).

The following verses of Scripture show who "my brethren" are. "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Hebrews 2:12). "But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And

he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matthew 12:48-50). In Matthew 10:42, He tells us of the "little ones": "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

On the other hand, since the sheep nations ministered to His "little ones" when they were hungry, thirsty, and naked, the sheep nations will be permitted to inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world.

Now we see that this is a judgment of living nations, and it is not to be confused with the Great White Throne judgment. (See Revelation 20:12-13.) These two judgments are one thousand years apart, one at the beginning of the Millennium, and the other at the end. II Timothy 4:1 also describes these two judgments: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick [living] and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." The judgment of the quick is the judgment of the living nations "at his appearing," while the judgment of the dead is the Great White Throne judgment at the end of the kingdom age.

When the Bible speaks of the sheep inheriting the kingdom, it does not mean that they are ushered into heaven, but they will enter the millennial kingdom of Christ on earth. No doubt they are the ones spoken of in Zechariah 14:16-21: in that day (one thousand years) they shall go up from year to year to worship at Jerusalem. The goats will not be allowed entrance into the literal kingdom because of their treatment of "the little ones." The Tribulation, ending with the Battle of Armageddon, is the final threshing that will sift out the goats from the sheep. The leader of this class, the wicked one, will be destroyed "with the brightness of His coming" (II Thessalonians 2:8).

To summarize, the believers who have accepted the gospel and have been born again will not come into judgment, since they have "passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). They will be caught up at the Rapture, and Jesus will bring them with Him when He comes to judge the nations.

Lesson 20
Judgment of the Church

The important point of this lesson is that Jesus dealt with sin on the cross. He took our place in judgment and left us the benefits that we can obtain by our faith in Christ and our obedience to the gospel. We were headed for judgment because of sin, and the sentence against us was death. Christ, however, took our sin upon Himself and died in our place. Therefore, our sin was judged in His own body: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25).

Our sin was judged in Jesus, and He paid the penalty by death. Therefore, "he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death into life" (John 5:24). The stroke that would have fallen on us fell on Him, and by a free gift of grace we stand acquitted before God. Because He was the only begotten Son of God and took our place in judgment, we become the children of God when we trust in Him: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory" (Hebrews 2:10).

The witness that we are believers is that He sealed us unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). He promised His disciples before He went away that He would send them the Comforter. The Holy Spirit being poured out on the Day of Pentecost was a witness to the disciples that the Lord was alive in heaven.

As an illustration, suppose a friend has visited you on a stormy night. As he travels home through the storm you are anxious for his safety. After an hour or so the telephone rings and you hear your friend's voice. At once your anxiety ceases and you know that he has arrived home safely. Even so, when Jesus ascended to heaven, His followers had no word from Him until the Day of Pentecost. When they began speaking in tongues as the Spirit gave utterance, the telephone rang, so to speak, and they knew they were serving a living, glorified Christ.

If we are to escape the future judgment of sin, we must first judge ourselves: "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (I Peter 4:17). We are God's house: "Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Hebrews 3:6). There is only one way to keep this confidence and rejoicing of hope firm unto the end, and that is by judging ourselves by God's Word. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Corinthians 11:31).

In I Timothy 5:24, Paul spoke of the blessedness of one who is being judged now: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." If we are willing to be judged now by the Word, we can send our sins on before for judgment and we can come shouting after them, free from judgment. But those whose sins follow after them will have to face them in judgment. They have not accepted Christ as their substitute; therefore, they must die in their own sins.

In order that we may more effectively judge ourselves, God has given the ministry of preaching and teaching the Word for the perfecting of the saints: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

How can someone can be a justified Christian while rejecting the office of a pastor and teacher, when the Word of God tells us clearly that God has ordained such offices? Who can claim exemption from their leadership and authority? Just one class, and that is the "perfect class"! If

you are perfect, then you might be exempt from being taught by and supporting a pastor. But we who know we are not perfect yet are glad to submit ourselves to God's appointed pastors and teachers, so that they can teach us the Word of God. By the Word we judge ourselves and see our imperfections. It is not the teachers and pastors who judge the saints, but it is the saints who judge themselves by the Word.

The Holy Ghost has come with a sword in His hand (Ephesians 6:17), and He does not use the sword unless He has an instrument (pastor or teacher) to wield it. These messengers are a "sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life" (II Corinthians 2:15-16). The person in the office of pastor or teacher is not perfect, but he holds a perfect office and should be respected, not because of who he is, but because of the office God has ordained. Pastors are here in Christ's stead, and to those who obey the gospel preached by them they become a fragrance or aroma of life leading to life. If some reject his message, to them the preacher becomes an aroma of death leading to death.

Jesus said to Peter, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). In John 20:23, He said to the disciples, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." The disciples did not personally have the power to bind and loose things in heaven and in earth and to remit and to retain the sins of the people, but they had this power by virtue of the Word of God, or the message they carried. Those who reject the truth are recorded in heaven as still being bound by the power of sin, while those who accept the truth and obey it are recorded in heaven as having been loosed from the power of sin.

Questions on Lessons 11-20

Lesson 11

1. Who built the church?
2. When was it built?
3. How can one get into the church?
4. Why did the apostles give Barnabas and Paul the right hand of fellowship?
5. What is the name of the church?

Lesson 12

1. What does the word “Pentecost” mean?
2. To how many was the Pentecostal experience promised?
3. Why was the Feast of Pentecost eaten with leavened bread?
4. What is the best reason why a person should have this Pentecostal experience?
5. When did God plan Pentecost?

Lesson 13

1. What illustration of exalted ambition do we find in this lesson?
2. After God made Saul king, why was he rejected?
3. What did God find in David that made him worthy of promotion?
4. What passage of Scripture written of Moses could well have been the secret of his being promoted to a high place of leadership?
5. What rule followed to obtain promotion from the Lord is different than the rule followed to get worldly promotion?

Lesson 14

1. When was the body of Christ first found in unity?
2. What “togethers” do you judge are the most important of those mentioned?
3. Give a verse of Scripture that proves that the body will increase in size rather another body being formed.
4. In the body of Christ, what does the eye need?
5. What was the prayer Jesus that prayed for us?

Lesson 15

1. After what order is Jesus a high priest?
2. Did Christ need to offer His own blood for His own sins? Whose sins did He offer the blood for?
3. What sign or token shows that God no longer honored the Old Testament’s Holiest of All?
4. When was the first witness given that the blood of Jesus was effective?
5. Name one contrast between the levitical priesthood and that of Jesus.

Lesson 16

1. How long is the period of time between the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust? Give Scripture reference.
2. Why does the Bible say so much about the resurrection of the just and so little about the resurrection of the unjust?
3. Who is the first fruits of those who slept?
4. What two classes of saints will go up together when Jesus comes?

Lesson 17

1. Who announced that Jesus would come again in like manner as disciples saw Him go?
2. What chapters in I Thessalonians mention the return of the Lord?
3. If you asked a Thessalonian Christian what he was waiting for, what would he have said?
4. What will the hope of Christ's coming cause a believer to do?

Lesson 18

1. What do we mean by the second phase of Christ's second coming?
2. What two verses of Scripture seem to be contradictory until we understand that one is speaking of the first phase of His coming and the other of His second?
3. State one important thing Christ will do at His coming.
4. Who is coming with Christ?
5. According to Zechariah, where is the last mighty battle to be fought?

Lesson 19

1. Who will escape future judgment?
2. Who are the goats and sheep of Matthew 25?
3. What is the difference between this judgment and the Great White Throne judgment?
4. How far apart are they in time?

Lesson 20

1. How can we escape the judgment of death, which is the sentence of sin?
2. What proof do we have that this work has been accomplished?
3. What must we do to avoid future judgment?
4. By what do we judge ourselves?
5. What has the Lord given to the church to help perfect us by the Word?

Lesson 21
Prayer

Prayer is the Christian's ladder by which he can climb into the presence of the Lord. No surrendered child of God will be barren or unfruitful when he lays hold of God in real prayer. If we meet the conditions in His Word, God will answer prayer.

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed" (Acts 16:25-26). Chains fell off from men who were bound, and doors opened and closed on their own! It all took place as an answer to prayer.

Acts 12:5-17 describes a similar incident when Peter was in prison. The church in John Mark's home prayed without ceasing to God for him. The angel of the Lord came, and Peter's chains fell off. The angel led him out through the first and second ward and out through the iron gate, which opened on its own. He then came to John Mark's house where the prayer meeting was still going on, and he "declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison" (Acts 12:17).

Another time when the Jewish authorities had imprisoned the apostles, "the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth" (Acts 5:19). From these three examples in the Book of Acts we see that prayer was common in the church of that day; everything moved by prayer.

These remarkable answers to prayer took place in the same age of grace in which we live. We have the same privileges in prayer that the first-century church enjoyed.

We Must Be Persistent in Prayer

Some may think that the people of old who received answers to prayer were different from us, but this is not so. James 5:17-18 says, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." He *prayed earnestly*. In fact, he put his face between his knees (I Kings 18:42). He sent his servant out to look toward the sea, but he saw nothing. The seventh time he said, "There ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (I Kings 18:44). He prayed until he got the evidence; he now had something to stand on.

We should note that Elijah prayed the same thing again and again. This was not a vain repetition, for he was praying with faith and with meaning. Likewise, we can repeat our requests in prayer without being guilty of what Jesus condemned. (See Matthew 6:7.)

Jesus spoke two parables to teach us persistence in prayer. "And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity [persistence] he will rise and give him as many as he needeth" (Luke 11:5-8).

In Luke 18:1-8 Jesus told of a widow who came to an unjust judge and asked to be avenged of her adversary. But he would not, at first. Perhaps she had no money to pay him, but finally he said, "Because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me" (Luke 18:5). Then Jesus gave the application: "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry

day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily" (Luke 18:7-8).

We Must Pray in Faith

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Here Jesus clearly shows us that in order to get results, we must link prayer with faith.

We Must Have an Attitude of Humility When We Pray

No matter how many prayers God answers for us, we must always stay humble. The answers God gives to us in prayer should give us confidence; nevertheless, we should never boast. Humility is essential. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven" (II Chronicles 7:14).

We Must Pray according to the Will of God

"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3). We ask for things that seem lawful for us to have, but God, knowing what is best for us, sometimes answers in a different way from what we expect. In such cases, we might not immediately recognize God's answer, because it is disguised. For instance, if we pray for patience, God may allow a trial to come to us, for "tribulation worketh patience" (Romans 5:3).

God sometimes permits us to have our own way. For example, Balaam asked the Lord for permission to curse Israel, and God said no. When Balaam asked God the second time, God said yes, but His anger was kindled against him (Numbers 22:12-22). So if God clearly says no to our prayers, we should not ask the second time, for He has already made known His will. We need not ask God, however, whether it is His will for us to do something that He has already revealed in His Word. For *God's Word is His will for His children.*

Lesson 22

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire

The baptism of the Holy Ghost has, in these days, become a widely discussed subject, and well it should be, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the preeminent promise for the New Testament church. It has been said that there are thirty thousand promises in the Bible, yet this is the one that God has exalted above all others for us today.

The Old Testament foreshadows the baptism of the Holy Ghost many times; we will consider a few of the direct references. Isaiah 12 gives a beautiful picture of saints who have received this experience. Because Jesus paid the debt for us, God's anger is "turned away" and He comforts His people, as they joyfully "draw water out of the wells of salvation." "And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD" (Isaiah 12:3-4). This is a common salutation among people who have received the Holy Ghost. Those who have had this experience surely "make mention that his name is exalted" (Isaiah 12:4). They are commanded to "cry out and shout" (Isaiah 12:6). No wonder all the criticism they receive does not keep them from shouting His praises!

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28). In Acts 2:16-21, Peter took up this prophecy of Joel and declared that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of it.

"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Isaiah 28:11-12). This verse applies to the baptism of the Spirit as the rest and refreshing. It speaks of the stammering lips and another tongue, which we find is always the evidence that God has filled someone with His Spirit. The tongue is an unruly member, but God takes complete control of it when He speaks through the believer in other tongues.

In the New Testament, we find many direct references to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matthew 3:11). Here John the Baptist informed the multitudes who came out to hear him preach that there was One coming after him, meaning Jesus the Son of God, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Some teach that this baptism of the Holy Ghost was just for the twelve disciples, but John was not talking to them alone; he was talking to the multitudes. The same "you" whom he had baptized in water would be baptized with the Holy Ghost! In Matthew 3:16, Jesus came to be baptized of John. Here we see the two baptizers together—one a water baptizer and the other a Holy Ghost baptizer—and John acknowledged his need to be baptized by Jesus.

The question is immediately asked, "Did not John already have the baptism of the Holy Spirit?" The answer is no. It is true that John was filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth. He was the last of the prophets and was even more than a prophet. He had the spirit of prophecy as did all the old prophets and was anointed as were the kings and priests who were under the law. But all of them, including John, had to make a blood offering for their sins each year. It was impossible for John or anybody else to receive the baptism of the Spirit as long as Jesus was alive. The new and living way was not made manifest while the first tabernacle was yet standing (Hebrews 9:8; 10:19-20). It was not possible for any person to receive the Holy Ghost baptism until after the

new covenant came into force. (See Hebrews 9:16-17.)

Jesus taught that believers would receive the Holy Ghost baptism (John 7:37-39). In His last words He told His disciples they would "be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). This great promise was soon fulfilled, but when He gave the promise, it was still future. Why did He not give the fulfillment to them then? Because He was not yet in His office as high priest, and He does not do business outside of His office. It was necessary for Him to enter heaven itself before God would pour out the Holy Ghost baptism. God could only baptize people with His Spirit after Jesus atoned for sins with His blood. As the high priest under the law went alone into the Most Holy Place with blood for himself and for the people (Hebrews 9:7), so Jesus went into heaven by His own blood and appeared in the presence of God for us. Jesus said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come" (John 16:7).

The Holy Ghost baptism is not limited to prophets, priests, and kings, as the anointing of the Spirit was under the first covenant. Rather, it is for "as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

This truth makes very clear the words of Jesus concerning John: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matthew 11:11). In other words, the least person baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire is greater than John.

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). Believers would heal more sick, cleanse more lepers, and raise more from the dead than He did. The greater works were to be done through the power of the Holy Ghost. After the Day of Pentecost, the disciples went out and laid their hands upon people, and they received the Holy Ghost. This is something that Jesus did not do, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given. Significantly, a person who can help people pray through to the Holy Ghost is doing a greater work than one who has much success in praying for the sick but does not lead them to receiving the Holy Ghost.

Lesson 23

The Initial Evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost

In our last lesson we found, among other truths, two important facts. First, the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for all believers. John said it was for all those he had baptized in water (Matthew 3:11), and Jesus said it was for anyone who would believe on Him (John 7:38-39). The second point is that Jesus could not baptize anyone with the Holy Ghost until after He had entered His priestly office, through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.

We shall now consider the initial physical evidence signifying that someone has received the Holy Ghost: "But when the Comforter is come . . . he shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26-27). Here we find two witnesses. First, the Holy Spirit, who testifies of Jesus, is actually Jesus speaking for Himself: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). Secondly, we also are to bear witness (Acts 1:8). On the Day of Pentecost, the 120 disciples were in one place and in one accord; they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak in other tongues (Acts 2:4). Here we see that the Holy Ghost bore witness of Jesus. Then after the multitudes came together, the disciples also bore witness, when Peter said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16).

Speaking in tongues, as recorded in Acts 2:4, is the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost baptism. Acts 10:44 records the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Gentiles: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." How did the Jewish Christians who came with Peter know that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost? "For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 11:46).

In Acts 19:6, around twenty-three years after the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Paul met some disciples of John the Baptist who had not yet received the Holy Ghost. He laid his hands on these disciples, and true to the pattern established at Pentecost (Acts 2:4) and at Cornelius' house (Acts 10:46), they spoke with tongues.

Acts 8 records a great revival in the city of Samaria. "For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed" (Acts 8:7). Following Philip's preaching, many had turned to the Lord. However, though they had been baptized in water, none of them had received the Holy Ghost. When Peter and John came to Samaria and prayed for the believers, they received the Holy Ghost. It appears that they, too, spoke with tongues, because Simon the Sorcerer saw something that convinced him that the people had received the Holy Ghost. He offered Peter money that he might have the power to lay his hands on people and give them the Holy Ghost in the same miraculous way.

God established the correct pattern for people receiving the Holy Ghost in the Book of Acts. Importantly, the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was always the same—speaking in tongues. How will honest hearts, who are seeking for the truth of God, be able to claim the baptism of the Holy Ghost unless they have spoken in tongues as the Spirit gives the ability? To what passage of Scripture will they point to as the pattern and say, "I thank God that I have received the Holy Ghost just as it is recorded there"?

Many people claim that the fruit of the Spirit is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but God's Word does not record a single instance where anyone received the baptism of

the Holy Ghost with this stressed as the evidence of the baptism. On the other hand, the Samaritans had great joy even before they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:8, 15-16). Moreover, Luke 24:52-53 says that the company of disciples who witnessed the ascension of Jesus returned to Jerusalem with great joy and continually praised and blessed God in the Temple. So we see that joy and blessings are not the evidence, as these disciples did not receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost till the Day of Pentecost. (See Acts 2:4.)

Many, in failing to place the books of the Bible in their proper setting, confuse the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 12 and 14 with the accounts in Acts. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, was teaching those who had already received the baptism of the Holy Ghost how to act in the church and was instructing them in the use of the gifts of the Spirit. He gave instructions concerning the gift of tongues for the edification of the church. The tongues recorded in Acts served a different purpose; no interpretation is required when one receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But Paul, writing to those who had already received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, instructed them that they must interpret any message in tongues given to the church.

In summary, the Acts of the Apostles records how believers entered the church, while I Corinthians teaches how they should act after they have entered the church, or in other words, how the gifts of the Spirit should operate through the Spirit-filled saints.

It is the baptism of the Holy Ghost evidenced by speaking in other tongues that makes us different from all other people. If it were not for this experience, which so many today do not accept, we would have no excuse for being a separate movement. Some would like to have the Holy Ghost but do not want tongues as the evidence. But one can just as easily have boiling water without steam as the Holy Ghost without tongues! To be sure, we should never seek for tongues, but we do urge those who have repented and given their lives to Christ to seek the Holy Ghost, and when He comes in, there will be tongues to witness His arrival. When one sends for a pair of shoes, it is the shoes he is after; but when he receives them, he finds the tongues are there with the shoes!

People who were not spiritual were creeping into leadership in the closing days of the apostles. This caused Jude to urge the church to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). A thorough study of the Book of Acts will prove to any honest seeker after truth that the Spirit-filled life is the normal New Testament standard for the present-day believer in Christ.

Lesson 24

The Benefits of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost

1. The baptism of the Holy Ghost puts us into the New Testament church. We become members of the church by receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (See I Corinthians 12:13.) Most Bible teachers agree with this, in that they teach the church was born on the Day of Pentecost. If it took the Holy Ghost to form the church, it will surely take the same experience to add members to the church.

2. We are sealed by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Paul taught the church at Ephesus that after they believed they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13). He possibly referred to Acts 19:1-6, when he found certain Ephesian disciples who knew only the baptism of John but who received the Holy Ghost under his ministry.

3. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the earnest (guarantee) of our inheritance. Ephesians 1:14 teaches that the Holy Ghost baptism is the earnest of our inheritance. An earnest is a guarantee or down payment.

4. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is our Sabbath or rest. In the baptism of the Spirit we find rest for our souls. (See Isaiah 28:11-12.)

5. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is our righteousness. "The Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17). Jeremiah 23:6 teaches us that the Lord is our righteousness. Therefore, to have the baptism of the Holy Ghost is to have the righteousness of God. The Word teaches us God does not accept our righteousness but only His righteousness in our lives. (See Isaiah 64:6; Romans 10:4.)

6. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the oil that gives us entrance into the marriage supper. (See Matthew 25:10.)

7. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is the wedding garment. (See Revelation 19:8.) In Matthew 22:12 Jesus told a parable about a man who came to a marriage supper not wearing a wedding garment. When questioned how he came to be there, he was speechless (without excuse).

In conclusion, since it is so important for every believer to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, we must hold up God's standard before people and urge them to be filled with the Spirit.

In addition to these seven benefits of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, there are many other benefits enjoyed by those who are partakers of the Spirit.

We have "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8). It is so much beyond what tongue can tell that we understand why Peter said it was inexpressible joy. Paul also wrote, "We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2).

A person filled with the Holy Ghost is so thrilled that at times that he cannot contain the blessing without giving vent in some outward expression, and we find him in some cases so full of power that his body shakes under the blessing. He is then able to worship the Lord with his whole being by a manifestation of the Spirit that carries him into heavenly places with the Lord.

This worship may be a holy dance before the Lord, as David demonstrated when he brought the ark of the covenant back to the city of David. (See II Samuel 6:14.) Dancing often accompanies some special victory wrought by the Spirit. Or the manifestation may be worshiping the Lord in tongues. This, too, is an expression of joy that only those who are partakers of the Holy Ghost can know.

Then there is the joy one receives in testifying under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. In fact, when the power of God is upon a person, it is sweet to the soul to participate in any of the things that are done in a well-ordered assembly. It is so wonderful when singing is done in the Spirit. And, oh, how marvelous it is to pray when the Spirit of the Lord rests upon the assembly! It is a common thing to have late-night or all-night prayer meetings where Holy Ghost people come together.

Then there is that highest calling, the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. God never intended for any person to preach the gospel until he is filled with the Holy Ghost.

The disciples never preached the gospel—which is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus—until after God filled them with the Holy Ghost. The reason is that the gospel is not to be preached with human talent and wisdom alone but in the demonstration of Spirit and power (I Corinthians 2:4). When it is thus preached, it brings results. Any service that is anointed and directed by the Holy Ghost will bring results for the kingdom. Men and women who grow tired and sleepy in some formal place of worship will often stay at a Pentecostal meeting wide awake for three or more hours and will be surprised at the way the time has slipped by. What holds the attention in such an extraordinary way? It is none other than the miraculous drawing power of the Holy Ghost, which simply cannot be counterfeited in other meetings where the Spirit of God is not received in a biblical way.

There is no substitute for the moving of God's Spirit upon the congregation. Let us always be found praying that the Holy Ghost will control our services, so that we may continually reap the benefits that are ours in this Holy Ghost dispensation.

Lesson 25
Gifts of the Spirit

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (I Corinthians 12:1).

There are diversities of gifts, differences of administrations, and diversities of operations, but they come by the same Lord God, by His Spirit. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (I Corinthians 12:7).

We often hear people say that we need the gifts of the Spirit among us, and they speak as though we had none of them in operation already. In fact, two gifts mentioned in I Corinthians 12:8 are typically in operation in a successful and growing assembly. These are the *gift of the word of wisdom* and the *gift of the word of knowledge*. It takes people who have wisdom to win and lead souls. "He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30). Paul said we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery (I Corinthians 2:7). The gift of the word of wisdom made Paul a successful soulwinner. He called himself a planter. For example, he planted the church in Corinth, and Apollos came to water it, but God gave the increase (I Corinthians 3:6). That is God's method of building up assemblies.

We need to recognize these two gifts at work in our midst. These gifts are not just gifts of wisdom and knowledge, but the *word* of wisdom and the *word* of knowledge. They are not the wisdom and knowledge of this world, but they are specific endowments of wisdom and knowledge from the Holy Spirit. They are not the gifts of human beings, not even of God's people, but they are the gifts of the Spirit that work through God's people.

For instance, a man of God who has been a success in his ministry may face a problem that perplexes him, but when he seeks the face of God, the faithful Spirit gives him the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. The apostles and elders in the council at Jerusalem faced the problem of circumcision for Gentile believers. James received the word of knowledge and the rest, through the word of wisdom, accepted his words for their decision.

Then there is the *gift of faith*. All Christians have faith, but not all have the gift of faith. This is a gift of the Spirit that operates through the members of the body as the Spirit wills. We seek the face of God with open hearts, and then God bestows His gifts.

These gifts develop as they are exercised. One man stated, in the latter part of his ministry, that he found it just as easy then to believe God for one thousand dollars when the need arose as it was to believe for ten dollars when he first started out in his life of faith.

To another is given the *gifts of healing* by the same Spirit. We should note that the word *gifts* here is plural. If a person had a *gift* (singular) of healing, we might suppose that he could heal everyone whom he found sick. But even the apostle Paul left a brother sick in a certain place. (See II Timothy 4:20.) Therefore, a person who has success in praying for the sick has "gifts" of healing by the Spirit.

The working of miracles is also an operation of the Spirit through people who exercise faith for miracles.

The discerning of spirits is a very useful gift, and every assembly needs it. It should operate only through a very tender person with a contrite spirit who is compassionate toward those who are taken captive by the devil. It should not operate through one who harshly rebukes people or through a busybody. It should be used to recover those who have fallen into the snare of the devil. As much as possible this gift should not be exercised in public meetings, for the majority of the congregation may not detect a false spirit. If care is not taken, it might bring division among the saints, since some might be sympathetic for the guilty party. It is usually, therefore, best to endure a wrong manifestation and later go privately to the party in the spirit of love. By this method, we

usually can win the person from the snare he is in and save the saints from a lot of trouble.

Paul told the Corinthian church that he came to them "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Corinthians 2:4). The demonstration of the Spirit and of power through the apostles and the 120 believers brought the mighty revival on the Day of Pentecost.

"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (I Corinthians 12:7). This means that the gifts of the Spirit are for the common good of the entire assembly. All those whom God uses in the spiritual gifts should be careful to exercise the gifts appropriately, so that the entire church will be edified. The gifts should bless the believer and bring conviction and awe to the unbeliever because of the blessing that accompanies the demonstration.

When the devil cannot hold an assembly down in cold formality, and when the gifts of the Spirit are in operation with manifestations and demonstrations, he will then use those that he can push into extremes and bring fanaticism into the assembly. We must remember that the truth here lies between the two extremes: cold formalism on one side and fanaticism on the other. Self-indulgence causes both extremes. On one hand, the flesh is often not willing to pay the price of what the world will think if people responded to the Spirit moving on them, so they remain formal. On the other hand, the flesh desires to be seen and to appear spiritual, so some people are led into fanaticism. No one should move in the realm of the Spirit without being sure he is wholly consecrated to the Lord.

Lesson 26

Prophecy, Tongues, and Interpretation

This lesson is a study of I Corinthians 14. It is important for us as Pentecostal people to study the truths in this chapter.

"I would that ye all spake with tongues" (verse 5). Paul did not deal here with tongues as the evidence of receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We are now studying spiritual gifts in the life of the Spirit-filled church (verse 1). The tongues discussed here are those exercised in the church by the saints who are filled with the Holy Ghost.

"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God" (verse 2). The Scripture informs us that there is an unknown tongue. Some have tried to discard the word "unknown" because it is in italics, but other plain statements support its inclusion in the text. The same verse says that the one who speaks in an unknown tongue "speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him." This description confirms that it is an unknown tongue. Paul did not condemn the use of this gift but, on the contrary, said that it edifies the individual believer and the church as a whole (verses 4-5). Therefore, speaking in unknown tongues during private devotions is in order. Moreover, when saints lift up their voices in one accord in prayer or praise, it is in order for someone to pray in tongues.

On the other hand, if someone delivers a message in tongues to the congregation, it should be interpreted. If after the message has been given, there proves to be no interpreter present, the Word says, "Let him keep silence" (verse 28). In other words, he should not give a second message. Paul then directed how speaking in tongues should be done: "Let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret" (verse 27). This order should be faithfully taught to all the saints to avoid confusion in meetings.

The person who exercises the gift of tongues can control the gift so that he can refrain from speaking when it would be out of order as taught in the Word. It is a dangerous thing to possess a spirit that cannot be controlled. The spirit should be conquered by the one who possesses it.

We should also notice that prophecy is greater than tongues, except when tongues are interpreted (verse 5). This puts speaking in tongues with the interpretation on an equal level with prophecy. In fact, the purpose of prophecy and the purpose of tongues with an interpretation are the same: to miraculously convey God's message to a given congregation at a given time. Therefore, as we study the gift of prophecy, the same basic thought will apply to the gift of interpretation.

Since there has been much abuse and misuse of these spoken gifts, it is always in order to instruct new saints concerning their proper use. What a mistake has been made by ministers who have allowed message givers to rule their assemblies! This is not God's will for the church. In fact, no assembly will be fruitful for very long if it allows such disorder. If we would stop to reflect, common sense would teach us that an all-wise God would never place a gift in the body with the intent that unstable saints could use it to rule over an assembly, demanding people to be at their beck and call.

There are two grades of prophecy: (1) The "more sure word of prophecy" (II Peter 1:19), the Word of God, which is to judge everyone, and (2) the gift of prophecy and tongues with the interpretation, which is tested by the church to ascertain its validity.

Peter clearly said that there is a high and infallible class of prophecy and declared it to be even greater than the experience he had with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration (II Peter 1:19-21). Here we find that Scripture is above all, in that it is not given for any private interpretation.

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge" (I Corinthians 14:29). Here we

find that this class of prophecy is to be judged or proved. Paul confirmed this teaching in I Thessalonians 5:20-21: "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." How does the church judge the messages given in prophecy and in tongues and interpretation? The Word of God is the standard by which we prove all things After a message has been given, we judge the nature of the message by the Word of God.

"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort" (I Corinthians 14:3). Hebrews 10:25 admonishes the saints to exhort one another. We cannot harm a meeting by bringing a message of comfort and edification.

When God called Paul to go to Rome, Paul knew the time had come for him to finish his ministry. Along the way, prophets and prophetesses gave him messages in every city, and in one place they told him not to go. But when the Lord had first called Paul, He told Ananias that Paul was to bear His name before Gentiles and kings. Paul knew that his work was not yet complete, so he did not discontinue his journey because of these messages. He, who taught us that prophecies should be judged, was able to judge for himself. He knew that these messages, even though they had come through Spirit-filled people, could be misunderstood or misapplied by the sympathetic minds of others. Only he, based on his personal relationship with God, had the right to understand and apply these prophecies about himself. He let none of the warnings change him, because he had his moving orders from higher up; the Lord had said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16).

Lesson 27

These Things Ought Not So to Be

"Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. . . . Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" (James 3:10, 13). James said that a fountain is not like humans, for it will send forth either sweet water or bitter water, not both. Likewise a tree will not bring forth two different kinds of fruit. But humans are sometimes different.

The Word teaches that there are three types of spirits that can directly influence us: the human spirit, the spirit of the Lord, and the spirit of Satan. When one is filled with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Lord dwells in the human spirit, and they are intimately associated together. It is possible for one who has been filled with the Holy Ghost to walk in his own spirit at times, and on other occasions, to walk in the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, out of the same mouth he might bless God and curse people.

James said that it should not be like this (James 3:10). But it is a fact that a person who is born again has two spirits at work in him. Too often we walk after our own spirit, rather than the Spirit of God. When we understand this fact, we can clearly see why Paul told us, "Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thessalonians 5:20-21). In exercising the gift of prophecy, one may be speaking under the influence of the Spirit and yet have his words colored by his human thoughts.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11). This verse of Scripture plainly teaches about these two spirits. While a man can knows the things of man by the spirit of man, no person knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God. This shows us that the Spirit of God is infallible. On the other hand, a person may get his words from either his own spirit or from the Spirit of the Lord, for they both dwell in him.

Preaching the gospel may be by the spirit of prophecy; therefore, preaching under the anointing may include prophesying, exhorting, reproving, rebuking, and instructing. Many of us have proved that one can preach a message under a heavy anointing but afterward find that the Word of God did not support every aspect of our message. We have learned, therefore, that we cannot accept everything that is preached as truth, even though the preacher is highly anointed when bringing it forth. So we need to judge preaching, like the gift of prophecy, by the Word of God.

All the trouble we have ever had in our assemblies has come because we have not allowed the Holy Ghost to keep control of our spirit. It is a truth full of mystery how the Holy Ghost can anoint our spirit to preach, testify, sing, or pray powerfully. God can give us a fluency in language that is so uncommon to our own vocabulary and force of words that we are astonished at what we are saying; nevertheless, it is still possible for us to make statements that are not completely backed up by the Word. Therefore, let us judge preaching, not by the anointing upon the preacher, but by its adherence to the infallible Word of God, which does not need to be judged, but rather, judges all people.

There is another truth that God's people often do not recognize. Our human spirits are so closely connected with and associated with the Spirit of God that many times the human spirit learns from the Holy Spirit. Thus, it is possible for a person who has received the Holy Spirit sometimes to speak in tongues by his own human spirit. Without the anointing, they may still go on speaking in tongues with no uplifting joy that real tongues, spoken by the Spirit of the Lord, brings. We should hold speaking in tongues sacred, and not allow ourselves to drift into a cheap and lifeless prattle. If our speaking in tongues does not lift us up into a place of blessing and edi-

fication, then we know that our spirit has gone off on a crusade of its own and left the Great Teacher behind. An overzealousness to speak in tongues will cause some to follow their own spirit. It is best to wait on God and have the real manifestation of the Spirit.

Because these gifts have been misused and directed by the human spirit, some have gone to the other extreme and do not want anything to do with the gifts. But the truth lies in the middle ground; let us who have caught the vision consecrate our lives to God and let the real gifts be manifested in and through us. When these gifts operate under the Spirit of God and an unbeliever comes into the midst, he will confess that God is truly among us (I Corinthians 14:25).

God has not given these gifts to make a playhouse out of the house of God. Neither has He given them just that we might be blessed or that we might appear to be spiritual, but God gives them as a supernatural witness of His power. Their operation causes hunger to take hold of needy souls. This is the result when the manifestations are real, but where cheap fleshly manifestations are in operation, the unsaved have no conviction and in some cases are driven away.

No one should ever attempt to operate the gifts unless he is living a pure, clean life before God and the Spirit of the Lord is indeed moving upon him. Then God will get glory out of the manifestation.

We need the power of God in our midst, especially in these last days when sin abounds so much all around us. Great movements that once saw mighty revivals have become cold and heartless, with no message for the poor, sin-laden men and women at their doors. God help us to move in the power of the Holy Ghost and contend earnestly for the genuine gifts of the Spirit to be in operation in and through us until He comes!

Lesson 28
A More Excellent Way

This lesson focuses on I Corinthians 13. It is fitting that the apostle Paul taught concerning the "more excellent way" just after he taught on the gifts of the Spirit and just before he elaborated on the gifts of tongues, interpretation, and prophecy. He made a sandwich and put honey between two slices of bread; we must bite through the bread in order to get the honey! This "more excellent way" is the crowning of all graces, and this is not to be wondered at, for it is the very nature of God Himself.

It is said that when Jesus gave His new commandment—"Ye love one another. . . . By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:34-35)—there was no noun in common use to express this kind of love. He used the verb *agape*, which means divine love, as a noun. The common Greek word used in Jesus' day for love was *phileo*, which means human love. It expressed natural affection such as the love of a mother for her child or the love of a husband for his wife. It is the best poor, fallen humanity has. But it is frail and faulty, and many times it turns to jealousy at the slightest pretext. It is the underlying cause for human failure and the parent of many tears, sorrows, and agonies. Many times people have looked forward to the joy and happiness that this human love can bring, but it soon turns to sorrow, and the cup is all the more bitter.

Divine love, which we are studying, is different from human love. It is from God, and it can never fail. Paul said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [divine love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (I Corinthians 13:1). Romans 5:5 tells us, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

I Corinthians 13:1 implies that it is possible for one to exercise the gift of tongues even after the love of God has departed from him. The glowing, burning love that melts the hearts of the hearers is not there, and the exercising of these gifts becomes a fruitless manifestation. It is the love of God that gives compassion for poor, lost, and dying souls and causes the revival fires to burn. It makes one willing to suffer hardships for the cause of Christ that others might hear the gospel.

When this love of God leaks out of a person's life, he is separated from the heavenly powerhouse. The tools that God has given him to plow deep will not turn up the soil or break up the fallow ground. Therefore, the secret of seeing God's work built up and His name glorified is to have the love of God in our hearts.

I Corinthians 13:2 says that we might prophesy, understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and even possess enough faith to remove mountains, but if we do not have the love of God we are nothing. We become like the church of Laodicea, who said, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17). I Corinthians 13:3 says that we can give all our goods away to feed the poor and even give our bodies to be burned, but without divine love all these deeds are worthless.

Without divine love, all human learning, human effort, and so-called human success will fail. Why? Because we must have *God in us*, for God is love. Love is a revelation, and more than that, *it is the life of God* poured out in our hearts, manifesting itself in word and deed.

What makes the Lord so good? It is His nature, for the nature of God is love.

Divine love "suffereth long, and is kind." Human love may suffer, but it grows bitter under the burden. Divine love "envieth not." Human love often manifests itself in envy and jealousy. Divine love "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Human love vaunts itself. Self is the center around

which human love revolves. Take selfishness from human love and it would crumble and fall, for self is the only strength it has. (See verse 4.)

Divine love "doth not behave itself unseemly." Human love airs its grievances in divorce courts. It too many times produces green-eyed jealousy and strikes down in cold blood the object of its affection. Divine love "seeketh not her own." The one object of human love is to get and hold its own. Divine love "is not easily provoked." Human love is sensitive and difficult to handle. It will not stand to be neglected. Divine love "thinketh no evil." Human love feeds on the scandal of the world. (See verse 5.)

Divine love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." Human love rejoices in the downfall of its enemy, and it cannot rejoice in the truth if that truth does not gratify its demands. (See verse 6.)

Divine love "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Divine love is always easy to entreat. Human love is easily upset and is full of doubts and misgivings. (See verse 7.)

No wonder Paul declared, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10). I Corinthians 13 closes by telling us that prophecies shall fail, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away, but love can never fail.

Lesson 29

The Fruit of a Christian

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16).

This was a call from the Lord to His disciples. It was not a call to salvation but a call to fruitfulness. The Lord wants fruitfulness in the lives of His children. It is possible for a person to be a Christian and not bring forth fruit, but this is only a temporary condition, for if he does not bring forth fruit, the Lord will take him away. Jesus said, "I am the true vine. . . . Ye are the branches" (John 15:1, 5). If a branch does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes, that it may bring forth more fruit.

The fruit that a Christian bears is not from himself but from the Spirit. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (John 15:4). Our natural man is dry and barren and cannot bear fruit by itself. We have a human heart that is deceitful and desperately wicked. But when we let the Holy Spirit come into our lives, He will bring forth fruit for us, and the fruit the Holy Spirit brings forth, in a life that is yielded to Him, is wonderful. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). All this fruit will grow in the life of a Christian as the result of the indwelling Spirit. The apostle Paul continually gave the Spirit credit for the fruits of his labors. He said, "I can do all things through Christ" (Philippians 4:13).

A beautiful thing about this fruit is that "against such there is no law." There is a law of limitation on the gifts of the Spirit, but God takes the limit off the fruit. He says we can bear as large and as much fruit as we are able to produce. We are allowed to exercise all the love we can and have all the joy we can get. We can exercise just as much longsuffering and gentleness and meekness as we desire.

On the other hand, we should heed the warning that God gives in His Word, if we do not bring forth fruit. "He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down" (Luke 13:6-9). For three years the owner of this tree had come seeking fruit but found none. He then ordered it to be cut down, but because the vine dresser pleaded for it, the owner gave it another year in which to prove itself. This parable clearly teaches that after the Lord's continued efforts to get us to bear fruit, if He fails to find it, He shall cast us off.

Isaiah 5:1-6 brings out the same thought: "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. . . . I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: and I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it."

This is a warning, for if the Lord comes to seek grapes on us and finds wild grapes (the fruit of selfishness, strife, etc.) we, too, will be cut off. Matthew 13:22 gives a reason for fruitlessness

in our lives: "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

When we have the fruit of the Spirit growing in our lives, we are pleasing to God. "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (John 15:2). This pruning and purging is a painful process, and at the time, we may wonder why God allows such things to come into our lives. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:5-11). Let us not despise but value the chastening of the Lord.

II Peter 1:5-8 tells us how we may be fruitful Christians: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." We can call this the addition chapter. We all must have faith in order to be saved, but we must add to our faith virtue and so on. If we do this, we shall never be barren or unfruitful. A life that is constantly growing in God will be a fruitful life.

Lesson 30
The Ministry

God's government is neither a democracy nor a republic, for in these forms of government the voice of the people rules, either directly or by representation. God's government is a theocracy. God rules as king over His own kingdom. He appoints His own offices and then fills those respective offices with those He chooses. (See I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11.)

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (I Timothy 3:1-7). Here we find that a bishop, who is an overseer or pastor, must be qualified and proven in his calling before being ordained.

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:5-9). Paul instructed Titus to go through the assemblies on the island of Crete and ordain elders in every city, and in listing their qualifications, he called them bishops (verse 7).

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. . . . Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:17, 28). On this occasion, when Paul called the elders of Ephesus to come to him, he said that God had made them overseers over the house of God to feed the church of God. These elders were pastors or bishops.

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:1-3). Here we find that the apostle Peter was likewise an elder.

Since the Scripture also calls bishops, pastors, and apostles elders, we conclude that all ordained ministers, regardless of their office, are elders. All elders are not pastors; all elders are not evangelists; all elders are not teachers or apostles; but pastors, evangelists, teachers, and apostles are all elders.

Paul in his pioneer evangelistic work did not immediately ordain elders in the various assemblies that he started. But we have already noted that all elders had to be first tried and proven in their different offices before they were ordained. Paul, therefore, returned later to do that work. (See Acts 14:23.) In some instances he sent some of his helpers to do it. (See Titus 1:5.) Thus Paul established the ministry in the new fields.

From this we see that it is unscriptural, when setting a church in order, simply to pick out two or more people from the church and ordain them as elders. When men are ordained who have no call to the ministry of the Word, they often become carnal bosses over God's heritage. General

disorder results, causing havoc in the local assembly.

Pastors whom God has qualified and set in their place are to have authority to rule in the house of the Lord and keep the meetings in the highest divine order possible. They should study to be approved of God, not to please themselves. They will soon gain the respect of the more spiritual saints in the assembly. If the spiritual saints will stand behind such a pastor, he will be helped in dealing with unruly spirits that do not build up but rather destroy the body.

The question arises, If the minister is set in office by the Lord, then how then can an assembly deal with an unfaithful pastor? The best order seems to be through a board of presbyters (elders). I Timothy 4:14 shows that there was such a board working in the apostles' day.

It is a good plan in each district to form a body of ordained elders (ministers) and let these elders select from among themselves a board of presbyters to handle any disorder that might arise among the ministers. In this way the lay members of any assembly can lay their requests before these presbyters in case their pastor should become unfaithful. If the saints are willing to have a godly pastor over them (Hebrews 13:17), the ministry itself should not object to having a board of presbyters over it. This system has proved to be a protection to the honest minister as well as to the congregation itself.

Questions on Lessons 21–30

Lesson 21

1. What discipline is necessary in the Christian life so that we are not unfruitful?
2. What passage of Scripture shows that it is appropriate to repeat our requests in prayer?
3. What important thing must we do if we are to expect the answer to our prayers?
4. What kind of prayer has no promise of an answer?

Lesson 22

1. Give two or more prophecies in the Old Testament that refer to the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
2. Where and by whom was the baptism of the Holy Ghost first preached in the New Testament?
3. What office did the Son of God need to occupy before the Holy Ghost could be given?
4. Give a Scripture reference to show that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for everyone.

Lesson 23

1. What two witnesses are mentioned in the teaching of Jesus about the Comforter?
2. What spiritual manifestation came upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost when they received the Holy Ghost?
3. What other verses of Scripture in Acts record the same type of manifestation?
4. Why do you believe the same manifestation should take place today?
5. What indication do we find in Acts 8 that this manifestation was repeated in Samaria?

Lesson 24

1. Give three benefits of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
2. What has God provided to make our preaching effective?
3. What effect does the moving of the Spirit have on the congregation?
4. Contrast a gospel service with the presence of the Holy Spirit and one without it.

Lesson 25

1. What two important gifts are necessary for the leadership and growth of the church?
2. From what source do the members of the body receive the gifts?
3. Explain why the Word speaks of gifts of healing in the plural.
4. What is a wrong or counterfeit exercise of the discerning of spirits?
5. For what purpose are the gifts given to the church?

Lesson 26

1. What is the chief difference between the use of tongues in I Corinthians and use of tongues in Acts?
2. What scriptural proof do we have that there is an “unknown tongue”?
3. What should the saints do when a message in tongues is given in the church?
4. What two types of prophecy does the Bible describe?
5. For what purpose should the gift of prophecy be used?

Lesson 27

1. In what way do humans differ from a tree or a fountain as described in the Book of James?
2. How does a person possess the knowledge of the “things of man”?
3. How can we know the things of God?

4. When someone preaches with anointing, can we depend on everything he says as being absolute truth?
5. Explain why or why not.

Lesson 28

1. Explain what Paul meant by the "more excellent way."
2. How does divine love and human love differ?
3. What is the propelling power in Christian service?
4. How does a person receive the love of God?

Lesson 29

1. How can a Christian bear the fruits of the Spirit?
2. How much fruit does the law of Christ allow one to bear?
3. What teaching do we receive from the fruitless fig tree?
4. What does God do to a fruit-bearing tree?
5. What advice did Peter give to Christians so that they may be fruitful?

Lesson 30

1. What is God's form of government?
2. To whom do "elders" refer in the Scripture?
3. What is the work of a bishop?
4. How did Paul provide for elders to be ordained in new fields?
5. Should an elder, who rules over the church in the Lord, in turn be in subjection to someone else in the Lord? How can this be accomplished?

Lesson 31

Honoring the Ministry and Paying Tithes

Honoring the Ministry

We have seen in lesson 30 that the Lord requires ministers to be qualified, and He gives them instructions concerning their work and conduct. Now we shall study how the church should treat the ministry.

"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (I Thessalonians 5:12-13). One of the things we must do to be sanctified wholly is to highly esteem those who are over us for their work's sake.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Hebrews 13:7). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17). The reason for obeying and honoring those who are over us in the Lord is given here: "For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." If we have been obedient to them, they will give account "with joy," for the Word has been profitable to us. If we have not been subject to them, their account will be "with grief," for the preaching of the Word has not been profitable to us.

I Timothy 5:17 says to count those who rule well to be worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and in doctrine. Our respect for the ministry also demands that we do not accept an accusation against an elder unless two or three witnesses bring it (I Timothy 5:19). If saints would always observe this rule, the world would hold the ministry in higher esteem.

Jude 8 and II Peter 2:10 tell us that some people dared to despise government and speak evil of dignities, and they were among the condemned. God warns the saints not to despise His government, for in His government are officers with authority from heaven.

James advised, "Be not many masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation [judgment]" (James 3:1). A teacher is in a responsible position and must be very careful as to what he teaches. It is best not to desire this position if we cannot fill it honorably; but if God calls someone to this position, "Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another" (Galatians 6:4). If a Bible student respects and honors the ministry, then if he is called into the ministry, others will respect him. "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

If an elder sins, he is to be rebuked publicly before all that others may fear (I Timothy 5:20). While we have seen how the Lord protects the ministry and commands that we give it double honor, here we find that if a minister sins and brings a reproach upon his work, he is to be rebuked before all. This is in contrast to Galatians 6:1, which gives instructions in how to restore lay members of the church who have sinned.

Paul warned the elders of Ephesus to feed the church of God. He also warned them of what would happen after his departure. "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). We should learn from such passages of Scripture what false leaders, even members of the assembly, will do. We should take heed that we never perform such a job for the devil. When these wolves, acting as sheep, begin to operate in an assembly, we should be able to discern them by their fruits, and we should not support them.

There seems to be a selfish, human desire in some to become leaders. As they strive to bring their own desires to pass, they become troublemakers and cause the work of God to suffer. How much better it is to be a consecrated, contented sheep in submission to the good teaching of one's pastor and have the blessing of God upon one's life! When God sees that we have qualified ourselves for a place of responsibility, He will open the way before us without our having to promote ourselves.

Paying Tithes

Tithing seems to be difficult for some people. Why should we pay tithes? Because tithes were paid by Abraham, and Jesus said if we are of the seed of Abraham, we will do the works of Abraham (Genesis 14:20; John 8:39). Christians are to give as the Lord has prospered us. If the Lord has prospered one much, he should give more than the one who has not prospered as much. (See I Corinthians 16:2.) This is the same principle as tithing.

The assembly must care for the ministry. If everyone would pay tithes to the church, even a small assembly would be surprised how easily they could meet the needs of the church and of the pastor.

Some who are opposed to tithing will say that we should not give one tenth but we should give all. They then inform us that they do not mean to give everything but just to "put it on the altar" for God. The trouble is that they tie it to the altar so tightly that it stays right there, and the work of the Lord is not benefited by it. The faithful tither does more for the work of God than the so-called giver of all.

God blesses the person who pays his tithes and walks honestly before Him. This persuades us that the most scriptural way of supporting a pastor is by tithing. Offerings, of course, should be given for other needs that may arise.

Lesson 32
Deacons and Assistants

Deacons

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Acts 6:1-6).

Let us notice several facts about the appointing of the first deacons.

First, we see that the church was in good operating condition before the apostles appointed these deacons. They were not chosen until they were needed.

Second, they did not appoint more deacons than were necessary to carry out the necessary duties. At the time they were appointed, thousands of disciples were in the church at Jerusalem, and they considered that seven would be sufficient for this great body.

Third, the apostles appointed the deacons to look after the material things, so that they could give themselves to prayer and the Word. Some have the mistaken idea that deacons are responsible for hiring and firing the pastors and issuing orders as to how to carry on the work. The office of a deacon is not an authoritative position but rather one of service. These deacons remained under the authority of those who preached the Word of God, while they cared for the natural affairs of the church.

Fourth, while the church was given the work of seeking out and nominating the seven men, those in charge of spiritual affairs appointed them and ordained them. The choice of the people was subject to the final appointment of the apostles.

"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 3:8-13).

Here we find the qualifications of a deacon. The deacons, like the elders, must first be tried, or proven, before they are chosen.

I Corinthians 12:28 says that God has set in the church helps and governments. The office of deacon comes under the title of helps.

There are usually many people in the church who could be helpful in ministry if they would only be obedient to the Lord's call to service. We read that many are called, but few are chosen. The reason is that all who are called do not meet God's requirements, and they make shipwreck of their calling, so they cannot be numbered with His chosen ones.

Assistants

Some people may have a good preaching ministry but are not called for pastoral leadership. Some of have failed in a place of leadership but can still have a useful and successful ministry

under a pastor. Others receive a call from God to be a pastoral assistant, perhaps for one phase of their ministry or perhaps for their lifelong ministry. A pastor who has a vision of placing the gospel in nearby neglected fields can use to a great advantage a consecrated assistant who is willing to work under a good man of God. He is content to go out and take charge of a meeting or stay in the home mission and let the pastor fulfill other obligations.

The apostle Paul had Timothy and Silas with him as helpers on his evangelistic trips. (See Acts 17:14-15.) After Paul was imprisoned at Rome, Timothy and Titus carried on the work. (See I Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:5.) He also had Mark, Luke, and others. (See II Timothy 4:11.) If we study the lives of all of Paul's helpers, we will find that they were good, obedient young men who were willing to be sent by Paul to various areas to minister. They did not consider it demeaning to obey the leadership of a successful man of God.

Many ministers who are called to the work of God have spoiled their usefulness by not being humble enough to labor under a successful leader. They are not called as evangelists, and so they do not have doors open to them. Some have remained unfruitful, going from place to place trying to accomplish something they are not qualified for. These same workers could have been a success, if they had taken their place as assistants and had been willing to prove their own work, so they could rejoice in themselves and not another (Galatians 6:3-4).

Some of this class become disgruntled and critical and then give an evil report about the pastor or his flock. Some will even go into a successful assembly very meek and lamblike, as if they desire to be a blessing, but their motive is to get hold of the hearts of the saints, so they might get charge of the assembly or at least pull off a following for themselves. Such men should be marked, for Paul says, "I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions . . . and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

Young men are needed in the ministry. John said, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (I John 2:14). Strong young men can labor for hours at the altar and at any other strenuous work in the Spirit and can often accomplish much more than older men because of their ability to endure hardships.

May the Lord give us more young workers and give them success in the ministry.

Lesson 33

Conduct of Young Workers

Paul wrote, "Let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful" (Titus 3:14). When Paul said "ours," he meant "our people," especially ministers and workers. We have already been taught that salvation does not come from good works, but in Titus 3:14, Paul exhorted the workers to maintain good works. It is necessary to maintain good works lest we become unfruitful.

When workers live in other people's homes, they should look for every opportunity to lift the burden from those who have extra work placed on them because the worker is there. All young workers in such a place, whether men or women, should put forth an effort to help with some part of the housework. One would think that no such admonition would be necessary, but it is surprising how many workers are slack along this line.

When a young man is staying in the home of a sister whose husband is unsaved, he should watch for a chance to put on some old clothes and help that unsaved man. He may by a half-day's work win a man to God who otherwise might never be saved. The worker will interest him in church in that way much easier than if the worker causes his wife extra work, accepts the hospitality of his home, and yet does not so much as lift a finger to help bear the burden.

Workers going out into new fields should guard themselves against participating in worldly amusements that the unsaved might participate in. Both the actions and conversation of the worker should be in harmony with his Pentecostal testimony, lest his good be spoken evil of (Romans 14:16). I Peter 2:12 says to have our conversation (conduct) honest among the Gentiles (unbelievers), "that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation"—that is, when a revival visits a district. If we have lived the life before them, they will want what we have.

Workers should guard their conversation lest their words become light and frivolous. Worldly young people will do their best to get the workers to go along with them; and should they compromise, they will lose their influence. The sinner will say, "I don't want that kind of religion; I am as good as they are." The world has nothing more to offer its young people, but the Lord has an infinitely greater life to offer; it is up to us to show them true religion.

Some young women went into a new field and started meetings. They began to witness for the Lord, and it looked as if a revival would soon break out. A worldly young fellow, who was of the forward and flirtatious sort, boasted to his friends that he was going to show these girls a good time. He remained after the meeting, and when approached about his soul he said, "No, I am not a Christian, but it must be fine to have that kind of an experience."

After only a few nights, the girls looked forward to the end of the meeting when they could gather around this fellow and urge him to give his life to God, for they were sure he was on the verge of giving in. However, they failed to detect that he was swinging the conversation to natural affairs about himself and his friends; he was entertaining them.

The result was that two of these girls fell in love with him and, by his schemes, became jealous of each other and began quarreling. He soon spread the news among his unsaved friends, and as they watched carefully, they could see those two girls snubbing each other. They were made a laughingstock for the devil and went home defeated. The worst part was that the place was ruined for the message, and the devil was overjoyed that he was able to use someone to break up a revival.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29).

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (Philippians 2:14-16).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4:5-6).

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you. Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:19-27).

The fact that we preach to others is no guarantee that we will never stray from the path of righteousness. Rather, we are special targets for the devil, for if he can get a leader to fall, he is sure to get others. Let us walk circumspectly before the Lord in fear and reverence, lest after having preached to others, we should become castaways.

Lesson 34
The Overcomers

God promises those who overcome that they will escape the things that are coming on the earth and that they will stand in His presence. We must not become confused concerning the life of an overcomer, as though it were a special calling that is hidden from the average Spirit-filled person.

Experience and observation have taught us that certain false teachings, which often exalt the individual, have been the cause of church splits. Some groups advocate a special message or doctrinal point as the qualification for becoming an overcomer. Often those who accept the unique message develop spiritual pride, thus leading them in the opposite direction of becoming an overcomer. Any person or assembly who is not out to promote unity in the church is not living an overcomer's life. It is easy for someone to join a group led by a person of strong personality, swallow all that person teaches, and break fellowship with God's saints who are determined to keep spiritually balanced.

The way of the overcomer is the way of death to the "old man," and he does not want to die. What a death it is to humble ourselves after we have held an exalted place! But if we do not humble ourselves, the Lord will (Matthew 23:12). Any individual or movement that wants to be used mightily by God must remain humble in God's sight (James 4:10; I Peter 5:6).

The way of the overcomer will make us go the "second mile" with our brother (Matthew 5:41). We would have great unity in the church if everyone were an overcomer. But few seem to want the humble place. They want the exalted position, or they are not willing to work.

May God help us to teach and live the overcomers' life, for God is most pleased with those who desire to minister rather than being ministered to.

The great trouble with false teachers is that they have not been wise enough to base all their doctrines on the apostles' teaching. Any teaching taken from prophecies, types, shadows, parables, or symbols that does not harmonize with the clear teaching of the New Testament is not sound doctrine and will come to nothing.

God will not bless movements or organizations unless they are founded on the doctrine of the apostles, who are the foundation stones in God's building (Ephesians 2:20). Babes in Christ who are so desirous of having great things in God are susceptible to teaching that exalts the self, since they do not have a thorough knowledge of the Word of God to balance them. The experienced and reflective Christian knows, however, that the only way of being a real overcomer is through repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Spirit, followed by a life of obedience and holiness. Unfortunately, pride often hinders a person from taking this humble way. But pride and haughtiness precede a fall (Proverbs 16:18).

Revelation 2:7 declares that God will grant the overcomer the right to eat of the tree of life. It is eternal life to the one who eats. If a person does not overcome, what will he eat? There is no middle ground; one is either an overcomer, or he is overcome. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (II Peter 2:20).

We overcome by our faith (I John 5:4). Specifically, Revelation 12:11 says that we overcome the devil by the word of our testimony and the blood of the Lamb.

Lesson 35
Unbelief

"So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19).

Of all the sins mentioned in God's Word, one sin stands out above all others. And strange as it may seem, this sin is boldly displayed in the lives of those whom the world considers some of its most prominent and favorite people, people who are looked up to as moral examples and worthy to be imitated.

The reason unbelief is such a sin is because it declares that God is a liar. If I tell you something you do not believe, that means you think that I am a liar. God's plan is to justify those who believe Him. There is no other way that we can be justified. Even if a person has exemplary morals, he is not justified unless he believes in God and obeys His plan. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). Unbelief has damned the world from the beginning. Eve sinned because she did not believe God's Word but believed the devil's lie.

By faith, Noah, moved upon by God, prepared an ark that saved his household (Hebrews 11:7). God revealed to Noah that He was going to destroy the world by a flood and commanded him to build an ark. Noah did not question God but showed that he believed Him by his actions. Later, the flood destroyed the ungodly who did not believe Noah's message.

The Israelites spent forty years in the wilderness. They could not enter into the Promised Land because of their unbelief. Hebrews 3:12 exhorts, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Here unbelief is called "an evil heart."

While Zacharias was burning incense in his office of priest, the angel appeared to him and told him that his wife, Elisabeth, would bear him a son (Luke 1:5-20). However, he did not believe it; therefore, the angel struck Zacharias mute until his wife gave birth to the son. So we see that God always punishes unbelief. When Jesus commanded the disciples to go and preach the gospel, He told them plainly, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

The multitude came to Jesus and asked, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28-29). Mark 16:17 declares that certain signs will follow believers. Jesus said that anyone who believes in Him will receive the Holy Ghost (John 7:38-39). If people do not believe, they are spiritually robbed. Since it is only by faith that one can be justified, all who refuse to believe are lost.

Someone has said, "Well, it does not make any difference what we believe just so we are sincere in it." Indeed, it makes a *great difference* what we believe. A lie does not become a fact just because we sincerely believe it to be the truth; it is still a lie.

The apostle Paul spoke about people who believed a lie and were damned (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). The truth remains the same whether we believe it or not. At one time nearly everyone believed the world was flat, but that did not make it so; the earth was just as round then as it is now!

One may ask, "How can I be sure what to believe, since there are so many different interpretations of the Word?" Among all the doctrines taught, there must be a right way, and it is reasonable to believe that the first gospel message preached was sound doctrine. It is recorded in the second chapter of Acts. After Peter finished preaching, many in the crowd believed his message and cried out, "What shall we do?" He said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Three thousand souls believed his words and were baptized, and God did the rest.

Faith without works is dead (James 2:17). This statement refers to the actions produced by faith. Living faith always produces actions that demonstrate genuine faith. Without these actions or works, faith is dead. James used Abraham as an example of one who demonstrated his faith by his works. He had faith in his heart that God would raise his son, Isaac, from the dead, and he proved this faith by laying him upon the altar of sacrifice. His works were the result of his faith.

Through faith we are saved: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). It is also by faith that we overcome. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

All a person needs to do to be lost is to refuse to believe that God meant what He said in His Word; if a person does not believe, he is sure to be lost. One does not have to be a murderer or a gangster to go into the lake of fire, but simply an unbeliever. (See Revelation 21:8.)

God broke off the natural branches (the Israelites) because they did not believe (Romans 11:19-21. They cried, "Away with him," demanding the death of the Son of God, and mocked with glee as he suffered. Still Peter told them, "The promise [of the Holy Ghost] is unto you, and to your children" (Acts 2:39). But when they as a nation did not believe it, God broke them off, their Temple was destroyed, and they were scattered into every nation, as a witness of the wrath of God against unbelief.

The same message that Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost is being preached today. If we reject it through unbelief, we will suffer eternal judgment. People may think it a small thing to reject Acts 2:38, but they would do well to consider that this was what the Jews of the first century did to seal their doom! It would be exceedingly wise to do the very thing they refused to do.

Lesson 36

Death in Us but Life in You

"So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (II Corinthians 4:12).

There is a law that in order to have life, there must be death. Jesus referred to this law when He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). Because of this law, Jesus had to die on the cross to bring us new life. He, the only begotten Son of God, had to die to give life to many children of God. Because this law is not clearly understood, few people fully understand God's plan for redeeming sinful humanity.

We see this law demonstrated in the birth of a child, particularly in past ages. The mother goes into the very jaws of death to bring forth the new life.

Some people talk about the new birth as though it were some small blessing that is obtained by accepting Jesus as their Savior, but the law of death preceding life must work in a soul before the new birth of God's New Testament order can occur.

The transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly is a beautiful illustration of the new birth.

"I wish we could fly," said one caterpillar to another as they saw a beautiful butterfly flying around on its rainbow wings.

"Do you know," said the other, "that every butterfly was once a caterpillar?"

"No, were they?" Calling to the butterfly he said, "Hey, there, Mr. Butterfly, were you ever a caterpillar like me?"

"Yes," said the butterfly. "Just six weeks ago I was a caterpillar."

"But how did you make yourself over? Tell us so we can become butterflies, too."

"That is where you miss the point," said the butterfly. "I did not make myself one, but it was this way. I was sunning myself one day when my Maker whispered to me the secret that if I would spin a web around me—He called it a cocoon—and if I would be very still, not even moving a muscle, He would make me into a beautiful butterfly. So I wound myself up tightly into a web—so tightly that I could not even wiggle. I remained in this seemingly lifeless condition for some time, but then I heard His voice say, 'Come out,' and I came out a beautiful butterfly."

His story told, he flitted away, and one of the caterpillars said, "I believe that if I continue to work hard, my Maker will give me wings like that too, so till then, work is my motto," and he crawled away more energetically than ever.

But the other caterpillar sat down and thought, That butterfly spoke from experience; I'll do what he did. And so he wound himself up in a web. As he lay there very still, the other caterpillar passed by and congratulated himself on having too much sense to foolishly expect his Maker to do something for him, when he could do it for himself. But he began to grow weary, and it became harder each day for him to reach his favorite tree to feed upon, and there was danger of him being crushed as he crossed the sidewalk. One day he looked for his former companion, and when he found him, behold! He was a beautiful butterfly.

He said, "What a fool I have been to think I could make myself into a beautiful creature, as though I were a Creator, too!"

From that very moment he began to spin a web for himself, fearing that time would fail him to complete it. Then he lay for weeks, while the caterpillar life went out, he knew not where, and the butterfly life came in, he knew not from whence.

So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

The apostle Paul said that death (self-sacrifice) worked in him and in Timothy, his helper, and as a result, life worked in the Corinthians' church. Let us get this vision, too, that we, as workers

together with Christ, will be of use to Him in bringing eternal life to those about us. This will only happen if we take the death route. Paul called these death blows "light afflictions"; he put them to work to bring him "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (II Corinthians 4:17). Through this supply of glory, he was able to bring life to others. (See I Corinthians 2:4.)

All saints desire the glory that the death route brings. Many have said, "I wish I could be just like that person," but little did they realize how great a price that person paid for that glory—that it was the death route that brought it. All may have the same glory if they are willing to take the way that brings it. It is a way of many small deaths and resurrections along the way.

Some have made a good start for God and have later become unfruitful because they came up against something that they have refused to die to, and therefore it mastered them. Thus, they became unfruitful trees. But, alas, when they asked God for a deeper walk with Him, He pointed them down a death route, but they refused it and turned off to a seemingly easy way. Therefore, the glory that God intended to work out in their lives was never brought forth.

Lesson 37
Teamwork

Jesus said, "For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). How often we find this to be true. In the world we find people teaming up together, whether it be in athletics, business, or any other walk of life. How we need this same teamwork in the body of Christ! Surely, if the Bible teaches anything, it teaches the need for unity in the body of Christ, and we should all bow our heads in shame as we see the lack of it.

Jesus prayed for the unity of His people in John 17:21-22, and the record in Acts 2:1-4 shows that His prayer was answered. Unity was their glory and not merely their doctrinal message. That glory can only come when God's people turn to the Word of God with honest hearts and obey its teaching on how to relate to each other.

The unity that Jesus spoke of in His prayer is not just the agreement of two spirits, but this unity is in the Holy Spirit. If we compare I Peter 1:11 with II Peter 1:21, we find that the spirit of Christ is the Holy Ghost. Then by comparing Acts 2:4 with Acts 2:17, we find that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God. Therefore, the unity of the Father and Son is in one Spirit. It was this one Spirit that baptized the 120 disciples into one body (I Corinthians 12:13). Acts 2:4 records the birth of the church, which is the body of Christ. (See Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24.)

As charter members they were living stones, cemented into the one spiritual house by the one Spirit, and so they became a marked people for the Lord. God's plan for His people is that there should be no schism (division) in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another (I Corinthians 12:25). A house with the stones cemented together will remain so, unless some foreign substance invades and works to separate the stones. The Holy Spirit never divides, and when we see division in the body, we may be sure that the Holy Spirit has been set aside.

God's Word gives us Acts 2 as the standard for Christian fellowship: they were in "one accord," and "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." The same Word will give us the remedy for our troubles if we will search for it.

Someone has rightly taught that the Bible often teaches by contrasts, such as love versus hate, life versus death, God versus the devil, and heaven versus hell. We find such a contrast between unity in Acts 2 and division in I Corinthians 1:10, 13; 3:1, 4. A foreign spirit had entered in the Corinthian church, and Paul said they were carnal.

In Paul's urgent appeal in Ephesians 4 for the unity of saints, he used the word "beseech." In Romans 16:17, he used the same word in his urgent appeal to "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine . . . and avoid them." He did not say, "Bless them," "Follow after them," or "Endorse them." On the contrary, he said, "Avoid them." Why? "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:18).

Unfortunately, Christians frequently disobey the commands given in these Scripture passages. For example, we have known where God's people have celebrated over a division, even though it killed a revival spirit and caused even the unsaved to look on with disgust. Instead of avoiding those who caused division, they joined right in with them.

For instance, let us picture a man with good words and fair speeches who sits on the platform of the church where Brother B is the pastor. However, he stops in the saints' homes and sows discord through flattery and other methods, until he pulls off a following and opens another mission. Can such a worker excuse himself on the ground that he has a new message for the people that the pastor does not have? No, that excuse will not stand in the clear light of honest, godly princi-

ples. If he is burdened with the message, he should go to the pastor, share it with him, pray with him, love him, bless him, and leave him with his flock. If the pastor accepts the message, the pastor has a right to preach his convictions to his own flock in love. If the pastor does not accept the message, the worker has cleared himself and can go to needy fields where there are no shepherds. However, he should not cause division. If he does, God will set a mark on him, and it will remain there till he repents and does his best to make restitution.

"O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isaiah 3:12). Unfortunately, leaders are often to blame for the division of God's people. If the leaders would stand together, then the flocks would remain together. "In multitude of counsellers there is safety" (Proverbs 24:6). Gathering ourselves together with successful, Spirit-filled ministers for counsel will not take away our liberty but will promote our freedom.

Lesson 38

Sanctification through the Blood

Hebrews 10:10 declares, "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." John wrote, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). From these and other verses of Scripture, we learn that the blood of Jesus cleanses and sanctifies us from sin. This cleansing, however, is not a cleansing from our present nature of sin, but from the defilement and guilt of sin. "For sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4).

Our old nature cannot be cleansed in this life. It remains the same; it is unchangeable. Before we are glorified, the Word of God never says that the old nature will be cleansed or eradicated. In contrast, the Word speaks of it being crucified with Christ on the cross (Romans 6:6). Our victory over the old man does not come by it eradication, but through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

"We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14). (See Ephesians 1:7.) We are redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus (I Peter 1:19), but we are saved from the power and dominion of sin by the risen Lord's life. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

Martin Luther once had a remarkable dream. He dreamed that Satan approached him with a scroll, which was broad, long, and closely written. As he proceeded to unroll it before Luther's eyes, he bade him read therein. This scroll contained a great list of sins, and Luther sought, in vain, to find one sin of which he was not guilty.

He turned to Satan and asked, "Are these all of my sins?"

"No," replied Satan.

"Let me see them all," said Luther.

Satan departed and returned with another scroll equally as broad and long. Again Luther scanned the undeniable evidence of his guilt. Satisfied at last of the correctness of the record, he again asked Satan, "Is this all?"

"Yes," replied Satan. "That is all."

Then Luther said, "Take the pen and write in red across the scrolls, 'The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin.'" Satan and his scrolls vanished.

The sacrifice of Calvary is complete and, therefore, final and effective. Since it is complete, there is no need of another sacrifice. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). The blood does not cleanse us from just part of our sins, but it cleanses us from all sin. Jesus' death paid our debt, thus canceling our sins. The work was so perfect that His spotless purity and stainless righteousness become ours when we are justified.

The blood not only cleansed us initially, but it continues to cleanse us from all sin (I John 1:7). God does such a complete work in cleansing us from our sins that we can stand before God covered with Christ's righteousness. Even after we are justified, our actual state of development or growth is imperfect. As we follow Christ, feed on the Word of God, and become established in the faith, our *state* begins to come up to our *standing*.

For example, a brother who has been serving God for a long time may have had more tribulations than others. Therefore, he will probably be on a higher spiritual plane or in a more developed spiritual state; nevertheless, his standing before God is just the same as the believer who has not progressed so far. Someone has said that God gives us a ticket that entitles us to go all the way to glory, but it is up to us to make the proper train changes that come on the way. We must

be sure that we always catch the right train. Paul instructed, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13).

We have clearly seen how the blood has reconciled us to God, but we also want to show how God delivers us from the present power of sin through our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. Again, when Jesus died on the cross, God dealt with the *defilement* of sin. But when the resurrected Christ poured out the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33), He dealt with the *principle* of sin. Romans 6:1-11 explains the method of getting victory over the sin principle or the old nature. Victory comes through reckoning ourselves as dead to sin. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, it gives us a new and counteracting nature. We then have two natures, which war against each other. Each is striving for supremacy; but as we reckon that we are dead indeed to sin, that sin has lost its power and dominion over us, the old nature becomes powerless and the new nature (Christ within us) enables us to live an overcoming life.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). In order to be united with Christ we must be *in* Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4).

Which baptism puts us into Christ? Some say water baptism, and some say Spirit baptism. The answer is that it takes both the water and the Spirit to make the one baptism that puts us into Christ. (See John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Corinthians 12:13.) Some who have been baptized in water but have not yet received the Holy Spirit may wonder how this could be. Receiving the Holy Ghost requires both repentance and faith. If someone was not truly baptized in the likeness of Christ's death, then he will not receive the holy Ghost. When Jesus died, He was entirely dead, as dead as He could be. In contrast, some are baptized in water before they have entirely died out to the old man. If they have truly repented, then they simply need to claim the promise of the Spirit by an active, present faith.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16). If we continue to be servants of Christ, we will have a victorious life. With our old man on the cross, and with Christ in us to keep him there, we can live free from the power of sin.

Lesson 39
Christ Our Sanctification

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30).

Here we find that Jesus is our sanctification. The work is *of God.* He is made our sanctification by the power of His deity. The deity of Christ is none other than the Holy Spirit who comes into us and sanctifies us. It is He and He alone who can set us aside from our sinful human nature.

Some inquire why the old natural self cannot be educated, disciplined, or reformed, and brought into a spiritual state. Why must it be set aside and nailed to the cross? We will let the Word of God answer these questions. It plainly teaches that the old fleshly nature of the unsaved person is incapable of transformation. Therefore, there is but one way to deal with it, and that is to set it aside and bring in an entirely new nature that is suited for the service of God and the fellowship of heaven.

Jesus had this truth in mind when He told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:6-7). Here Jesus showed the utter impossibility of transforming the self by natural means and the absolute necessity of the new birth.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit'' (Romans 8:3-4). The flesh is weak. If there had been any moral or spiritual strength in the flesh, sanctification might have come by the law, for "the law is holy . . . and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). The law was even spiritual, but the people who tried to keep it were carnal, sold under sin; the flesh was too weak to meet its requirements. Likewise today we might set high ideals and make good resolutions, but we cannot live up to them, since we do not have the strength to carry them out. One may talk much of Christ as an example, but in the natural we have no strength to follow Him.

"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Enemies can be reconciled, but there can be no reconciliation where there is ongoing enmity. The flesh is not only weak, but it is enmity against God. Any show of piety that one has before he is saved is insufficient and incomplete. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:8-9). We can whitewash the flesh and exalt it, but its nature remains the same. Human nature is the same regardless of environment or position.

A kitten, for example, has clean habits. By instinct, it will wash itself. The swine, however, is a creature of filth and will never have clean habits. We can take a little pig before it has ever seen a mudhole, bring it into the house, wash it, put a ribbon on its neck, and give it the place of a kitten; nonetheless, given the chance, it will plunge into the filthiest mudhole it can find, ribbon and all. On the other hand, if we put a kitten into a mudhole, it will get out as soon as possible and clean up. Why is there a difference between the pig and the kitten? It is because of their natures.

One tree will produce good apples, and another tree will produce sour apples. We can take the tree that bears the sour apples, cultivate it, prune it, and give it the best of care, but it will continue to produce sour apples, because that is its nature. Humans are just as helpless to change their own nature as the pig, the kitten, or the apple trees. Therefore, God gives us a new nature and nails the old one to the cross. God gives us the new nature, through the power of the Holy Ghost, when we believe in Christ and are born again. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to

the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:12-14).

"This we know, that our old self was nailed to the cross with Him, in order that our sinful nature might be deprived of its power" (Romans 6:6, Weymouth). It takes Christ to deprive the sinful nature of its power, as we reckon ourselves to be dead to it.

Romans 6:11 reveals that there is to be a double reckoning. First, we must "be dead indeed unto sin." Second, and most importantly, we are "alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Herein lies the secret of our victory. When we cease to mourn over the death of our sinful nature and keep busy in the activities of the new life, we will then be well established in our relationship with God.

Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). The statements "I am crucified" and "I live" sound contradictory, and no doubt they are confusing to unbelievers. There is no conflict, however, in believers' minds, for they have found victorious lives with Christ as their sanctification. They live after the new nature, victorious over the sinful nature, to which they were once enslaved.

Lesson 40
Sanctification by the Spirit

The phrases "sanctification of the Spirit" and "sanctified by the Holy Ghost" occur only three times in the New Testament: in Romans 15:16, II Thessalonians 2:13, and I Peter 1:2. Nonetheless, the truth expressed in these phrases is continually reinforced throughout the Epistles. In fact, one primary purpose for the Epistles is to urge God's people to walk in the sanctification of the Spirit.

There is a difference between the sanctification of the Spirit and the sanctification of the blood. The blood cleansed us when we became believers and made us fit for the reception of the Holy Spirit, while the sanctification of the Spirit is a progressive work in the saints of God. The perfect standing (justification) that the believer obtains through the blood should be the strongest motivation for him to live a holy and victorious life. When once he envisions the glorious victory won for him by Christ, he is impelled by divine love to press on to a God-pleasing victory through grace.

As we continue our subject of sanctification by the Spirit, let us boldly affirm that God has made a full and free provision for a life of unbroken victory over every form of sin. This is not only plainly taught in the Word, but it has been the happy experience of thousands of men and women throughout this Christian era. It is generally admitted that we can live a victorious life; but when it comes to the method of bringing it about, there are several conflicting views.

Sanctification is not by self-inflicted punishment. Some Christians believe that they can purify their soul through self-inflicted punishment. They attempt to bring the sinful nature into subjection by denying themselves rest and food, by wearing clothing that irritates their bodies, and by engaging in various other ascetic practices. They are to be admired for their earnestness, but, alas, when they get through with all of these various forms of asceticism, they are just as sinful as they were at first. (See Colossians 2:23.)

Jesus did not teach sanctification through denying our natural desires, but He taught that it could be obtained by having a new heart and mind that would delight to do the things that please God. The Scripture, of course, teaches that we should practice self-denial but with the knowledge that this, in itself, will not produce holiness in us. Holiness will always be a work of grace in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit. If we deny ourselves of some necessity so that we can grow closer to God, He will reward us, but we will not be made more pure and holy by it. Victory over sin does not come that way. Spiritual disciplines are a means, not an end, to spiritual growth.

Sanctification is not by suppression. There is another class of Christians who seek deliverance from the sinful nature by suppression. Their church sets up some standard of righteousness, and they propose, by their willpower and effort alone, to live up to it. The sinful nature can be suppressed at one point, but it will show up at another. If a person succeeds in reforming himself by his own efforts, he is likely to become filled with pride and self-confidence. These are more dangerous than his former sins, for he is harder to reach with the gospel of salvation. Many people have renounced some major sin only to become proud, boasting moralists. It is impossible to get victory over pride, envy, jealousy, an unforgiving spirit, unholy desires, and a bad temper by the method of suppression.

Sanctification is not by eradication. Many Christian people believe that sanctification can be obtained only by the eradication of the carnal, sinful nature. By this method they are supposed to be delivered as completely from the old man as when a stump is pulled from the ground or a weed from the garden. They teach that this wonderful experience comes as a second, instantaneous work of grace. After receiving that experience, they claim that one can then be filled with

the Holy Ghost and have clear sailing until Jesus comes again.

A careful study of the twenty-five or more verses of Scripture in the New Testament regarding the subject of sanctification reveals that not one of them teaches a second work of grace, that is, the eradication of the old man. If such a thing were possible, the person with such an experience would not have any internal temptation, for we are tempted when we are drawn away by our own lusts and enticed (James 1:14). But how can one be drawn away by his own lusts and enticed, if they have been eradicated and taken out root and branch? Paul said, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Romans 6:12). If it were not possible for sin to reign over us, why did Paul give this warning?

Some would say, "If you do not believe in self-inflicted punishment or suppression or eradication, how then can you claim the victory while the carnal nature still exists?" This is like asking how the slaves of the South were delivered without killing all the slaveholders. They were delivered by the bringing in of a greater power. This illustration of the deliverance of the slaves is not a perfect one because the Northern army did not have unlimited strength by which to deliver them. But there is power enough behind the blood-washed child of God to deprive the sinful nature of its power and set the believer free!

The story is told of two men, one of whom believed in suppression and the other of whom believed in eradication. They discussed the subject of sanctification; one declared it came by suppression, and the other declared it came by eradication. The argument finally became so heated that both became red under the collar, proving that neither had the experience he was talking about. A third man who had overheard the conversation approached them and said, "Brethren, you are both wrong; it does not come by suppression, nor eradication, but by habitation!" He referred, of course, to the indwelling Spirit of God.

Questions on Lessons 31–40

Lesson 31

1. Why should we obey those who have the rule over us?
2. How should we treat those who labor in Word and doctrine?
3. When can a person rejoice in his own works?
4. What is the difference in dealing with an elder who sins and a layperson who does the same?
5. What attitude should we take toward tithing to show that we are the children of Abraham?

Lesson 32

1. What are some important facts regarding the appointment of the first deacons?
2. Name some of the qualifications of a deacon.
3. If someone is an anointed speaker but is not called to be a pastor, what useful place can he fill?
4. Why are young men needed in the work of the Lord?

Lesson 33

1. Why should we maintain good works, since we are not saved by works?
2. When a worker stays in a home where the husband is unsaved, how might he win that man to the Lord by his conduct?
3. How should a worker conduct himself in regard to worldliness while staying in the home of unsaved people?
4. What did Paul tell his converts to do so that he might rejoice in the day of Christ?
5. Did Paul make a difference in his ways when in company with different classes of people?

Lesson 34

1. What grace or attribute is needed to keep from being deceived by a false teaching?
2. How can the Christian be an overcomer in his everyday life?
3. What does the Lord promise to overcomers?
4. If someone is not an overcomer, what is he?
5. In the Book of Revelation, how do the saints overcome the devil?

Lesson 35

1. What is the outstanding sin mentioned in the Bible?
2. Why is unbelief such an awful sin?
3. What did unbelief do to the Israelites who came out of Egypt?
4. What calamity came upon a good man for not believing the message of an angel?
5. What is the destiny of unbelievers?

Lesson 36

1. Explain II Corinthians 4:12.
2. What law always works in the bringing of an increase of life?
3. What two classes of people do the caterpillars represent by their actions?
4. What did Paul say about the light afflictions he received?
5. How can we become fruitful Christians?

Lesson 37

1. In what way are the people of the world wiser than God's children?
2. What was the essence of Jesus' prayer for His people?
3. Contrast the church at Jerusalem and the church at Corinth.

4. What did Paul say our conduct should be in regard to those who cause division?
5. What advice does the Book of Proverbs give that will promote freedom among God's people?

Lesson 38

1. From what does the blood cleanse God's people?
2. What should we do with the old nature?
3. What has reconciled us to God?
4. Who are sanctified by the blood?
5. Explain the difference between our "state" and our "standing."

Lesson 39

1. How does Christ become our sanctification?
2. Is it possible to build up the natural man into a spiritual state?
3. Can human nature be changed by environment or position?
4. Can self-improvement produce a new nature in humans?
5. What is God's plan in making humans a new creation?

Lesson 40

1. What is the difference between sanctification of the blood and sanctification of the Spirit?
2. If one is sanctified by the Spirit, what kind of life will result?
3. Explain two unscriptural methods of attempting to get victory over the "old man."
4. What would be the state of man if the old nature were destroyed?
5. What is God's way of dealing with the old nature?

Lesson 41
Sanctification by the Word

In this lesson we will see that sanctification of the Spirit and sanctification by the Word are linked together; they carry out the same purpose. Sanctification by the Spirit is God within us working out our salvation. (See Philippians 2:12-13.) The Word is on the outside of us, but as we eat of it and get it on the inside, it also works on us. The Word of God is the spiritual food we eat; we live on it. (See Matthew 4:4.) The Word reveals the will of God to us. God gives us perfect standing when the blood is applied, because by it we are cleansed from all sin. But from this point, we must walk on toward the perfecting of our state, as God reveals His will to us by the Word.

The Spirit and Word work together to sanctify us progressively. Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth" (I John 5:6). "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). II Timothy 3:16-17 declares, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Jesus told the Sadducees that it took both the power of God and the Scriptures to keep them from error. (See Matthew 22:29.)

One may live in the dead letter of formalism if he takes the stand that he needs the Scriptures only and refuses the Holy Spirit's operation in his life. On the other hand, some who have been filled with the Spirit have been overcome with fanaticism because they did not see the need of studying the Scripture and seeking the wisdom it imparts. From the preceding quotations, we see that both the Spirit and the Word are necessary for our sanctification.

It is impossible for someone, at any given moment, to thoroughly know the entire Word of God, which is the truth. Therefore, how can anyone teach from John 17:17 that the Word sanctifies us as it eradicates the old man in an instantaneous work of grace? The Word can only come to us in a progressive way, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little (Isaiah 28:13). II Peter 3:18 exhorts us to grow in knowledge. Therefore our sanctification by the Word is a progressive work. The Word of God does not say the Spirit will thrust us immediately into all truth, but it does tell us that the Spirit will guide us into all truth (John 16:13). This, of course, is a progressive work, rather than an instantaneous work.

If the Spirit of God leads us, the truth of the Word will open to us as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105). As we walk in the light that is shed upon our path by the Word, the blood by which we were sanctified and given a perfect standing in the beginning of our Christian life will continue to cleanse us from all sin.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psalm 119:9). This verse of Scripture shows that the Word sanctifies believers. Ephesians 5:25-26 states, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." We are all sanctified by the Word.

Sanctification by the Word can only take place when the believer does the will of God, as God reveals it to him by His Word. Some will put their own revelations and dreams ahead of the Word of God, but any experience that does not have its source in the Word should be called in question. One may spend whole nights in prayer without profit if he is not willing to do the will of God. The depth of all Christian experiences must be determined by the measure of one's commitment to the Word.

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18). Here is the promise of a continual increase of light, as we press on in the

pathway of glory. What is this light on the path of the just if it is not the Word of God illuminated by the Holy Ghost? Psalm 119:105 shows a double purpose for the Word. First, it is a lamp to our feet, so that we can see how to walk; it is also a light to our path. Like the headlights on an automobile, it forecasts distant scenes and discloses future events.

The world does not have this light, because it comes by the Spirit. Therefore, the children of God know things that are about to take place in this world that the wise and educated unsaved know nothing about. Peter declared, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (II Peter 1:19). We know the past, and we know the present, but the future is a dark, uncertain place. But we have a light that shines on our path, so that we do not walk in darkness concerning future events. In a special way, the Word has made plain the coming of the Lord, which will take place in the near future.

Nothing besides the Word of God gives light on what is ahead of us in this dark world. We as believers have this light, and we ought to cherish it and walk in every ray we can receive. We can only remain spiritual as we keep walking in all the light received from the Word. The reason some do not keep the experience they get from the Lord is that they fail to keep walking, and soon they go back into the world. It is impossible for one to stay long in any one state; we are either moving on in God, or we are going back.

God's Word is full of doctrine. How inconsistent it is for anyone to claim sanctification, yet not be willing to listen to the preaching of doctrine, let alone follow it! If truth is the means of our sanctification, it is necessary that we as saints should know what the truth really is. In some places there is a great outcry against doctrine as though it were something apart from the truth. People talk about Christianity being a life and not a creed. But Christianity is the expression of a life, and that life comes from obedience to the form of doctrine delivered by the disciples of Jesus (Romans 6:17).

Jesus Christ is not only the way and the life, but He is also the truth (John 14:6). He endorsed every part of the Bible as God's Word, and we are sanctified through that Word.

Lesson 42

Calling Things That Be Not As Though They Were

"God . . . quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17).

This verse states the principle that nothing is impossible with God; it enunciates a law of faith. This law is as sure to bring results as any other law that is properly followed. First God promises, then we believe, and afterwards we receive what we have believed for.

God made a promise to Abram that he would have a son, and Abram "considered not his body now dead . . . neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb . . . but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Romans 4:19-20). While he and his wife were yet childless, he believed God was able to bring life from the dead. God, then, called the "things which be not as though they were" and changed Abram's name to Abraham, meaning "father of many nations."

By faith Abraham became the father of us all. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, for it was imputed to him without works (Romans 4:2-6). Because Abraham lived before the new covenant, God could not give him the promise of the Holy Ghost but simply counted him as righteous (Hebrews 9:16-17).

While Abraham was counted as righteous, he, along with the other Old Testament faithful, died in faith without receiving the promise, God having provided some better thing for us (Hebrews 11:39-40). But if he had lived until the Day of Pentecost, he would have joined the other believers in the upper room, waiting for the "better thing," that is, the promise of the Holy Ghost. (See Galatians 3:14.)

We sometimes hear the question, "What about the many faithful people of ages past who have lived for God and yet never received the full New Testament experience of Acts 2:4 and Acts 2:38?" We can answer that if God desires He can call "those things which be not as though they were." If God counted Abraham's faith for righteousness and called him the "father of many" while he was yet childless, is He not able to do that for others? Thus, it could be that for people who truly walked with God and surrendered their lives to the *known* will of God, the Lord blessed them and gave them a right *standing* before Him, through His blood. Yet we have to admit that their *state* was far different from that of a Spirit-filled believer today. Nevertheless, it is not possible that, through their faith, God called things that were not as though they were? However, if those same people had lived on to see our day of increased light, they too would have embraced Acts 2:4, 38 and would soon have been baptized in Jesus' name and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Lesson 43

Born of the Spirit

Part 1

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The birth of the Spirit is a New Testament experience and therefore must come through the cleansing of the blood. As we study this subject, we must fully settle in our minds that it was necessary for Jesus, as high priest, to offer His blood and to enter heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us. It would have been impossible, therefore, for His disciples to have received the benefits of the blood, until He fulfilled the office of high priest.

The outpouring of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:4 is the witness to the blood, for Hebrews 10:15 says, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." In verse 14, the "offering" refers to His blood. (See I John 5:6.) After Jesus shed His blood and ascended to heaven, He poured out the Holy Spirit on the disciples in the upper room.

Some teach that people are born of the Spirit before being baptized with the Holy Ghost. Their arguments are founded largely upon experiences and blessings that various individuals have had before receiving the Holy Ghost. The Book of Acts records the early ministry of the disciples and their evangelistic work; if we cannot find these experiences named in the revealed Word of God, it is unsafe to rely on them. Many people have claimed the new birth at repentance, later were filled with the Spirit, and then testified that before receiving the Holy Ghost they had just enough religion to make them miserable because of the battle they fought to live up to the high standard of righteousness. However, they found that after receiving the baptism of the Spirit, which is God's righteousness, it was no longer they who had to live this life, but it was Christ who lived within them. (See II Corinthians 6:16.)

If one is born of God he is a child of God. He is a joint heir of Christ, and as such, he should be entitled to the inheritance promised to an heir of God. But those who claim that the new birth occurs at repentance meet with the stubborn fact that unless they are baptized with the Spirit, they are not ready to go to heaven when Jesus comes. (See Romans 8:9-11.) They have no oil of the Holy Ghost, so they will be told, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Matthew 25:12). How could someone be a born-again child of God, a joint heir with Christ, and lose his inheritance when Jesus comes?

To born of the Spirit is to be baptized with the Spirit, and this is the greatest experience anyone can receive in this life. A careful study of the Word will show that there is no record of the disciples' receiving the Holy Spirit as a distinct experience before the Day of Pentecost. In fact, it would have been scripturally impossible for them to have received the Holy Ghost, until Jesus, as our high priest, had ascended into heaven. (See John 7:38-39.) After receiving the Holy Ghost, Peter preached to the multitudes, telling them of their wickedness in crucifying Jesus. As they heard the message, they were pricked in their hearts and asked what they should do. Did he tell them that they must be born of the Spirit and then later receive the Holy Ghost? No. He told them that by repenting and being baptized in Jesus' name, they could receive the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38). The only birth of the Spirit he promised to them was the gift of the Holy Ghost.

While Peter was preaching to Cornelius and his household, informing them of Jesus' death and resurrection, "The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. . . . For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (Acts 10:44, 46). Later, when Peter was relating what had taken place at the house of Cornelius to the Jerusalem council, he said, "A good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and

believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:7-9). There is no place here for these Gentiles to have received an experience called the new birth aside from the reception of the Holy Ghost. In Acts 11:18 the apostles at Jerusalem, accepted the conversion of the Gentiles and glorified God, saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." The Holy Ghost was a witness to the apostles that the Gentiles had received eternal life.

When God sent Ananias to Saul with the message of New Testament salvation, he spoke to Saul of no other spiritual experience save being filled with the Holy Ghost. "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17).

In the early church, the only Christianity people knew about was Holy Ghost religion. Many today, not having the full revelation of apostolic teaching, have received subapostolic experiences. But let us not allow the subapostolic experiences of any person to cause us to stop short of the normal New Testament standard of salvation.

Lesson 44
Born of the Spirit
Part 2

Acts 8 records the great revival that came to Samaria under the ministry of Philip. Many miracles and healings took place, which brought great joy to the city (Acts 8:8). Philip baptized those who believed his message about Christ, but there is no mention of anyone being born of the Spirit or receiving any other spiritual experience (Acts 8:12). When Peter and John came down and laid hands on them, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17).

In Acts 19:1-6, Paul found certain disciples from Ephesus who knew only the baptism of John. They had never heard of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Paul taught them to believe on Jesus, and after they were baptized in Jesus' name, they received the Holy Ghost, spoke in tongues, and prophesied. There is no mention that they were born of the Spirit before they received the Holy Ghost. In fact, throughout the Book of Acts, there is no mention of anyone who was born of the Spirit apart from receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). Those who received Jesus were given power to become the children of God by being born of God. Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, had to die in order to bring forth other children of God: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). We have already shown that as high priest, Jesus had to rise from the dead and go into heaven, the present Holiest of All, and appear in the presence of God for the sins of the people.

Some point out that I John 5:1 says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," and that I John 4:15 says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." But let us also notice what the same author said about how we can know that He dwells in us: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (I John 4:13). John further said, "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (I John 5:4), and we know that it takes nothing short of the baptism of the Spirit in order to be an overcomer.

Some take verses from the four Gospels, referring to the time before the death of Christ, in an attempt to prove that the disciples were born of God before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is true that the Lord told the disciples to rejoice because their names were written in heaven, but this was their standing before God under the old covenant and therefore cannot refer to the new covenant born-again experience. If we carefully read Hebrews 9:16-17, we will see that the new covenant was not in force until after the death of Jesus: ''For where a testament [covenant or will] is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead." The new birth of the Spirit, or New Testament salvation, could not have existed before the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Some say, "Surely the disciples were born of God at this time." No, the new covenant was not in force at that time, so they could not have had a New Testament experience, but those whom Jesus called at this time were the natural branches spoken of in Romans 11. John 1:11-12 says that He came to His own, but His own did not accept Him. Jesus, however, gave the power to become children of God to all those who did receive Him. Those who did receive Him at that time were the remnant spoken of in Romans, the branches that were not broken off. Being natural branches, they went on and

received the Spirit, so that they might remain in the vine.

Those who did not receive Him were broken off. Why were the others broken off? Was it because they crucified Jesus? Oh no! After Peter had told them that with wicked hands they had crucified the Lord (Acts 2:23), almost in the next breath he told them that the promise of the Holy Ghost was for them and their children, if they would meet the conditions (Acts 2:39). Later Peter said, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25-26). No, they were not cut off for crucifying Him but for rejecting the resurrected Christ when He came back in the Spirit. In short, God rejected them for rejecting the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:5-6). Our flesh was born in our first birth, but it takes the second birth to be born of God. Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth . . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17).

The Lord Jesus comforted the disciples while He was with them physically, but He had to leave them (John 16:7). The Spirit of truth that dwelt with them was the Father, who was in Jesus doing the works. (See John 14:7, 10-11.) Jesus said that He would be in them as the Comforter, whom the Father would send. In verse 20, He said, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." The Spirit could not have been given until Jesus went away or until He had risen and ascended into heaven to appear in the presence of God for them. Then, and only then, could they receive the Spirit.

John 16:7 emphasizes the same thought: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." If we carefully read His discourse from this verse through verse 21, we will find that Jesus referred to His departure as a time of sorrow, as when a woman is giving birth (John 16:20-21). He likened the sending of the Holy Spirit to *a birth* in verse 21: "But as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." In verse 22, He said that He would see them again and that joy would replace their sorrow: "Ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice"—over the new birth in the Holy Ghost!

Lesson 45

A Message to Young Converts

The following is adapted from an article by F. Harold Bickford of Mars Hill, Maine.

You have taken upon you the choicest of names, that of a Christian. First, please notice where this name was first used (Acts 11:26). As in ancient times, so today, many walk and bear this name in an unworthy manner. But we expect all of you to be real Bible Christians. By this, we mean that you will endeavor, in all your ways, to do everything just as the Word of God teaches. We shall pray for you to this end.

After repenting and starting the Christian life you will realize that the Bible teaches water baptism. Study the following verses of Scripture: Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5. The Bible teaches that we should reckon the old person dead, and water baptism is his burial (Romans 6:3-8, 11). The Bible teaches that everyone baptized in water in the early church was baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. There is no other name by which we can be saved. (See Acts 4:12.) The next step is the resurrection of the new person in Christ Jesus. (See Colossians 3:1-2.)

Ephesians 4:5 says that there is but one baptism. This must include the water and the Spirit according to John 3:5. So we conclude that it takes both water baptism and the baptism in the Holy Ghost to complete the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5. Jesus corroborated this view with His answer to John the Baptist's protest in Matthew 3:15: "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Upon the authority of God's precious Word, we beseech all young converts to consider yourself only half baptized, if you have been baptized in water only and have not yet received the baptism in the Holy Ghost, or vice versa.

Many these days are receiving the blessed filling of the Spirit with the scriptural evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. For those who have not yet received this experience, we call your attention to Luke 24:49, where Jesus told His disciples, "Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high." On the Day of Pentecost Peter said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children" (Acts 2:39). But we find that many have to wait on God until they are rid of everything that would hinder them from receiving the precious Holy Spirit. So we exhort every young convert not to be satisfied until you have waited on the Lord and have received this blessed baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, which John the Baptist said Jesus came to give.

In three cases the Bible records that believers spoke in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6). Millions all over the world today are receiving this Bible experience, and it is *your* privilege to be among this number. So again we say, *tarry until*!

It is your privilege to have one or more spiritual gifts after, or as soon as, you are filled with the Holy Ghost. Many well-intentioned preachers and teachers these days make the sad mistake of teaching that tongues is always spoken of as one of the spiritual gifts. But unless we make a distinction between the sign of the new tongue in Acts and the gift of tongues in I Corinthians 12 and 14, we will be confused in our teaching regarding the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We should notice carefully that in I Corinthians 12, as Paul began his teaching on the gifts of the Spirit, he said, "Now concerning spiritual gifts." In the Book of Acts, however, speaking with tongues was the evidence that the Spirit had come to dwell within the believer. There is no question that the standard of the early church was that everyone was filled with the Spirit and that they all spoke with tongues initially when they received this experience.

Furthermore, it is the privilege of every child of God to have one or more of the spiritual gifts listed in I Corinthians 12:8-10. If you will prayerfully study I Corinthians 12, 13, and 14, you will

be enlightened a great deal as to the reception and use of these gifts.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Among the *all things*, many are finding it a privilege to have Jesus as their Great Physician. Just think what a legacy this brings to a child of God! Millions all over the world have been healed in the past few years by the power of God. In order to stand on scriptural ground, familiarize yourself with the following verses of Scripture: Exodus 15:26; Psalm 103:1-3; Matthew 8-10; Mark 16:16-18; James 5:13-15; and many others that you can search out for yourself.

Then always remember that the consummation of our hope in Jesus is His coming again, which is referred to 358 times in the New Testament, as well as many times in the Old Testament. II Timothy 2:15 is a good verse with which to close this message. Please look it up and do as it says, and God will bless you and keep you on the way.

After we receive the Holy Ghost, we must not make the mistake of feeling that we no longer need to seek after God earnestly. We must never settle down to a life of inactivity. After receiving the Spirit of God, we need to be very active in the study of God's Word and in witnessing to others of the wonderful life we have found in Jesus. Only those who do this will be able to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:1-5). The writer of Hebrews emphasized the need of growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Word. (See Hebrews 5:12-14; 6:1-3.)

As we search the New Testament, we will find the will of God for our lives. As the body requires food for the natural man, so now we must feed the "new man." The Word of God is the only food we can eat that will make us healthy Christians (Matthew 4:4). A good, healthy Christian is one who is well balanced by both the Spirit and the Word.

God does nothing without a plan; He had a plan completed before He made the world. He planned to have a Son in "the fulness of time" (Galatians 4:4), and He also planned for the Son to be slain (I Peter 1:19-20).

God gave Noah a plan for the ark, and He gave Moses a plan for the Tabernacle in the wilderness. He has a plan for the ages and for each individual life.

We cannot fulfill God's plan for us until we have accepted Jesus as Savior and have been born again of water and the Spirit. Then, if we will realize that He has a plan for each of us, we can enter into His plan and live each day for Him. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD" (Psalm 37:23).

How are we to know God's plan for us? "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). The Old Testament gives us a beautiful illustration of this great spiritual walk. The Tabernacle in the wilderness represents our body, which is a temporary structure, a place for God to indwell. When the Tabernacle was dedicated, a cloud of heavenly glory and divine presence filled it. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in our bodies. "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Corinthians 6:16). The cloud represents the Holy Ghost.

"And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle. . . . And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents" (Numbers 9:15, 17-18).

Just as the cloud guided the Israelites, so the Holy Spirit will guide us. To find God's plan for our lives we need only to yield ourselves to His divine will and let the Spirit lead us. As we walk in the Spirit, we fulfill God's plan for us. When we do not walk in the Spirit, we are out of God's will for us, and we are walking in the flesh. Only what we do through the guidance of the Holy Spirit will endure; all else will vanish like chaff from the summer threshing floor. We should recognize that all of our time belongs to God. None of it should be squandered. Whether we eat or

drink, or whatever we do, we should do it all for the glory of God.

However small a work may appear, if it is done for His glory, God will take notice of it and reward us. Even a cup of cold water given in His name will be rewarded. Let us yield ourselves to God so that He may fulfill His purpose in our lives!

Lesson 46

The Godhead

Part 1

The prophets, the apostles, Jesus Himself, and many passages of Scripture teach that deity and humanity are united in the person of Christ. In other words, Jesus is both God and man.

The Prophets Declared That Christ Is God

In the King James Version of the Old Testament, wherever "LORD" (large and small capitals) occurs, it represents the name Jehovah (*Yahweh*) in the original Hebrew text. This is the Old Testament name of God. "Lord" (first letter only capitalized) represents *Adonai* in the Hebrew text, meaning "Lord, Master, Supreme Ruler."

"Behold, your God will come . . . he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isaiah 35:4-6). Let us compare this prophecy with the question that John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus, and the answer that Jesus gave: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matthew 11:3-5).

"I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me . . . saith the LORD [Jehovah] of hosts" (Malachi 3:1). "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD [Jehovah], make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3). Matthew 3:3 applies this prophecy to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus. "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD [Jehovah] . . . we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isaiah 25:9). "For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD [Jehovah] of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called" (Isaiah 54:5). Compare these statements with Matthew 9:15, Ephesians 5:30-32, and Revelation 19:7, where Christ is called husband or bridegroom.

The Prophets Declared That Christ Is Man

According to Isaiah 53:2-9, the Messiah was a man of sorrows, one acquainted with grief, without form or beauty that we should desire him. He was wounded; he was bruised; he was whipped. God laid our iniquity on Him. He was oppressed; he was afflicted; he was taken from prison and judgment. He was cut off from the land of the living; he was stricken; he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death.

The Prophets Declared That Christ Is Both God and Man

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son [humanity], and shall call his name Immanuel [God with us]" (Isaiah 7:14). "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son [humanity] is given . . . and his name shall be called . . . The mighty God, The everlasting Father [deity]" (Isaiah 9:6). "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch [humanity]. . . . He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS [deity]" (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

The Apostles Declared That Christ Is God

"The Word was God" (John 1:1). Thomas called Jesus "my Lord and my God" (John 20:28). Paul said Christ is "God blessed for ever" (Romans 9:5). "God was manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16). Jesus Christ "is the true God, and eternal life" (I John 5:20). "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Hebrews 1:8). The "only wise God" is our Savior (Jude 25). We are "looking for . . . the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Some have tried to make two appearances out of this verse of Scripture; one of the great God and the other of the Savior. Verse 14, however, shows that the great God and Savior are the same: "Who gave himself [not themselves] for us, that he might redeem us."

The following verses of Scripture show that Christ is God, the Creator: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (John 1:10). "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth . . . all things were created by him, and for him" (Colossians 1:16). "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands" (Hebrews 1:10).

The Apostles Declared That Christ Is Man

Peter said that Jesus was "a man approved of God" (Acts 2:22). God "will judge the world in righteousness by that man" (Acts 17:31). The "gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:15). "By man came also the resurrection of the dead" (I Corinthians 15:21). There is "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5).

The Apostles Declared That Christ Is Both God and Man

"The Word [deity] was made flesh [humanity]" (John 1:14). "Behold, a virgin . . . shall bring forth a son [humanity], and they shall call his name Emmanuel [deity], which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:23). "The second man [humanity] is the Lord [deity] from heaven" (I Corinthians 15:47).

Jesus Himself Declared That He Is God

Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). ''I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending . . . the Almighty" (Revelation 1:8). "I am the first and the last" (Revelation 1:17). (See Isaiah 44:6, which says that Jehovah is the first and the last.) "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:6-7). Since the overcomer is the child of Jesus, Jesus must be his Father.

Jesus Himself Declared That He Is Man

Jesus called Himself "the Son of man" around eighty times in the New Testament.

Jesus Himself Declared That He Is Both Man and God

"I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). "Believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (John 10:38). "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John 14:11). "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). "I am the root and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22:16).

Other Passages Declare the Dual Nature of Jesus Christ

Christ Is God Because of His Preexistence. "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:17). "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me . . . whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Christ Is God Because of His Titles. The Bible calls Jesus the "Holy One" (Acts 2:27); "the Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:14); "the Just One" (Acts 7:52); "the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Timothy 6:15; see Revelation 17:14); "the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:8); "the Prince of life" (Acts 3:15).

Christ Is Man. He was "made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). He was "made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). He "increased in wisdom and stature" (Luke 2:52). He "hungered" (Matthew 4:2); was "wearied" (John 4:6); was "tempted" (Matthew 4:1); had "sweat" (Luke 22:44); "wept" (John 11:35); was angry and grieved (Mark 3:5); died (John 19:33); was buried (John 19:42).

His Actions Prove His Dual Nature. As man Jesus wept over the grave of Lazarus, and as God He raised him from the grave (John 11:35, 43-44.). As man He died (John 19:33), and as God He arose from the tomb (John 10:18; I Corinthians 15:4).

His Words Prove His Dual Nature. As man He said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). As God He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25). As man He said, "The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him" (Matthew 17:22-23). As God He said, "Destroy this temple [body], and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19).

We can illustrate Christ's dual nature by an analogy to human beings, for humans are dual also, in that they have a body and a spirit—yet each human being is but one person. When we say, "I am sick," we refer to the body; but when we say, "I am happy," we refer to the spirit. Likewise Jesus often spoke of His humanity and at other times of His deity—the Spirit of God that dwelt within Him. This truth is a wonderful key that unlocks and unfolds the teaching of the Godhead, which is in Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:8-9).

Lesson 47
The Godhead
Part 2

In our previous lesson, we demonstrated that Christ has a dual nature, that is, He is both God and man. It goes without saying that there is only one God, since God has declared this fact over and over again throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

The Substance of God

"God is a Spirit," (John 4:24). "The Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17). We further see the spiritual nature of God in that God is omnipresent. Obviously, only a spirit can be omnipresent. "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:24). "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee" (I Kings 8:27). "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:27-28).

Christ's Humanity Enables Him to Be Our Mediator

While God is almighty, all wise, and omnipresent, humans can only approach and know God through the person of Christ. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). Since the fall of Adam and Eve, human beings were sinful and therefore needed God; but because they were sinful, they could not approach God or live in His holy presence. While humanity was in this sinful state, Christ, God manifested in the flesh, came to meet humanity's need. The union of deity and humanity qualified Christ to be a mediator. He perfectly represented God to sinful humanity and fallen humanity to God. He reconciled the two through His shed blood: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Corinthians 5:19).

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19-22). "But ye are come unto mount Sion . . . and to God . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:22-24). Since Christ is both God and man, He is a perfect mediator to reconcile, through His flesh, lost persons to God.

Christ's Deity Made Him Lord

From Luke 2:11 we learn that Jesus was Lord when He first entered into the world. It was the indwelling Spirit of God (deity, not humanity) that made Him Lord (Acts 2:36). "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (I Corinthians 12:3). "The Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17). "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (I Corinthians 12:4-6). From this passage of Scripture, we see that the terms Holy Spirit, Lord, and God refer to the same Being. This Being is holy, eternal, uncaused, uncreated, and invisible. He alone is God. The Word (God's self-revelation) was with

God and was God Himself, and the Word was made flesh (John 1:1, 14).

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (I John 5:7). This verse does not mention the title of Son, for it speaks of the heavenly record, whereas the Son is God manifested on earth as a human. The one God is the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. These three titles represent three positions or offices of the one God. In other words, God has a record in heaven of being the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost—three terms that each apply to one God. God as Father begot a Son; God's Word was incarnated as the Son (John 1:14); God gives His Holy Spirit to believers (Acts 2:4).

The Humanity of Christ Was Not Preexistent

We should not suppose that the humanity of Christ preexisted the Incarnation. The Son did not preexist except in the mind and plan of God. The Spirit of Christ preexisted the Incarnation as the one God. The Word, which is God Himself, is eternal, but the Son was born at Bethlehem.

The Son of God was the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16), the seed of David (Romans 1:3), and the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). As a human, Christ was the descendant of Adam and Eve, Abraham, and David, through His mother, Mary.

Christ was both God and man; both deity and humanity were united in Christ. The reason that the Son could say, "I and my Father are one" (John l0:30) was that deity and humanity were united in one person. Again He said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28) because deity is greater than humanity.

As a Man, Christ Will Deliver up the Kingdom to God

Some object to the message of the fullness of the Godhead in Christ, saying that I Corinthians 15:24-28 contradicts this teaching. This passage explains that when the end comes, there will no longer be a need for a mediator between God and humanity. The Incarnation, of course, will always exist, but Christ's human role as mediator and high priest will cease. Instead of reigning as the Son, He will reign as God throughout eternity.

We should remember that as a man (the Son), Jesus was always "subject" to God, who is the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Spirit. At the same time, Jesus is also "the light of the world" (John 8:12) and "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God" (I Timothy 1:17). Jesus will be both God and the Lamb on the throne throughout eternity as one personal Being with one face and one supreme name (Revelation 22:3-4). To Him "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 25).

Lesson 48

The Godhead

Part 3

The Rock of Ages

Paul, speaking of the Israelites in the days of Moses, said, "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10:4). It was not the Son of man, the seed of the woman, that was with the Israelites; it was the Spirit of Christ that preexisted before the Incarnation. Let us search the Scriptures to see what it says about the Rock that was with the Israelites.

"Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any" (Isaiah 44:8). "Neither is there any rock like our God" (I Samuel 2:2). "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust" (II Samuel 22:2-3). "For who is God, save the LORD? and who is the rock, save our God"? (II Samuel 22:32). "The LORD is my rock" (Psalm 18:2). II Samuel 23:3 says that the God of Israel is the Rock of Israel.

Not a verse of Scripture even hints of any other Rock save Jehovah God. (See also Deuteronomy 32:4, 15, 18, 30-31; Psalm 28:1; 42:9; 61:2; 71:3; 94:22; 95:1, Isaiah 51:1.)

In Isaiah 8:13-14, Jehovah will be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both houses of Israel. Peter said, "Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified . . . is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner" (Acts 4:10-11). (See also I Peter 2:4-8.) Romans 9:32-33 teaches the same truth. The church is built "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 3:11).

The songwriter knew his Bible when he penned the immortal words: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee."

Jesus said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The name of Peter comes from the word *petros*, which means "a little stone"; the word "rock" comes from *petra* meaning "a large or chief stone." Christ did not mean that He would build His church upon Peter, a little stone, but upon the confession of Himself, the chief cornerstone. Thus He said, "Thou art Peter [*Petros*, a little stone], and upon this rock [*petra*, the large rock] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We have received "a kingdom which cannot be moved" (Hebrews 12:28), for it is founded on Jesus, the true Rock of Ages. He is a shelter in the time of storm (Isaiah 32:2).

Lesson 49

The Godhead

Part 4

The Holy Spirit

John the Baptist testified that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 3:11). But Christ as the Son said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter . . . even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive . . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless [literally, orphans]: I will come to you. . . . At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:16-18, 20). Since Christ was a true man He could say, "The Father . . . shall give you another Comforter" (John 14:16). Since Christ was also God, He could say, "I will send him [the Comforter] unto you" (John 16:7). As John 14:17-18 reveal, the Comforter would actually be Christ Himself coming back in another form—in Spirit rather than flesh, to dwell in believers rather than merely with them.

During the life of Christ, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39). After Jesus was crucified, buried, raised from the dead, He was glorified. He was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] by the Spirit" (I Peter 3:18). "This Jesus hath God raised up . . . therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:32-33).

When we understand that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Christ, we see how Peter could say that the Spirit of Christ inspired the prophets (I Peter 1:10-11). In another place he said that the Holy Ghost moved them to speak (II Peter 1:21). In harmony with this, the writer of Hebrews said that God who spoke through the prophets (Hebrews 1:1). It is common to read in the Old Testament, "Thus saith the LORD [Jehovah]." Therefore, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Ghost, and Jehovah are none other than the *one true God*. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Son that comes into the hearts of the believers, crying, "Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6).

God is omnipresent and invisible, for He is a Spirit. In order that we might not confuse God's Spirit with another spirit, Paul declared, "Now the Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:17). The Lord God, *that same Spirit*, was the Father of the Son. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:18). "For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 1:20). This miracle was the Word "made flesh" (John 1:14). John further declared that the only begotten is in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18). The angel told Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Surely we need no more proof that the Holy Ghost is the Father of the man Jesus.

It was God who said, "Destroy this temple [body], and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). The Spirit of Jesus could not die, but the Son did die, as the Spirit withdrew from the body. No one could take His life from Him; He voluntarily laid it down. On the third day, God raised the Son from the dead (Acts 13:30). By the Spirit, He was made alive. (See I Peter 3:18.) By the eternal Spirit Jesus offered Himself (Hebrews 9:14), and the same Spirit raised Him up again (Romans 8:11).

The Son of God overcame and sat down with His Father in His throne (Revelation 3:21). There is only one divine throne in heaven (Revelation 4:2). John saw the slain Lamb in the midst (middle) of the throne (Revelation 5:6). The heavens must receive Him until the time of the restitution

of all things (Acts 3:20-21). The disciples saw Him after He had risen, and Paul saw Him later, as one born out of due time (I Corinthians 15:8). But now the Son's place is in heaven till He returns in clouds of great glory. At the same time, since Christ is both God and man, the Spirit of Christ can be with us and, better still, in us. In this way, the Son can be in heaven and at the same time pour out His Spirit on believers. The Spirit that we have within us is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27) (See also II Corinthians 13:5.) And yet, we are still looking for Him, who is in heaven, to come again to earth in the flesh and give us immortal bodies like His.

Jesus said, "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62; see Matthew 26:64). This verse of Scripture destroys the theory that "sitting on the right hand of power" refers to a physical position. The truth is that He will still be sitting on the right hand of God when He comes in the clouds. The right hand is a figure of speech denoting a position of power. Paul explained that we are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Jesus is our great God and Savior.

The Bible teaches that God, the Father, dwells in those who are filled with the Holy Ghost. (See John 14:20; II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 4:6; Philippians 2:13; I John 4:12-13, 15-16.) These verses of Scripture reveal that the omnipresent, invisible One—the Father, the Spirit, the deity of Christ—dwells in believers. At the same time, the Son—the glorified Man who is the incarnation of God—is in heaven as our mediator. (See I Timothy 2:5.)

Lesson 50

The Godhead

Part 5

The Dual Nature of Jesus Christ

We can use of a glass of lemonade to illustrate the *dual nature* of Christ. The lemon represents the *deity* of Christ, while the water represents the *humanity* of Christ. While no human analogy is perfect in describing the Incarnation, this illustration serves as a tool for understanding and remembering the truth on this subject as expressed in the Scripture references given.

Deity and Humanity in One Person

1. The Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father (John 14:11).
2. But the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father (John 8:29).
3. The Father is greater than the Son (John 14:28).
4. Still the Father and the Son are one (John 10:30).
5. The Father is invisible (John 1:18).
6. But he who has seen the Son has seen the Father (John 14:9).
7. The Father apart from the Son is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:18-29).
8. But the Son is a mediator between humanity and the Father (I Timothy 2:5).
9. The Father gave Christ the name Jesus (Philippians 2:9-10).
10. What is the name that reveals the Father and the Son? Jesus. (See John 5:43.)
11. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ (the manifestation of God in the flesh, the Father in the Son)? (I John 2:22).
12. He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son (I John 2:22).
13. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (I John 2:23).
14. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).
15. "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (Psalm 34:8).

Two Ingredients in One Drink

1. The lemon is in the water, and the water is in the lemon.
2. But the lemon is not the water, and the water is not the lemon.
3. The lemon is greater than the water.
4. Still the lemon and the water are one drink.
5. The lemon is invisible.
6. But he who has seen the water has seen the lemon.
7. The lemon without the water is too sour to drink.
8. But the water is a mediator between us and the lemon.
9. The lemon gave this drink its name—lemonade.
10. What is the name of this lemon and water? Lemonade.
11. Who is a liar, but he who denies lemonade is this drink (lemon and water)?
12. He who refuses the lemon and the water is without this drink.
13. Whoever refuses the water, the same does not have the lemon, but he who accepts the

water has the lemon also.

14. Whoever turns away and refuses the substance of this drink does not have the lemon. He who receives the substance of this drink has both the lemon and the water.

15. O taste and see that this drink is good!

The Dual Nature Explained

It is hard for some to see how two perfect natures could be united in one person, even Christ, and they, like many of old, stumble at the "stumbling stone." However, our standing does not depend on a perfect understanding, but on our faith, that is, on our believing what the Word teaches. In this case, we cannot overlook the plain teaching that the Father dwells in the Son and the Son is in the Father (John 14:10-11).

Because Jesus was both God and man, He could rightly represent God to humanity and humanity to God and thus bring about a union. This was accomplished by the death of the Son of God on the cross. When He died in our stead, He reconciled us to God by His blood (Romans 5:10).

Some may ask how Jesus could be limited as a man and at the same time be unlimited as God. The Scriptures point out that as a man He was limited in strength (John 4:6) but as God He had all power in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18). His humanity, when weak from loss of blood, fainted under the heavy load of the cross, Simon having to bear it for him; yet of His deity we can say that He upholds "all things by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3).

Those who accept trinitarianism must believe the unscriptural teaching that the second person of the trinity is Christ's deity and the Son of Mary is Christ's humanity, thus making Christ two sons in one person. But this theory cannot stand the test of the Scriptures, for in no place are we taught that the deity who did the work in Christ was the second person of the trinity. It was always the Father who did the work (John 14:10-11). The Son of God was the man who died, for if the Son had been God he could not have died. So while it may seem at first a mystery as to how Christ could be both limited and yet unlimited, the Word of God teaches this truth plainly. It leads us to worship one God in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Questions on Lessons 41–50

Lesson 41

1. Why is it impossible for us to receive entire and instant sanctification by the Word in this life?
2. Why is it necessary to have both the Word and the Spirit?
3. How can we have the blood to continually cleanse us?
4. What is a dark place into which the sure word of prophecy will shine?

Lesson 42

1. How may we demonstrate that we have believed?
2. What caused God to change Abram's name?
3. What is the difference in Abraham's experience of being counted as righteous by faith and our experience with God today?
4. According to the suggestion of the lesson, how might God look at someone in centuries past who obeyed all the truth they knew yet did not receive the full Acts 2:38 experience?
5. Nevertheless, if someone obeys the fullness of truth that is proclaimed today, what will they experience?

Lesson 43

1. Since the new birth is a New Testament experience, what had to happen to Jesus before anyone could receive it?
2. After Jesus shed His blood and entered the Holiest of All (heaven), what was the first witness that He had gotten there?
3. If people are taught that they are born of God before receiving the Holy Ghost, what problem do they nevertheless encounter?
4. In the sermon Peter preached in Acts 2, what experience did he offer the Jews who crucified Jesus?

Lesson 44

1. If Jesus was the only begotten Son God, and God offered up His Son so that He might have many children, when were the first children born to God under the new covenant?
2. How does one who believes he is born of God know that God dwells in him?
3. How was Jesus able to call the disciples branches before they were sons?
4. Were the Jews broken off for crucifying Jesus?
5. What part of a person is born of the Spirit of God?

Lesson 45

1. What is the first step a young convert should take after repenting of his sins?
2. What is the "one baptism" spoken of in Ephesians 4:5?
3. What experience with God should someone receive after he has repented?
4. Name some verses of Scripture that teach healing for the body.
5. What does the Lord want to grant to those who are filled with His Spirit?

Lesson 46

1. In the King James Versions of the Old Testament what is the difference in meaning between the word "LORD" (large and small capitals) and the word "Lord" (first letter only a capital)?
2. What noticeable contrast is there in the prophecy concerning Christ in Isaiah 35 and that in Isaiah 53?
3. Give a Scripture reference which prophesies that Christ would be both God and man.

4. Give a Scripture reference where Jesus spoke of Himself as God.
5. Name a human limitation of Jesus that shows Him to be a man.

Lesson 47

1. What is the substance of God? Give a Scripture reference to prove it.
2. What benefit does humanity have because of the union of the two natures in Christ?
3. When Jesus was a baby, to whom did an angel give the message that He was Lord?
4. Why does I John 5:7 not say "Son" instead of "Word"?
5. Why could Jesus say, "The Father is greater than I"?

Lesson 48

1. Who did Paul say was the Rock that followed the Israelites?
2. Who did the prophets say was the Rock?
3. Who did Isaiah say would be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both houses of Israel?
4. Whom did Peter refer to as the stone that was set at naught?
5. What is the difference between Peter as a stone and Christ as the Rock?

Lesson 49

1. Who does the Bible say inspired the prophets? Who moved upon the prophets? Who spoke by the prophets?
2. What Scripture verse teaches that the Lord is the Spirit?
3. What Scripture verse shows the Holy Ghost to be the Father of the Son?
4. How can the Son of God can remain in heaven and yet be in us at the same time?

Lesson 50

1. In what way is lemonade like Christ?
2. How did Christ get His name, Jesus?
3. According to I John, who is antichrist?
4. What Scripture passages show that Jesus is limited as to His humanity but unlimited as to His deity?
5. Who dwelt in Christ and did the works of Christ?

Lesson 51

The Godhead

Part 6

The Preexistence of Christ

In a previous lesson we mentioned the preexistence of Christ, but we shall now consider a number of scriptural passages regarding this.

Some people try to use Proverbs 8 to show that the Son of God preexisted with the Father. They teach that the personification of wisdom here is actually the preexistent Son, but this chapter speaks of our need of wisdom and does not in any way indicate that it is speaking of the Son of God. Indeed, if we accept that wisdom is the preexistent Christ, then we should teach that Christ is a goddess, for Proverbs 8 describes wisdom as a woman. I Corinthians 1:30 says that Jesus was made unto us wisdom but says this was "of God"—as to His deity not His humanity.

Some people also use John 17:5 in an attempt to prove that the Son is an eternally distinct person from the Father: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." This text simply speaks of the plan of God, however. Before the Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, the Son existed only in the mind and plan of God.

Christ was *foreordained* before the foundation of the world but was *manifest* in these last times for us (I Peter 1:20-21). While the Scriptures teach that Christ was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8), who would not agree with Hebrews 9:26 that it was at Calvary that He was actually slain? The only reasonable conclusion is that the Crucifixion was always in the mind and plan of God, even though it did not occur until around A.D. 33. In like manner, God's Son was always in His mind and plan, and He had glory in that Son. However, it was in time and not in eternity that the Lamb was slain, and it was in time and not in eternity that the Son was begotten. The God of faith counts the things that are not as though they already are (Romans 4:17). The humanity of the Son of God had preexistence only in the plan of God.

Many attempt to prove the preexistence of the Son by the phrase "God sent . . . his Son into the world" (John 3:17). However, no one would attempt to prove that the apostles preexisted their birth simply because the Scripture says that the Lord sent them into the world (John 17:18). As the disciples were in the world before they were sent, so the Son was begotten and born before He was sent. The words of Jesus confirm this understanding: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). God gave His Son, not from heaven, but on the cross. The order is "a child is born" and then a "a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). John 3:16 speaks of God giving His Son, but Romans 5:8 says this took place in time, not in eternity.

A favorite objection to the teaching of the oneness of God is Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man." This text, however, does not contradict the rest of the Word of God. No Scripture ever contradicts Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." The simplest explanation of Genesis 1:26 is that God was counseling with His own will (Ephesians 1:11). Genesis 1:27 clearly states that God created man in "his own image," and the man that He so created was one person in every way. Moreover, Jehovah created all things alone and by Himself: "I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself" (Isaiah 44:24).

There are three manifestations of the one God in the Scripture:

1. God is manifest as the Father (Luke 1:35).
2. God is manifest *in* His Son (I Timothy 3:16).
3. God is manifest as the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4).

There are not three Gods, nor three persons, but one God and one mediator between God and humans, the man Christ (I Timothy 2:5).

When Jesus was baptized in the River Jordan (Matthew 3:16-17), He was "God manifest in the flesh" (I Timothy 3:16). At that time, John the Baptist saw the Spirit of God manifest in the form of a dove (John 1:32). God also spoke from heaven by a voice. So here we find three manifestations of one God. Three manifestations of God do not prove three separate persons in the Godhead any more than one person being "slain" in the Spirit, another person dancing in the Spirit, and still another speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance proves the existence of three Holy Spirits! In this example, we would explain that the one Holy Spirit was manifested in three ways, by "slaying" power, dancing power, and power to speak in tongues. And so it was at the River Jordan. The eternal God was manifested *as* Father by speaking, was manifested *in* the Son, and was manifested in the form of a dove *as* the Holy Ghost.

To teach that the only begotten Son of God preexisted as a begotten Son from all eternity, distinct from two other equal persons, is contrary to logic. The terms "begotten" and "eternal" are contrary words. The very title "Son" denotes a beginning, so it could not designate a person who existed from all eternity.

In short, Jesus Christ preexisted the Incarnation as the almighty God, the one Spirit, but He did not exist as a Son or as a different person of the Godhead.

Lesson 52

The Godhead

Part 7

The Doctrine of the Trinity

For the benefit of any who may think the doctrine of the oneness of God is complicated, it will be helpful at this point to discuss the modern doctrine of the trinity, as it appears in the Athanasian Creed.

In A.D. 325, the Roman Emperor Constantine summoned all the bishops of the church for a general council at Nicea. The principal objective of this council was to settle a great dispute that had arisen over the nature of Christ and the Godhead, specifically regarding the doctrine of Arius. At the council, Athanasius of Alexandria championed a form of trinitarianism. The bishops present finally supported the contention of Athanasius that Jesus Christ was truly God and not a lesser deity as Arius contended. This decision marks the first official church decision supportive of the doctrine of the trinity, although it did not give full definition or endorsement to the modern doctrine.

This council, however, did not end the dispute over the Godhead or the nature of Christ; the debates raged on. In 381, the Council of Constantinople met and officially endorsed the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead. The statements of the two councils gave rise to the Nicene Creed, which attained its final form about A.D. 500. Another creed that was formulated about this time or later (fifth to eighth centuries) was the Athanasian Creed, which, despite its name, was composed long after the death of Athanasius.

This creed is the most comprehensive statement of the doctrine of the trinity from ancient times. The creed uses the word *catholic*, not in reference to the Roman Catholic Church as such, which formally developed later, but simply meaning "universal."

The following is taken from *The Creed of Athanasius* (in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* 7:366):

1. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary to hold the Catholic faith.
2. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. But this is the Catholic faith: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity.
4. Neither confounding the persons; nor dividing the substance.
5. For there is one person of the Father; another of the Son; another of the Holy Ghost.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such is the Holy Ghost.
8. The Father is uncreated; the Son is uncreated; the Holy Ghost is uncreated.
9. The Father is incomprehensible; the Son is incomprehensible; the Holy Ghost is incomprehensible.
10. The Father is eternal; the Son is eternal; the Holy Ghost is eternal.
11. And yet there are not three eternals; but one eternal.
12. And also there are not three uncreated; nor three incomprehensible; but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.
13. So likewise the Father is almighty; the Son is almighty; and the Holy Ghost is almighty.
14. And yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty.
15. So the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God.

16. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God.
17. So the Father is Lord; the Son is Lord; and the Holy Ghost is Lord.
18. And yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord.
19. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by Himself to be God and Lord;
20. So are we forbidden by the Catholic religion to say: there are three Gods, or three Lords.
21. The Father is made of none; neither created nor begotten.
22. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created; but begotten.
23. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son; not made, neither created, nor begotten; but proceeding.
24. Thus there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.
25. And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none greater nor less than another.
26. But the whole three persons are co-eternal together, and coequal.
27. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity is to be worshipped.
28. He, therefore, that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.

Of course, no one can actually understand such teaching, nor is it found in the Word of God. We should notice that this creed not only contradicts the Word of God but is self-contradictory as well! Section 25 says, "None is greater nor less than another." But Jesus plainly declared as the Son of God, "My Father is greater than I." Section 10 states, "The Son is eternal," but section 22 contradicts this by stating that the Son is begotten. It would be impossible for there to be but one God, as section 16 states, if the "Son is God" (section 15) and is at the same time a different person from the Father (section 5).

There is only one true God, and if it were possible for the Son (humanity) to be the one God, then He would be His own Father, for God is the Father. (See I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6.) But we can believe in the deity of Christ and also in the Father and the Son without having to accept the contradictions handed to us from church councils of the past. The Son was not eternal but was begotten by the Holy Ghost, and Mary was His mother (Matthew 1:20). The Father and the Son are not separate persons, but the person of Christ is both God and man, Father and Son united in one person. "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). The Father and Son are not equal, for humanity cannot be equal with deity.

Let us base our doctrine and faith on the pure Word of God as believed and taught by the holy, inspired prophets and apostles, rather than on the distorted teaching of the Dark Ages. Let us renounce every idea that has been handed down that does not conform to the holy Word of God.

Lesson 53

The Godhead

Part 8

Jehovah Is Jesus

Jehovah Is God
Exodus 3:15; 6:3
Isaiah 43:10
Isaiah 44:8
Isaiah 45:6

Jesus Is God
Isaiah 9:6
John 20:28
I Timothy 3:16
Titus 2:13

Jehovah Is Creator
Isaiah 44:24

Jesus Is Creator
John 1:10

Jehovah Is the "I AM"
Exodus 3:13-14

Jesus Is the "I AM"
John 8:58

Jehovah Is the Savior
Isaiah 45:21-22
Isaiah 43:11

Jesus Is the Savior
Luke 2:11
Titus 2:13
II Peter 3:18
Jude 25

Jehovah Is the Eternal King
Psalm 44:4; 98:6
Isaiah 44:6
Jeremiah 10:10
Jeremiah 46:18

Jesus Is the Eternal King
John 18:37
I Timothy 6:15
Revelation 17:14
Revelation 19:16

Jehovah Is the One We Serve
Matthew 4:10
Deuteronomy 6:13
Deuteronomy 11:13
Joshua 24:14-15

Jesus Is the One We Serve
John 12:26
I Corinthians 7:22
Colossians 3:24

Jehovah Is the Lord
Deuteronomy 6:4

Jesus Is the Lord
Luke 2:11
Acts 2:36; 9:5
I Corinthians 8:6

Jehovah Is the Rock
I Samuel 2:2
II Samuel 22:32

Jesus Is the Rock
I Corinthians 10:4

Lesson 54

The Godhead

Part 9

The Name of Jesus Christ

"Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Proverbs 30:4). The prophet asked for the *name* of the Father and of the Son. Can we give the answer from the Word of God?

We have shown in a former lesson that it was the deity, not the humanity, of Christ that made Him Lord; and by the same rule, it is easy to see that it was God, not man, that gave the Christ His name. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:9-10). As we cannot even imagine a name that could be higher than God's name, it stands to reason that God gave the Son His own name.

God has progressively revealed His name. Before Moses, God revealed his name as God Almighty (Exodus 6:3). Then God revealed His name Jehovah to Moses. This was God's primary name during the rest of the old covenant. Finally, the angel announced that Jesus is God's name for the new covenant age (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:31).

The Son of God made the following plain statement: "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43). And to bind this testimony, the writer of Hebrews declared that the Son obtained His excellent name *by inheritance* (Hebrews 1:4). Peter told the Jewish rulers, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

We have already given abundant testimony that Christ is both God and man. As God, He is the everlasting Father, and as man, He was a child born and a Son given (Isaiah 9:6). Of course, no one would deny that Jesus is the name of the Christ. John said, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" (I John 2:22). And in harmony with this wonderful truth that Christ is both God and man John added, "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." What could be plainer than that Christ is the Father incarnate? Moreover, John said, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (I John 2:23).

God told Moses that Jehovah (LORD) was His name forever (Exodus 3:15). This statement is fulfilled in a wonderful way in the name of Jesus, since the name Jesus means "Jehovah Savior." Matthew 1:21-23 demonstrates this point, teaching us that Mary's giving birth to a Son and calling His name Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14.

While we have answered the prophet's question in Proverbs 30:4, having made clear that the name of the Father and the Son is Jesus, we also wish to emphasize that the Scripture commands us to cast out demons, speak in new tongues, and pray for the sick in Jesus' highly exalted name (Mark 16:17-18). Moreover, we are to anoint the sick with oil in His name (James 5:14). In fact, Paul said, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17.) It is not surprising, then, that we are commanded to baptize in that name, as we shall see in our next lesson.

Lesson 55

The Godhead

Part 10

The Baptismal Formula

In taking up this phase of our subject, we are aware it is by no means the least important part to consider, for every follower of Jesus surely has the desire to be baptized in water. As to the mode, we are thankful that the Baptists and others recovered the truth that immersion is the scriptural mode of water baptism. In this lesson, we will focus on the scriptural formula that we should use, since it is closely associated with the subject of the Godhead now under consideration.

We will begin with our Lord's commission in Matthew, which He gave to His disciples after He rose from the dead and before they had received the Holy Ghost. We will consider the name mentioned in this verse: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19).

There have been differences of opinion as to how to carry out this commission. The most common teaching is that of the single immersionists who quote the latter part of this verse for their formula. Others think that in order to carry out the commission, they must bury their candidates three times in water, repeating the formula, "I baptize you in the name of the Father; I baptize you in the name of the Son; I baptize you in the name of the Holy Ghost." We should note that those who use a threefold formula do so on the authority of this single verse, as no other verses of Scripture harmonize with this interpretation. But if we can find only one verse of Scripture that seemingly supports a doctrine, we should reevaluate our interpretation of that verse, for Scripture interprets Scripture, and doctrinal truth is typically established by multiple witnesses in Scripture.

Notice that the word "name" in the above verse is in the *singular*, not in the plural. Since "name" is singular, there is but *one* name for Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Since there is but *one* name for the three, if we know the name of one, we know the name of all three. We know that Jesus is the name of the Son. (See Matthew 1:21.) Therefore, Jesus is also the name of the Father and the Holy Ghost. The Word clearly teaches that God, the Father of the Son, is the Holy Spirit, so in fulfilling the commission, we should baptize in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We know the apostles did, for the Book of Acts contains five instances where they baptized new believers in the name of Jesus. (See Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16.)

We all know that the name of the Son of God is not Son, because the angel said His name should be called Jesus (Matthew 1:21). Furthermore, if the name of the Son is not Son, then the name of the Father is not Father. The titles Father and Son are terms of relationship. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43), and that alone ought to settle the matter that the *name* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is *Jesus*. Almost any schoolboy would understand that his father's name is not Father. If this boy was commissioned to deposit some money in a bank or do some other business in his father's name, he would not use the term Father in fulfilling the commission, but he would use his father's *name*. Generally, if we knew this schoolboy's surname, we would also know his father's name, for the boy received his father's name by inheritance. Likewise, the Son of God obtained His excellent name *by inheritance* (Hebrews 1:4). We, therefore, conclude that when the disciples baptized in the name of Jesus, they fulfilled the commission given in Matthew 28:19, for the singular name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost is Jesus.

To those who say they would rather take the words of Jesus than the words of Peter, we should note the words of Jesus in John 17:20: "Neither pray I for these alone [the disciples], but for them

also which shall believe on me through their word." Jesus instructed us to believe on Him according to the words of the apostles.

Hebrews 8:5 reminds us of how God told Moses to make all things according to the pattern. The only pattern we have to follow concerning the mode and formula of water baptism is that of the early church, for we read in Jude 3 that we are to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The apostles delivered the faith to the saints.

Ephesians 2:20 states that the saints are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." The Lord decreed that the preaching of the apostles should be part of our foundation, and surely our Lord would not have provided a foundation on which we could not depend.

Let us also note Jesus' own words to His disciples: "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:20). So it was not really Peter's own words, but the Spirit speaking in him, on the Day of Pentecost.

In the earth today, we have different stages of the knowledge of truth as it emerged from the Dark Ages, when it was nearly extinguished. The only way to be certain of the truth is to go back before the Dark Ages and get the gospel directly from the apostles before it was ever distorted.

To those who say that Matthew stood for the words of Jesus against the rest of the apostles, we would remind them that on the Day of Pentecost, when "Peter [stood] up with the eleven" (Acts 2:14), Matthew was right there at Peter's side as Peter instructed the crowd to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. He did not contradict Peter's message, but on the contrary, he supported him by standing with him. No doubt he helped Peter and the other ten to baptize the three thousand converts. Matthew would have corrected Peter on the spot if Peter had been in error at this point. Some may consider it of little importance as to what we believe, but God is not pleased with His children believing something not supported by His Word. We are to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace . . . till we all come in the unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:3, 13). When we have come to the unity of the faith, we will believe the same thing, and our unscriptural preconceived ideas will be gone.

Lesson 56
Repentance

One of the most important doctrines in the Bible is repentance, and yet many times it is little understood and sometimes ignored entirely. However, it is impossible to obtain salvation without true biblical repentance. The reason why thousands of professed Christians have had no true change of heart and consequently know nothing of a holy life in Christ is that they have never experienced true biblical repentance.

When John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, came preaching in the wilderness, the burden of his message was a call to Israel to repent. And when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he told them not to come boasting of being Abraham's children but to bring forth proof that they had repented (Matthew 3:2-9). When Jesus began His ministry, after His experience in the wilderness with the devil, He also came preaching to Israel to repent, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matthew 4:17).

Commentators have given various explanations for repentance. One is that it is simply a change of mind, a decision to stop doing one thing and start doing another. Yes, it is all of that, but a change of mind is only part of Bible repentance. It is indeed a turning away from the old life, an about-face as it were. It is all of that and much more.

Sorrow for sin is another definition often given. Here again we must say that while every truly repentant sinner has experienced sorrow for sin, such a definition does not cover the subject. There was an elderly man who had a favorable attitude toward the gospel, but once in a while he would get drunk. He said one day that repentance meant to be sorry, and he added that every time he got drunk he was sorry. But his attitude was not true repentance. Yes, he needed to be sorry. But he felt sorrowful because, after he got drunk, his money was gone and he was very sick. II Corinthians 7:10 says: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." This man's sorrow proved to be a worldly sorrow, because as soon as he was over his sickness and had more money, he forgot his sorrow and would get drunk again. By contrast, godly sorrow works a repentance that results in salvation, and such an experience is never to be regretted. For who would repent of having received this wonderful salvation?

The message of repentance was first preached to Israel. Not only did John the Baptist and Jesus call Israel to repentance, but Peter did likewise in the first gospel message. When those whose hearts had been pricked by preaching asked him what they should do, he commanded them to repent (Acts 2:38). (See also Acts 3:19.)

Some preachers claim that while the Lord required Israel to repent in order to receive salvation, it is unnecessary for the Gentiles to repent in order to be saved. However, the Word of God is unmistakably plain on this subject. Let us look first at the commission Jesus gave to the apostles in Luke 24:47. Jesus told His disciples that repentance and remission of sins should be preached to *all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. This, of course, included the Gentiles.

Now let us notice carefully that after Peter had brought the gospel to the Gentiles, as recorded in Acts 10, he returned to Jerusalem, where the apostles and brethren contended with him for having gone into the homes of the Gentiles. Peter then gave them satisfying proof that God had really sent him. After hearing him, "they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

For further proof that God demanded repentance of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, preached on Mars' Hill: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). Paul told King Agrippa of his

experience. In the course of his testimony he said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Acts 26:19-20).

These verses of Scripture prove that there is no difference in the gospel to the Jew and to the Gentile. Both are commanded to repent. Perhaps some who teach that the gospel to the Gentiles did not require repentance do so because they wish to make Acts 2:38 apply to the Jews only. But it is equally impossible to prove that baptism in the name of Jesus was just for the Jews because Peter baptized the Gentiles in Jesus' name, as recorded in Acts 10:48. The Samaritans likewise were baptized in Jesus' name (Acts 8:16).

I Corinthians 15:1-4 says that the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. We are to follow Jesus' pattern in our conversion experience. The Scripture commands us to *obey the gospel*, or follow this pattern. II Thessalonians 1:8 warns that when the Lord comes again to this earth with His mighty angels He will take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." This furnishes us with a key that unlocks the true meaning of repentance. For if we *obey* the gospel (Romans 6:17), *we too* must die, be buried, and rise again! This leads us to believe that repentance is more than sorrow for sin and more than a change of mind. It is complete *death* to self (Romans 6:2)—an entire surrender of all personal desires.

Does this not explain why many who have been sorry for their past lives and have been baptized in Jesus' name have not received the promised Holy Ghost? If their repentance were *as deep* as God intended it should be, nothing could keep them from receiving the Holy Ghost! How often we have observed that when a candidate for the Holy Spirit died out to self and became completely surrendered to the will of God, he was then filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul clearly confirmed this teaching in Romans 6:5: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

In obeying the gospel and following the gospel pattern completely, we follow Jesus in His death by genuine repentance, we follow Him in His burial by water baptism in His name, and we follow his resurrection when we receive the Holy Ghost and rise to walk in a new life. (See Romans 8:11.)

Lesson 57

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

Of all the questions that were ever asked, this one stands out as one of the most important. (See Acts 16:30.) Knowing its importance, we ought to have an answer backed by divine authority. Yet a great variety of answers are given to this important question. Some have just enough scriptural support to deceive the people and give them a vain hope of eternal life.

One answer given today is this: "Join a church, read the Bible, pray, and attend services." Others say, "Just pray and read the Bible and do the best you can." Still others tell the inquirer, "Confess Christ, be baptized and take communion." Then someone will object to all this and say, "Those things are not necessary as they are all works. Salvation is a gift and therefore obtained by faith alone. Just believe that Jesus nailed all your past and future to the cross, and that is all there is to it." The poor sinner who has felt for years that he ought to make some preparation for eternity has found nothing better and so accepts this easy way. The next day he goes to work and tells his friends about the decision he has made. He tells them how his decision has eased his conscience to know that it is all settled, and he will no longer have to bother about it. He does not contact the Savior in any real way, and years later we find him the same old sinner. The question comes up about his soul's salvation, and his friends of more recent years are surprised to hear him say, "Why, I settled all that ten years ago. Sure I am a Christian; Jesus the Son of God settled that for me." Can anything be sadder than the deception into which this man has been led? And yet thousands of people claim to be Christians through this and other similar deceptions.

There was once a lady with a small babe in her arms traveling on a passenger train, going west over the mountains. That night the cold was severe, and a blizzard raged outside. The woman was very nervous and restless. A traveling man, noticing this, asked her what could be wrong. She told him she was supposed to get off at a certain little station and was afraid she might miss the place. The man, trying to relieve her fear, told her he was well acquainted with that road, having been over it many times, and he would see to it that she got off at the right place. Finally a station was called out and the train stopped. He said, "Lady, your stop is next." The train soon left that little station and sped on into the darkness. Shortly afterwards, it stopped again. The traveling man helped the lady off with her baby and baggage and soon the train moved on. Another station was called out. The traveling man listened closely and realized it was the very station where the woman wished to stop. He hurriedly went to the brakeman and told him what he had done. The brakeman informed him that the previous stop was made only because they had to fix the engine. In that awful, blinding snowstorm the train backed up to the place where the woman had got off. They traced her fast-disappearing footprints for just a few feet and found her, with the babe clutched tightly in her arms, frozen to death in a snowbank.

We scarcely need to make an application, for it is plain to see that the traveling man was out of order; he had given the wrong instructions. The company had a man employed on that train who knew just where the various stations were located, and it was his duty to give the instructions. Great is the number of people today who are taking it upon themselves to give orders as to how one may be sure of reaching heaven, but the result is bound to be the same kind of a tragedy. Many souls will be lost for all eternity because they followed the wrong instructions! A teacher has a place of great responsibility. James 3:1 says, "My brethren, be not many masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." Therefore, let us turn to the Word of God for the answer to this all-important question.

Acts 16:30-34. The authorities had cast Paul and Silas into jail, and at midnight as they sang praise unto God, there was a great earthquake. The keeper of the prison fell down before them

and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Some people read no further and say that all the disciples told them to do was to believe. But verse 32 says, "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord." No one ever was saved in the church age without the gospel, so in preaching the Word they must have explained the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. (See I Corinthians 15:1-4.) Since Paul knew the gospel to be just this, he surely told the jailer that in order to obey the gospel he too must *die* to self by repenting, *be buried* in His name in water baptism, and *be filled with resurrection life* (the Holy Ghost). These things must have been explained to the jailer, for "the same hour of the night . . . [he] was baptized," and he received an experience that caused him to rejoice.

Acts 2:37-38. In this chapter, Peter told the Jews they had by wicked hands crucified and slain Jesus, but the Lord had raised Him up. When they heard this, they were pricked in the heart and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." In other words, they would receive what Jesus died to give them.

Acts 8:26-40. Here, the angel of the Lord told Philip to go into the desert, where he met an Ethiopian eunuch riding in a chariot. The eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53 how Jesus was led as a sheep to the slaughter. He asked Philip if Isaiah was speaking of himself or of some other man. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (verses 35-37). Did Philip say, "Just believe and you will be saved"? No, he "preached unto him Jesus," and he did it in such a way that when they came to water, the eunuch himself asked if he might be baptized. In preaching Jesus, Philip must have told the eunuch about His death, burial and resurrection, and how this gospel could be obeyed in repentance, water baptism in Jesus' name, and receiving the Holy Ghost. While the text does not say that the eunuch was filled with the Spirit, if there was enough power to catch Philip away to another city, there was enough power there to fill the eunuch with the Holy Ghost! As with the jailer, the eunuch received an experience that caused him to rejoice.

Acts 9:1-18. Some teach that Paul was fully converted on the way to Damascus, but the Lord told him He would send a man to *tell him what he must do*! Later, he was then *baptized* and *filled with the Spirit.* (See also Acts 22:16).

Lesson 58
The Old Paths

The Lord has not left us to work out our own plan and ways but has had, from the beginning, a definite plan for our lives. As we look into the heavens and consider the work of His hands, beholding how He has placed the sun, moon, and stars in their proper orbits, none of them interfering with the other, we realize that God is a God of order. And as we search into His plan, we find that He not only has a special course and order for the heavens, but He also has paths planned for His people. As we consider the manner of His working, we are amazed at His marvelous precision.

When Moses was about to build the Tabernacle, the Lord admonished him: "See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Hebrews 8:5). If God was so particular about the building of the Tabernacle, it stands to reason that when He formed the church, which is the antitype of the Tabernacle, He would have designed a plan, after His own pleasure, for it. Yet it is puzzling that so many professed followers of the Lord are content to accept almost anything that appeals to the human mind, when such an important thing as eternal life is involved. But humans have ever had a weakness along that line. They are willing to depart so easily from the pattern God laid down.

God established the early church, under the apostles, as the perfect pattern for the entire church age. (See Acts 2:4, 38.) The departure from this pattern and from the faith once delivered to the saints did not come suddenly, but gradually. However, in the latter days of Jude, we find that this departure from the faith had already begun, and Jude saw the need of admonishing the saints to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to them (Jude 3-4). Certain sensual men who did not have the Spirit had unexpectedly crept into the church (Jude 19). Jude urged his followers to go back to the original pattern.

In our text for this lesson we read of Jehovah's call to the people to return to the "old paths": "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16). This same rest is promised in Isaiah 28:11-12, a prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost. There, this experience is called the "rest" and "refreshing." The call back to the "old paths" has the promise of rest for the soul.

Little by little, beautiful, God-honored truths were obscured and generally forgotten as Western civilization entered what we call the Dark Ages. When the Protestant movement came into existence in the sixteenth century, the Reformers restored some of the biblical doctrines that were mostly lost in the Dark Ages. As each leader recovered different aspects of the truth, the people made another step toward the faith that was once delivered to the saints. Each Reformer had a group of believers who supported him and were forced "outside the camp," bearing the reproach. But as time went on, they too started on the downward way as unspiritual people crept into leadership. As another leader came on the scene with added light, he and his followers were forced to the outside. Luther brought the message of justification by faith, but when light came on water baptism by immersion, it was not the followers of Luther who accepted this truth but an entirely new group of people. As we understand these history events, we see why there are so many religious denominations.

At the beginning of the twentieth century there seemed to be a great cry in Christendom to go back to the old paths, accompanied by prayer. The result was the great Pentecostal movement as it is known today. No one person can lay claim to having founded this movement, as it is God's own move in answer to the cry that went up from the hearts of people in many different denom-

inations and Christian groups. Without doubt, it is the greatest revival since the apostles' day. It began in 1901 and soon spread to all Christendom and to the untouched fields of the non-Christian world. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, just as it was received on the Day of Pentecost, became available to all who would open their hearts and receive from the Lord this glorious outpouring of His Spirit. The message is still going forth to the ends of the world. It has brought back to the people the "old paths," and millions have found "rest" for their souls. The Lord is preparing a people for the soon coming of Jesus.

In God's Word, we find not only a Jerusalem Pentecost, which was highly commendable in every way, but a Corinthian Pentecost as well. Paul pointed out many failures in the church at Corinth, and we can see many of these same failures in parts of the church today. He reproved the Corinthians for their carnality and the divisions among them. Likewise, preachers and teachers need to warn the saints and, of course, themselves to guard against these things today. Nevertheless Paul called the Corinthian believers the "church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints . . . waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 1:2, 7).

As Paul warned the early church to guard against false teachers, so God's people today must guard against anyone who would cause them to leave the "old paths" as taught by the apostles. Some ministers may forsake the truth today as the ministers in Asia forsook Paul, but God is testing and proving a ministry that will lead a people on to victory. As they purge themselves from dishonorable things, they will cause God's house to be filled with vessels of honor suited for the Master's use.

Surely this great ingathering is like the "net" in Matthew 13:47-50. When it was cast into the sea, it gathered every kind of fish. People holding every kind of doctrinal belief have come into this movement, and while they have received the Holy Ghost and have accepted divine healing, many of them have refused to give up their former teaching and have caused the formation of various groups of believers.

However, in the midst of all kinds of opposition and in the presence of all sorts of teachings, God has a people willing to return to the apostles' doctrine in the Book of Acts and the Epistles. God has brought many to the blessed truths of the fullness of the Godhead in Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:9) and of water baptism in His name (Acts 2:38), which truly belong to the "old paths," the faith once delivered to the saints.

Lesson 59
Their Own Company

"And being let go, they went to their own company" (Acts 4:23). This verse of Scripture refers to the disciples of the Lord. After the Jewish authorities had threatened and mistreated them, they gathered with the saints and had such a prayer meeting that the house where they met was shaken. In this lesson, we wish to draw a mental picture of what could easily happen today if the two most outstanding apostles, Paul and Peter, were raised from the dead and came back to earth in search of their own company!

Let us follow these apostles as they find themselves on the street of a modern city. They inquire about the location of the nearest place of worship and are directed to the Roman Catholic Church. As they watch with curiosity the ceremonies and ritual of the priest and his helpers, they fail to associate anything they see there with the worship of the saints in the early church. They soon decide that they must look for some other gathering if they are to find their "own company."

The next people they approach direct them to the Lutheran Church, and soon they are listening to a sophisticated man preaching on the wonderful theme of justification by faith, from the text "The just shall live by faith" (Galatians 3:11). The apostles enjoy the message very much until the minister changes his subject and takes occasion to preach against immersion as the proper mode of water baptism. It seems he has been quite disturbed by a Baptist revival going on in the city, where some of his flock were baptized by immersion. Peter and Paul are convinced that they have not yet found their "own company," since Peter remembers well that when Jesus was baptized, He came up straightway out of the water (Matthew 3:16), and Paul taught that baptism was a burial with Christ (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).

The apostles now hasten out and follow every clue given them until they arrive at the scene of a great Baptist revival. They are very impressed as the speaker gives clear, scriptural teaching on water baptism by immersion, using John 3:23 for a text, where John baptized in Aenon because there was *much water* there. He also relates how both Philip and the eunuch went *down into* the water, and after Philip baptized him they came up *out of* the water (Acts 8:38-39).

But the Baptist minister has been having his troubles too, for it seems that the Holiness people are in town and are convincing some of the Baptists that God commands His people to live holy lives. So the speaker, in no uncertain terms, condemns the teaching of holiness, declaring that there is "none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). Taking these words out of context, he applies them to the children of God, instead of unsaved Jews and Gentiles, attempting to prove that there is not a single righteous Christian. Paul looks at Peter and Peter looks at Paul. Peter says, "I declared by the word of the Lord, 'Be ye holy; for I am holy.'" (See I Peter 1:16.) Paul said, "I taught the saints to 'follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord.'" (See Hebrews 12:14.)

Again they realize they have not found their own company, so they go out in search of the Holiness believers. Upon entering their church, they hear a fine message on the necessity of being holy. Here they begin to feel quite at home until the speaker spoils the message for them by a sudden outburst of harsh and cruel words directed at a group of people he calls "the tongues folks." With a great tirade of words he condemns, in general, not only the people who speak in tongues but the doctrine of tongues itself. Again Paul looks at Peter and Peter looks at Paul. Peter declares, "It is plain we still have not found the people we are trying to locate, for it was by the witness of other tongues that I, with the rest of the 120, received the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, and I remember well how speaking in tongues convinced us that Cornelius and his house had received the Holy Ghost." (See Acts 2:4; 10:44, 46.) Paul answers, "Yes, and in one of my letters

to the Corinthian church I told them plainly that I spoke in tongues more than all of them." (See I Corinthians 14:18.)

Not far down the street they enter a large hall crowded with happy, shouting people who seem to enjoy God's presence as they praise the Lord in song and in testimony. Surely at last we have found our own people, think the apostles. Finding a seat near the door, they settle down to enjoy the fellowship that they feel is surely there for them. The minister's searching eye soon catches sight of them and something about their bearing causes him much concern. He watches them carefully as their old sainted faces shine with the glory of God. Not recognizing them as anyone of his acquaintance, he concludes they must be some of those Jesus Name preachers.

The evangelist delivers a great sermon on the present outpouring of the Holy Ghost, declaring it to be the fulfillment of the prophet Joel's prophecy concerning the outpouring of God's Spirit (Joel 2:28). He concludes by showing that speaking in other tongues is, as it was in Bible days, the evidence of having received this experience. Before calling the people to prayer, he cannot resist the temptation to warn his hearers to beware of those false teachers who claim a revelation that Jesus is God and that all believers should be baptized in Jesus' name. He lets the congregation know, in no uncertain terms, how little he thinks of anyone who would consent to water baptism in Jesus' name.

Again Paul looks at Peter and Peter looks at Paul. Peter says, ''I commanded the people to be baptized in Jesus' name in the first gospel message to the Jews, and later I gave the same teaching to the Gentiles." (See Acts 2:38; 10:48.) Paul said, "I also taught baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus." (See Acts 19:5.) "Let us go and try to find these people who are still preaching the same message we taught so long ago." And once again they go out in search of their "own company."

It would be a very sad affair, indeed, if Peter and Paul could not find a single group of people in all the Pentecostal movement where they could preach the same old gospel message they preached in Bible days. But there is such a people!

Let us take note that the apostles will be coming back and will be looking for their "own company," for the dead in Christ (and they are in that company of people) will rise first; and with their "own company," they will be caught up together in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Lesson 60
Doctrine

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:1-3).

The Lord said that His doctrine is like rain, dew, or showers upon the tender herb and the grass, and *it comes by publishing the name of the Lord and ascribing greatness to our God*. How different is the Scripture's attitude toward doctrine, compared to that of some professed people of God, whom we have heard declare they did not want to hear doctrine preached. They have said this, of course, through ignorance, for doctrine to the gospel of Jesus Christ is like bone structure to the human body. There are a lot of jellyfish in the ocean water. They are boneless, and consequently they float with the tide. This is a good illustration of religion without doctrine; people who are not willing to listen to doctrine are never established in anything. But true religion must have doctrine, for doctrine is teaching. If we teach salvation by the blood, we are teaching doctrine. The truths concerning the baptism of the Spirit and healing for the body are both doctrines. What most people mean when they say that they do not wish to hear doctrine is that they do not want to hear any doctrine but their own.

It is possible for a teacher to come without any doctrine of his own, as our blessed Lord did. He said, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16). He spent His entire ministry laying a foundation of the true doctrine of God. And yet he said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:12-13). As we study His ministry, we find that His disciples initially understood little of His doctrines and even failed to grasp the doctrine of his death, burial, and resurrection. But he gave them the promise that when they received the Comforter, the Spirit of truth would guide them into all truth, that is, the true doctrine.

After God gave the disciples the Holy Spirit, they received the full revelation of the truth, and then they delivered it to the saints. The revealed truth that they taught was called the "apostles' doctrine": "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). This doctrine was *the faith* that was delivered unto the saints, for which Jude some thirty-three years later exhorted them to earnestly contend for (Jude 3). Some say that it does not make much difference what a person believes, but Jude was not the only apostle who urged the saints to hold on to the doctrine that had been revealed.

Paul did not merely get his doctrine from the apostles before him, but Jesus Christ revealed it to him: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). When Paul compared the doctrine he had received by revelation to the apostles' doctrine, he found that they harmonized. Thus the greatest of the apostles, Paul, confirmed the other apostles' doctrine that was received by revelation of the Spirit.

On his last trip to Jerusalem, Paul stopped at Miletus and sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus. When they arrived, he gave them a last charge to care for the church of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. He told them that he had declared to them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:17, 27-28). Later, he told Timothy to admonish the church at Ephesus that they teach no other doctrine (I Timothy 1:3).

Acts 19:1-6 contains the doctrine that the apostles taught. Paul, finding certain disciples at

Ephesus, asked them, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (Acts 19:2-6).

Paul also wrote to the same Ephesian church, "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:14). This verse of Scripture has been used against some who have received light on truth and have turned from some Dark Ages doctrine. But this verse properly applied to those who were departing from the true doctrine they had received from Paul, who taught them the "whole counsel of God." As we have just seen, they had been baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost.

Paul told Timothy to concentrate on doctrine (I Timothy 4:13-16). He told him that all Scripture was profitable for doctrine (II Timothy 3:16). His last charge to Timothy in II Timothy 4:1-5 also emphasizes doctrine. Paul further said that one of the qualifications of a bishop is that he hold fast "the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus l:9).

Paul told the people they were delivered by obeying from the heart the doctrine (Romans 6:17). Romans 6:3-5 declares that the doctrine that brought deliverance was being buried with Christ by baptism, being planted in the likeness of His death, and rising to walk in the likeness of His resurrection, in a new life.

Yes, if we were without doctrine we would be like the jellyfish. It is good in these days to know that, while the writers of the New Testament were not able to receive the full doctrine while Jesus was with them, He revealed it to them by the Holy Ghost. They have recorded it in the revealed Word, particularly the Book of Acts and the Epistles.

Questions on Lessons 51–60

Lesson 51

1. Does the wisdom we get from Christ come from His deity or His humanity?
2. With what did Jesus ask to be glorified?
3. How did Christ preexist?
4. In what manner did God send His Son into the world as mentioned in the lesson?
5. If the Son's humanity is divine, then what would be absurd about the statement that the angel made in Luke 1:35?

Lesson 52

1. Read section 4 and answer this question: How many can we identify in an undivided substance?
2. Section 25 says, "None is before or after another." How does this contradict section 22?
3. Section 25 also says, "None is greater or less than another." What verse of Scripture does this contradict?
4. Where does such teaching belong?
5. How can we rid ourselves of such teaching?

Lesson 53

Write out five things in which Jehovah and Jesus are the same and give a Scripture reference for each one.

Lesson 54

1. Where could the Lord get a name that is higher than any name?
2. Give three of God's names as taught in the lesson.
3. How did the writer of Hebrews say the Son got His excellent name?
4. What prophecy was given declaring that the Christ would be both Father and Son?
5. The name Jesus means Jehovah Savior. What prophecy concerning the Son of God shows this to be so?

Lesson 55

1. What singular word in the commission given in Matthew 28:19 gives evidence that the apostles were right to baptize in Jesus' name?
2. Where is the name of Jesus first mentioned? Who announced it?
3. What verse of Scripture can we use to show that the name of the Father?
4. To those who want to take only the words of Jesus' as authority and not the words of the apostles, what Scripture passage could we advise them to read to show that Jesus endorsed the apostles?
5. What did Matthew do on the Day of Pentecost that shows he supported baptism in Jesus' name?

Lesson 56

1. Who was first to preach repentance as recorded in the New Testament? What did he say about it?
2. What is genuine repentance?
3. What did Peter say about repentance?
4. When Jesus gave the commission according to Luke, to whom did He say repentance should be preached?
5. After Peter had brought the gospel to the Gentiles and had convinced the other apostles he

was in God's will in doing so, what did the apostles say repentance had brought the Gentiles?

Lesson 57

1. If someone inquires as to how to be saved, what should we tell him to do? Give verses of Scripture.
2. The traveling man who gave erroneous instructions to the woman is like what kind of religious person?
3. What did Paul tell the jailer and his household?
4. What did Peter preach to the Jews in Acts 2 that caused them to be pricked in the heart?

Lesson 58

1. How did the professed church come to depart so far from the pattern?
2. What did God promise to those who would walk in the old paths?
3. What other prophecy has a like promise?
4. What truth did Luther restore to the people?
5. Who can be proclaimed as starting the Pentecostal movement?

Lesson 59

1. In the story, how did Paul and Peter know they had not found their own company while in the Baptist church?
2. What was one of the texts the Baptist minister used to prove that baptism is by immersion?
3. What verse of Scripture did Peter use to support his teaching of holiness?
4. What verse of Scripture did Paul use to support speaking in tongues?
5. What caused Paul and Peter to be turned away from the trinitarian assembly?

Lesson 60

1. What is the doctrine of the Bible like in the human body?
2. Whose doctrine did Jesus bring?
3. After Pentecost, in what doctrine did the believers continue?
4. Where did Paul get his gospel?
5. What admonition did Paul give Timothy?

Lesson 61
Christian Conduct

In summing up the conduct of the Christian, Paul said, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (I Corinthians 10:31-33).

Ephesians 5:1-21 gives a wonderful insight into Christian living. We would not think of having any part in the immorality mentioned in verses 3-5, but verse 4 says that filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting ("coarse jesting" in NKJV) are not beneficial and should be replaced by the giving of thanks. We can easily understand why, since these things are so out of harmony with a soul that is burdened for a lost world. To pray for hours and then to indulge in coarse, vulgar conversation is inconsistent. It detracts from our spiritual life in much the same way that loose motion hinders the work of machinery.

Sometimes we wonder why we do not see more results from our prayers. But Ephesians 5 classifies these things, which are so often counted innocent, right in with gross sins: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (verses 6-8). It also gives us a positive exhortation in verses 16-19, telling us to be filled with the Spirit and to speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.

We do not have to put up with a long-faced religion without a thing to cheer us. This was the plight of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. (See Luke 24:17.) The Word tells us, "The joy of the LORD is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). Peter said that as believers we have "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8). We do not need to go to the world for amusement, "for our conversation is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20). That is, we are citizens of heaven, and our lives belong to God, for He has bought us, and we are not our own (I Corinthians 6:19-20). Therefore, our conversation should be ordered of the Lord.

It is important that we keep our hearts free from condemnation. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:21-22). If our prayers are not effective and we wonder why, we may find the solution right here. It may be that we are living so far from God that our hearts do not condemn us for things that the Word of God plainly tells us are not beneficial for us to do. If we are in that condition, let us seek the face of the Lord and not be satisfied until we feel condemnation in our own hearts for things in our lives that the Word of God tells us ought not to be there. It is not that God would rob us of innocent pleasure, but we must watch lest we rob ourselves of the Spirit of God by not allowing ourselves to be condemned for wrongdoing. Let us be rigid in judging ourselves regarding our personal lives, diligently striving to rid our hearts of things forbidden by the Word, which we have heretofore allowed to be our lives.

As workers together with God, we are no longer to live for ourselves; instead, we are to search for the greater things in God. We should be glad to pay any price to experience more of His power and presence in our lives. We have Christ in us if we are filled with the Spirit, and in Him are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge* (Colossians 2:3). It is up to us to search for these treasures as we would for gems that we know are hidden in a treasure house. Such wisdom is not of this world, nor of the prince of this world, but it is the hidden wisdom that God ordained for our glory. And this knowledge is not what is known by the spirit of a human, but that which is

freely given us of God. The Spirit reveals this hidden wisdom and knowledge. (See I Corinthians 2:6-12.) Shall we allow a desire to be amused with the coarse, foolish jesting of the world to rob us of the treasures found in Christ?

"But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26). This "Jerusalem which is above" is the church, our spiritual mother. We as individuals who make up the church are to travail in the Spirit if we are to bring forth newborn children. How can a Christian have strength to travail unless he eats the kind of food that will make him spiritually strong? If we allow frivolity to dominate our lives, we will be weak in our battle against the forces of darkness. Is it any wonder why more people do not receive the baptism, and why some who do are such weak children? Isaiah 66:8 says, "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Is this the cry of our hearts today? Are we yearning to see every believer filled with the Spirit? Let us then take heed lest things that are "not convenient" sap our strength. We shall be wise if we remember that it is "the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (Song of Solomon 2:15).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Peter 2:11). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

"The tongue can no man tame" (James 3:8), but the Lord can, if He has first place in our lives.

Lesson 62
Unity of the Spirit

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace . . . till we all come in the unity of the faith" (Ephesians 4:3, 13). Ephesians 4 is often called the unity or oneness chapter. It not only teaches that we should hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, but it also teaches that there is only one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all.

The Holy Spirit guided Paul in writing these things for the church, and these words are especially relevant for us today, who live in the end time. Today, some teach that there is more than one body, more than one Spirit, more than one faith, more than one baptism, and even more than one Lord and more than one God. We are glad for these clear statements that say that there is but one body (the church, Colossians 1:24) and one faith for that body.

This one faith is the truth. Paul said that there is but one teaching or doctrine to believe. In the face of so many different doctrines today, it is undeniable that there is a great deal of false teaching in Christianity. While it is impossible for all Christians to believe exactly the same on every matter, they should have a heart full of love for all of God's people. They can hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, while waiting for God to bring everyone to one faith. We can manifest a right spirit and attitude toward all clean-living Christian brethren.

The restoring of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) has been a slow but gradual process. As each ray of light has been revealed and embraced, it has always been pushed aside by the majority. The people who have accepted the revealed truth have had to go outside the established camp. The one who claims the truth should be the one who shows the most longsuffering, especially toward those whom he considers to be in need of the truth that he possesses. It is far more convincing to show that we are of God by the fruit of the Spirit than by any argument to prove our doctrinal point.

In these days there is certainly a need to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace until we come into the unity of the faith. The purpose of this lesson is to stress that the Word of God recognizes only one faith; nevertheless, we are to hold a proper attitude in our life and conduct toward all Christians, while we wait for all to accept that one faith. In the early church when all believed the one faith that had been delivered to them, they were all of one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32). They had unity of faith as well as unity of the Spirit. This is what we can call "Jerusalem Pentecost." Where this unity prevailed, there was great power to witness for Jesus, and wonderful results followed. But we also find a "Corinthian Pentecost" where the saints were divided. If two groups have the same faith, and yet are divided, it must be carnality that keeps them apart (I Corinthians 3:4).

It is unnecessary for God's people to believe every point exactly alike before they can have fellowship in the Spirit, when circumstances of various kinds may bring them together. It has been proven over a period of years that brethren working in different churches can have fine and lasting fellowship, even though they may differ to some extent in what they believe. The secret is that they all walked in the Spirit.

The Spirit of God brings unity. A harsh, bitter attitude toward someone of another church is carnal and will not serve to win that person to the truth. Such a spirit is often manifested in those who are walking not after the Spirit but after the flesh. If a believer from another church visits one of our assemblies, we need to remember we did not always possess the truths we now count as precious. Someone had to love us in spite of our lack of knowledge and had to manifest a unity of the Spirit, with much patience, in order for us to receive the enlightenment we now enjoy. God

has permitted some of us to see a large number of ministers from other faiths won to the original doctrine of the apostles, but these things did not come by mere accident. They came because people held to the principle set forth in this lesson.

In fact, all that we need to bring unity at any time or place is for those concerned to live by the Golden Rule. (See Matthew 7:12.) How would we like another Christian to act toward us if we were in his place? Then we should act that way toward him. We cannot force another believer to walk by that rule just because we know he should, but we can walk that way ourselves. It might seem at times that we receive the worst end of the deal, but those who walk after God's way are the winners every time, even though the natural eye cannot see it.

It looked as though the mob had won when they took the dead Christ down from the cross, but Psalm 2:1-6 prophesied that the heathen would rage against Christ, and yet He would still reign as king on Mount Zion. It looked as though the Jewish authorities had won when they had Stephen stoned and the disciples had to carry him away for burial. They had silenced a voice that told them the truth about their Temple, but in the end they could not preserve their Temple. They stopped his voice, but the truth he preached went marching on. Stephen won!

It may look as though we are the loser when, because we take God's way, someone hurts us. But let us take courage and have mercy and pity on our opponent, for Jesus and Stephen forgave their enemies. God is calling for a people who will have a humble attitude regardless of what others may do.

However, there is a class of people with whom the Lord forbids us to have fellowship: *those who cause division*. We should not have fellowship with this class, even though they may see eye to eye with us in our doctrine. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

If we fully obey God's Word, we are forced to mark them and have no fellowship with them. The Word tells us to *avoid* them, whether they seem to prosper or not. We must remember that the end is not yet. Asaph was perplexed by the prosperity of the wicked *until* he went into the sanctuary, and *then he saw their end* (Psalm 73:2-17). It may seem hard to understand how some have undermined and used deceit and yet seem to prosper, but let us avoid them as the Word says, and someday we shall see their end.

Lesson 63
Holiness

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). The doctrine of holiness has been opposed from the time of the Wesleys until this present time by large bodies of professed Christians. Yet it is clearly inconsistent to teach that a person who is saved by the grace of God will continue to live in sin. (See Titus 2:11-12.)

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS [Jehovah Savior]: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). The angel, in announcing the birth of the Son of God, said that His very name reveals the purpose of His coming—to save us *from* our sins, not *in* our sins.

Peter said, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16). Peter was writing to *saints*, people who were born of God. If they were born of God, then they were children of God. This passage of Scripture gives the reason why the children of God should be holy: because God is holy. If God, our Father, is holy, should not the children born of Him be holy?

When we were born of the flesh, we were children of wrath; that is, we were sinners by nature. Then when we are born of God, we should be holy, for our new birth is by the incorruptible seed (I Peter 1:23). We are "an holy nation" (I Peter 2:9). As children of God, we are a nation of holy people in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we are to shine as lights in the world (Philippians 2:15). We are now children of God, and, furthermore, we will be like Jesus when He appears. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:3).

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8). God was manifested in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16) that He might produce a holy people.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

A verse of Scripture has perplexed many: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:9). If this verse meant that it is impossible for a born-again person ever to commit sin, then it would not be in harmony with many Scripture passages that teach the opposite. Instead, it means that Christians will not continue to live in sin. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not [that is, he does not live in sin or habitually practice sin]; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (I John 5:18). I John 3:9 and I John 5:18 are both in the same letter on the same subject, so we should understand them in the same way. This interpretation is in perfect harmony with such passages as Romans 6:11-12: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

In summary, Christ in us gives us the victory, for our righteousness is not in our own works, but He is our righteousness. In the same manner we can say He is the seed that is our holiness, and we are not to continue in sin, for that would prove that we have not been born of God but are of the devil. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1). Seeing that God has

provided a way back for His children who fail Him, we conclude that our victorious life depends on our walking in the light.

Opponents of this holiness teaching commonly refer to Old Testament verses to refute this position. "For there is no man that sinneth not" (I Kings 8:46). "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). In context, those verses are, of course, true, but we are not preaching salvation from sin back in the days of the kings; we are preaching holiness through Jesus Christ.

Then they use New Testament passages such as Romans 3:10: "There is none righteous, no, not one." This passage is a quotation from the Old Testament, and it describes the human race in the unregenerate state. Verse 19 says, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Verse 23 adds, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But did Paul leave people in that state? No, he preached Jesus, who came to save them from their sins!

The reason many people oppose holiness teaching is that they have little if any communion or fellowship with our holy God. As soon as a person comes into fellowship with God through the baptism of the Holy Ghost according to Acts 2:4, he will become a holy person. The very grace of God received in the baptism of the Holy Ghost teaches us that we should live holy lives in this present world. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).

By the blood of the Son of God, we have entrance into the presence of a holy God. If we abide in Him, we will walk as He walked (I John 2:6). God has provided the power for such a holy walk in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 1:8.)

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:6-7).

Lesson 64
Worship

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

There is in the nature of the human heart a desire to worship something. God has planted this desire in everyone's heart, for He seeks worship from the human beings He has created. It is almost incomprehensible that seemingly intelligent people will bow down and worship idols made by the hands of humans—idols that cannot speak, that cannot hear, that cannot see. But even today, in light of the blessed knowledge anyone may get, by investigating the Word of God, thousands bow their knees to idols in our own countries.

Abraham was one of the earliest Bible characters who diligently worshiped the one true God. Concerning God's call to him, a legend says that Abram's people were fire worshipers. They wanted Abram to worship fire, but he did not want a god that could be quenched by water. Then they told him to worship the water, but he saw that the sun had power over the water, so he did not want to worship the water. Then he was told to worship the sun. While the sun seemed to be the highest and greatest of all created things, yet part of the time, at least, it lacked power to light the world. So Abram decided to worship the unseen Creator of the sun, and God accepted his worship.

We do not know how much truth is in this legend, but we know that God called Abram from among his idol-worshiping people and asked him to go to a land that He would show him. After Abram reached the land of Canaan, he built an altar to the Lord (Genesis 12:7). He pleased God by the faith he manifested and so received the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Abram passed his faith on to his son, Isaac, and on to his grandson, Jacob. Then it was delivered to the twelve patriarchs, who were the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. God called these Israelites to be His own chosen people; He gave them the law and demanded worship from them. He told them, "Thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (Exodus 34:14). "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10). But in the very face of this clear command from Jehovah, they continually turned away from the Lord and worshiped idols. It seems impossible that they would turn to idols after the Lord had worked so many miracles for them. He led them out of Egypt with a mighty hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

Today, God still seeks people who will worship Him, and Him alone, in spirit and in truth. The church is composed of such people. Paul said, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3). Before receiving the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit, our worship was very limited. In fact, our worship is now so different from the old customs that we have become an astonishment and a wonder to those outside the movement. Our praise to God is beyond natural understanding. There is something about this kind of worship that stirs the devil and brings censure and ridicule. The persecutors get stirred against the people of God, but God's children just go on enjoying the presence of the Lord beyond anything they could even ask or think. It is only by worshiping God in the Spirit that we can experience such a heavenly place in the Lord.

It was this supernatural praise and worship that burst forth from the 120, after their upper room experience, that brought the multitudes together on the Day of Pentecost. It was also the cause of the marvelous and effective sermon that Peter preached. When the multitudes saw and

heard what was going on, they asked, "What meaneth this?" Peter was merely answering this question as he preached his powerful gospel message. This was indeed a different order of worship than they had ever seen before, and Peter, anointed by the Spirit, explained to them these "strange" happenings.

And so it is in these last days during the outpouring of the Spirit. The praise and worship in the Spirit has brought the multitudes together. The curious crowd hears that the power is falling, and they come to see what it is all about. Some mockingly say this or that, but there are always some who are honest enough to inquire, as did those Jews, "What meaneth this?" Many stay and pray, and soon they become part of this Spirit-filled crowd.

The beauty of this worship in the Spirit is that it is not confined to any one place, but we can have the praise of God continually in our mouths (Hebrews 13:15). We are taught, "Rejoice evermore. . . . In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thessalonians 5:16, 18). "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father" (Ephesians 5:20).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:4-6). The reason we can rejoice at all times is that our rejoicing is in the Lord and not in our circumstances.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men" (I Timothy 2:1). Many of us have learned the secret that worshiping and giving thanks to God with our requests have brought results, when victory could be gained no other way.

The worship of God among restored Israel is pictured prophetically by Jeremiah: "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them to rejoice from their sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:12-13).

If some wonder why dancing in the Spirit has appeared among Spirit-filled people today, perhaps the above passage of Scripture will help them to see that it is not some strange, unheard-of thing, but it was prophesied many years ago. In I Chronicles 15:12-29, David danced before the restored ark, which represented the presence of God, even as the Holy Spirit does today.

Lesson 65
The Cross

"Christ sent me . . . to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Corinthians 1:17-18).

The preaching of the cross is foolishness to a certain class of people; and how sad, for it is those who perish who consider it foolishness. In the day in which we live, we must face the appalling fact that thousands of professed Christians have no knowledge of the saving power found in the cross of Christ. The blind leaders they follow have taught them to trust in their good deeds. To them the death of Jesus is no more than the death of a prophet or of one of the apostles.

But the question is often asked, "Don't you think if they have professed Christ and are sincere in what they believe that they will be saved anyway, since they just don't understand?" No, for Paul said, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost" (II Corinthians 4:3). It is impossible for any person to be saved except by the cross; but Paul said it is foolishness to those who perish. Why? Because people want to glory in their own works, so they attempt to make a way of salvation of their own. They present their good deeds to God, trusting in their flesh. But these are the "things that are," which God brings to nothing, so "that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Corinthians 1:28-29). This is why "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (I Corinthians 1:26). The wise, the mighty, and the noble want to have glory in themselves, and, therefore, they are forever barred from the presence of the Lord.

If a person, by a certain sum of money or by a certain standing in society or by a certain level of education, could obtain a place in the presence of God, the road would be crowded with those seeking that place. But if it could be obtained in that fashion, then not every soul would have access into the presence of God.

But God's salvation is within the reach of "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17). It is by faith in the blood of His cross that our warfare ceases and we have peace with God. We are justified by His blood: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" (Colossians 1:20). He tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9), and we judge that if He died for all, then all were dead (II Corinthians 5:14). If all are dead, then all must come by the way of the Cross. Yes, this way is open to all—the poor and the rich, the wise and the unwise. All may come. The high must come down in humility, while He lifts up the low so that all may come in together. God's way is hard on the natural man, who is a lover of self. But he must come by the way of the Cross, or else he will find himself cast in the lake of fire with the worst of criminals.

Paul taught that believers are crucified with Christ, that is, Jesus took every one of us who believe to the cross with Him, "that the body [or power] of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6). This work has been accomplished for us in the Cross of Christ.

Jesus also spoke of a cross that his disciples would have to bear. When He spoke of this cross, we wonder just how much they understood. They knew that the cross was an instrument of punishment, but they knew little of the cross in the sense of which He spoke. Even His closest disciples could not understand or believe His preaching when He spoke to them of His death on the cross. (See Mark 8:31-33.) But this, like most of the teachings of Jesus, they understood after the Holy Spirit filled them. If they did not understand the teaching of the cross concerning His literal death, no doubt they did not fully understand when He told them, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life

shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:23-24).

The cross that we must take up daily is the crucifying of the self-life. Jesus said that if we would save our lives, we must lose them. There is no other way for us to take but the way of the cross. A follower of Jesus will never get far with the Lord and will never enter into the secrets of His treasures until he becomes familiar with the way of the cross. We cannot retain our own self-life and at the same time have His life.

Jesus said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:25-26). Clearly, suffering must precede glory.

Many have been attracted to some person who has seemingly found the secret to glory outside of the cross. They desire to reach the same settled place in the blessing and glory of God, but little do they realize the death process this saint went through in order to reach that place. Many think this place of blessedness comes by just the first surrender one makes when he is filled with the Spirit, but this is only the initial step of our consecration to God. If a person has been led to believe that because he has the baptism he has it all, he is doomed to disappointment. It is true that all we need is in the Holy Ghost, but a Spirit-filled life must be one of continual surrender to the will of God. If a child of God finds himself short of the glory he hoped would fill his life, he had better check to see where he has drawn back from the cross. For if he does not discover it and repent, he may make shipwreck of his faith and become a castaway.

No doubt every Christian would like to take the trip Paul took to the third heaven, but how many are willing to take the cross he took? (See II Corinthians 11:23-28.) Paul said, "I Paul . . . rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Colossians 1:23-24). And in Galatians 6:14 he wrote, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

John and James did not have the cross in mind when they asked Jesus for the first places, one on His right and one on His left, in His kingdom. Jesus advised them that there was a "cup" to drink and a baptism to be "baptized" with before they could enter into that place. He asked them if they were able to partake of them, and they said they were. He knew the hearts in those two blessed young men, and said, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with" (Matthew 20:23). Those who take up the cross have this promise: "But the God of all grace . . . after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:10).

Lesson 66
Immortality

The word "immortality" appears only five times in the Bible: II Timothy 1:10; I Corinthians 15:53-54; Romans 2:7; I Timothy 6:15-16. The word "immortal" occurs once: I Timothy 1:17.

As we examine these six passages of Scripture, we find that not one of them refers to the souls of mortal human beings. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Timothy 1:10). The gospel brought immortality to light. This verse of Scripture clearly shows that mortal human beings, before the gospel, do not possess true spiritual immortality, for if they had, they surely would have known it.

Romans 2:7 states, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." Here we have the promise of eternal life if we seek for immortality. Surely one would not have to seek for something he already had.

"This mortal must put on immortality. So when this . . . mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Corinthians 15:53-54). This verse refers to the change, in the twinkling of an eye, when the Lord will transform our mortal bodies into immortal bodies at His coming. Philippians 3:20-21 confirms this. At the appearing of Jesus, He shall change our vile body, and it shall be fashioned like His glorious body. From this we know that He, the precious Son of God, once had a mortal body but now has an immortal body.

In connection with Christ's appearing, I Timothy 6:15-17 says, "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting." "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (I Timothy 1:17).

Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, was made of a woman (Galatians 4:4). As a mortal man He died, but God raised Him up in power (I Corinthians 15:43), thus He became the firstfruits of those who have slept (died) (I Corinthians 15:20). And, therefore, He was the beginning of the new creation of God (Revelation 3:14), the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18). I Timothy 6:15-17 speaks of Him as the King, the only immortal One, who now dwells in the light and is invisible to us. Revelation 17:14 says that it is the Lamb who is King of kings, so we understand that the immortal Jesus in His glorified humanity is the King eternal, and in His deity He is the invisible, only wise God. The disciples saw Him after His flesh was made immortal, so mortal eye can see immortality, but no mortal has seen or can see God outside the Incarnation.

Lesson 67

Neglecting So Great Salvation

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Hebrews 2:1-4).

While this passage of Scripture has been used successfully in making an appeal to the unsaved to seek salvation, it is actually addressed to those who are already saved. Let us notice the setting of this appeal. The previous chapter shows the superior place that the Son of God holds over the angels. Then the Scripture logically asks, if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every time their word was transgressed it brought judgment, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" (Hebrews 2:3).

Let us consider how our Pentecostal message is in harmony with this setting. Jesus spoke and taught of this salvation, but He could not give it before the Cross, for He purchased our salvation with His own blood at Calvary. Before the Atonement, He could only speak about it; but after the testament came in force, God confirmed His words to us by those who heard Him; and we have seen this Word confirmed with signs and wonders.

Just think how much greater their testimony is compared to the word that was spoken by angels, and yet *God stood behind the word of angels*! Therefore, will not God judge every transgression and disobedience that has to do with neglecting the salvation He has given us? How many coming to the knowledge of this great salvation will be able to escape if they neglect it?

Jesus gave His apostles the power to loose and to bind as they preached the gospel (Matthew 16:19; John 20:23). Paul confirmed this in II Corinthians 2:15-16. This power to bind refers to those who refuse to accept the message the apostles preached; but our text warns us, who possess this great salvation, that if we neglect it, we shall not escape the "just recompence of reward."

We all know the folly of neglect. The old saying "A stitch in time saves nine" is true. If one neglects prayer, neglects to testify, neglects to read the Bible, and neglects to assemble with the saints, he breaks down his power to resist evil. Then when temptation comes, he has no grace, no power, and no faith to overcome, and he ultimately will turn away from God. On he goes on the downward road at a breakneck speed, grasping for almost anything to drown the voice of conscience. No, he did not intend to go so far, but just a little neglect started him on his downward path.

Lesson 68
Paul the Debtor

"I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Romans 1:14). Paul admitted that he was in debt; he had something to pay. It is a honorable thing to acknowledge a debt, even if the person is unable to pay it back. Sometimes people borrow money from a friend, but when they are unable to pay it back, they begin avoiding their creditor instead of admitting they are still in debt. Thus they become an enemy of one who befriended them.

What was the debt Paul owed to the unsaved world? It was a debt for the price that was paid for his redemption from sin. It was not Paul alone who owed this debt, but the entire human race, for we were all sold into sin and were helpless to redeem ourselves. But when we were in this hopeless state and were slaves to sin, with no money in our hands with which to purchase our freedom, the Lord Jesus came, paid the price for us, and redeemed us from sin. It was indeed a great price that He paid, for it took the very blood of the Son of God to satisfy the claims of justice.

If Paul could hear our precious hymn "Jesus Paid It All, All To Him I Owe," his heart would melt, and the flame of revival fire would blaze anew as he would declare that he still owed all to Jesus. Yes, Paul had a clear vision of the call of God, and he found that Jesus had turned his debt over to be collected by an unsaved world. Do we today feel this debt weighing upon our shoulders? Oh, yes, we shout that salvation is free, and since it is a free gift, we fear we would insult the giver if we tried to earn it. It is true that we could never earn our salvation, but when we realize the great price that was paid, we likewise should feel the debt upon us to reach out to the lost.

Let us take a look at what our redemption cost: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Corinthians 8:9). How rich was He? Who could answer such a question? He spoke the world into existence, and He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Philippians 2:6).

Just how poor did He become? Though He made the world, He once told an inquirer that the Son of man had no place to lay His head. Let us notice the steps that led to His poverty, as recorded Philippians 2:7-8:

1. He made Himself of no reputation.
2. He took upon Himself the form of a servant.
3. He was made in the likeness of men.
4. He humbled Himself.
5. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (a method of punishing criminals).

He did all this, so that we might be rich, and how rich are we? We are rich in faith, rich in hope, rich in love, rich in grace, rich in blessings, rich in homes and lands, and rich in fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters. The Lord has promised us that if we forsake material things for His sake and the gospel's, we shall receive a hundredfold *now*, in this life (Mark 10:28-30). Many gospel workers have testified that for the one home they left, a hundred homes have been opened to them; for the brother and sister they left, God has given them hundreds of brothers and sisters in Christ. These are all riches received during our lifetime, but if we keep true to Him, hereafter He will give us a wedding robe, a crown, a throne, and a place of rulership. Last, but greatest of all, we will be rich in an eternal inheritance. (See Revelation 21:7.)

With all that He has given us, can we say we owe Him nothing in return? No! We become obe-

dient to His call, and as far as it lies within our power to fulfill this call, we carry this glorious gospel to the entire world. When we think of how someone labored to bring us this light and to tell us of Him, shall we fail to see the debt we owe to others? Even if we work till the end of the day, we are still unprofitable servants. We can never pay this debt, but we can be faithful in acknowledging it as we labor in His vineyard.

The Homeless One
By John H. Dearing

They borrowed a stall and that was not all;
They borrowed a manger, too.
They borrowed a bed to lay His head,
Yet He was the Savior true.

It was borrowed bread when the crowd was fed,
And all were satisfied.
He borrowed fish, too, and only a few;
Many fragments were left beside.

He borrowed a boat and set it afloat
Not far out from the shore.
He borrowed a seat and rested His feet,
As the word to the people He bore.

It came to pass that He borrowed an ass,
And the praise of the people was heard;
With borrowed garments, He trod on a borrowed road,
The Savior, fulfilling God's Word.

He borrowed a room on his way to the tomb,
The Passover lamb to eat.
They borrowed a cave for the Master's grave;
They borrowed the winding sheet.

Not reckoning the loss, He borrowed a cross,
And Barabbas, the owner, went free.
He borrowed the sin that was laid upon Him
And borrowed His death from ME.

Lesson 69
Sham

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

Deceitfulness in the heart of God's children will damage their standing as bad as any known sin, and many times it does great damage to a life of victory. The sad part is that the devil can entice a poor soul into deceitfulness more easily than into some outward manifestation of sin because it can be covered from the eyes of people, at least for a season. People will do things in the sight of God that they will not do in the sight of people, for if people should find it out, they would be severely censured.

The devil has enticed many souls, whose aim has been to live a good, true life for God, into sham and deceit, though it may not appear to them as deceit. But just a little sham that pleases the flesh will hinder the soul from entering into the fuller experience of God's grace. We shall be glad if this lesson will cause someone to check up on the "little foxes that spoil the vine." The purpose is not to condemn anyone but to help free some soul from a hindrance to a deeper and fuller life in the Spirit. No one likes to be called deceitful, but sham is simply deceit.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3). "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Galatians 5:26). "Vainglory" is undoubtedly the cause for the practice of sham. The flesh loves to receive glory, and a desire for vainglory is the foundation of sham. It would be a wonderful thing if one could have the sinful nature eradicated as some teach! Many a precious soul who would not think of stooping to sham or deceit in their daily dealings with neighbors, relatives, or friends have through vainglory blocked their progress in spiritual things by sham in worship, in manifestations, in gifts, and even in testimony.

"But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth" (James 3:14). It is a sham to glory in God when we have envy, jealousy, and strife in our hearts. We lie against the truth if we do this. Is that sham? Surely it is, and many are caught in its snare. Even though these things are in our hearts, sometimes we get up and glory in God, so that people will not know our hearts are not in tune with God. We seek to appear among them as spiritual, for our old man desires the food of vainglory. Many souls who started well have lost their standing, grown cold, and even turned again to the world over sham and deceit.

God upholds the operation of the gifts and manifestations through the demonstration of the Spirit and power, and when these manifestations are in the Spirit, they will always bring forth fruit. But the reason we do not see more of the genuine gifts of the Spirit is that those who want vainglory have put on the sham, and it has, in many cases, discouraged the true soul who would have been used of God. It is wonderful to be used by the Spirit while under the power of God; but if the Spirit of the Lord is not moving, a desire for vainglory may enter even those who have had the real manifestation, causing them to put on a sham and thus rob themselves of the real blessing God wanted to give them. He would have used them with the real demonstration if only they had waited for Him, but He was pushed aside, and self, who likes to take glory, put on the sham. The carnal self cannot stand to be pushed down and cannot stand to remain unseen and unheard.

Jesus seems to say, "All right, son, if you want to create a sham with your filthy rags as though they were a linen garment of righteousness that I give, go ahead. I will keep the shining linen garment for someone who puts self in the background and awaits My Spirit."

There are examples of sham in God's Word that led to defeat where victory could have been won. Acts 5:1-10 tells of the awful judgment that God put on Ananias and Sapphira when they

tried to deceive Peter and hold back a part of the price of their sold possession. They came into the meeting with him and acted just as if they had given all the money they had received from the sale of their property. This was a sham, for they had only brought a part. Now this may seem like an insignificant thing on their part, but the judgment that came on them shows how displeasing even a little sham is in the sight of God. God has been more merciful to the deceivers of our day and has not knocked them dead, but He is still much displeased with sham. Many souls who could have been such a blessing if they had only waited on God and moved in the Spirit have died spiritually and brought a reproach on the cause of God.

"Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel" (Proverbs 20:17). Yes, it is sweet to the natural self to be in the limelight and to have people look up to us. Even among Pentecostal people, we have seen some put on a sham so that others would think they were spiritual. The assembly that this false manifestation has failed to bless might forgive and forget, but the poor souls who have done it have put a great block in the way of that assembly's spiritual growth, as well as in their own. The unsaved also laugh at such manifestations, while if they had been in the Spirit, those same sinners would have been convicted of sin.

It is a most wonderful thing that God, in these last days, has poured out His Spirit upon us, so that we can know the mighty power of God and the unspeakable blessings that we enjoy. It is a sad fact, however, that some souls, who have once known the real blessings and power of God, have let them leak out of their lives. Since putting on a sham blocks one's own spiritual progress and brings reproach upon the church, why not honor God and bless our own souls and the church by humbling ourselves before God and receiving the genuine blessing of God from heaven?

Lesson 70
Humility

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).

To be humble is one of the most essential graces for Christians to possess if we are to have the approval of God upon our lives. Most of us, though having nothing in our lives to be proud of before God, felt we were going a long way when we humbled ourselves and confessed that we were lost and hopeless without Jesus. But God required us to take our place as defeated and helpless sinners before Him, before He could do much for us. We have nothing to be proud of, but the old sinful nature wants to hold its head up and be somebody. It is a common thing for God's people to have a proud heart, which keeps them from going far with Him. But as we humble ourselves and confess our need before Him, He proves to us that it is well worth it, seeing that He does for us what we could not do for ourselves.

One of the simplest lessons we have in the Bible on humility is when Jesus took a little child, set him in the midst of the people, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3-4). A little child is helpless and needy and desirous of the care of its parents. Likewise we should take our place of helplessness before God and confess our inability to save ourselves or to keep ourselves saved.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Peter 5:6). One of the outstanding things about humility is that we are to humble *ourselves*. The person who waits for God to humble him will surely regret that he did not humble himself. God often uses drastic means to humble the person who will not humble himself. He has ways and means by which to bring the proudest heart down, and what a humiliation it is! It is far better that we humble ourselves as we are commanded.

I Peter 5:5 tells us, "Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." If we humble ourselves we will not only escape God's judgment, but we will also benefit by doing so. If we humble ourselves, He will exalt us. Furthermore, Isaiah 57:15 says, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

We have some examples in God's Word that show in a marked way how God takes notice of and favors one who will humble himself. A good example is King Ahab in I Kings 21. He desired to possess Naboth's vineyard because it lay close to his palace. Naboth, being a God-fearing man, would not sell it because it was an inheritance of his fathers. (See Numbers 36:7.) The wicked Queen Jezebel then devised a scheme whereby Naboth was put to death, and King Ahab took possession of his vineyard. Then God sent Elijah to rebuke Ahab for his sin and to inform him that God was going to bring evil upon him and cut off his posterity. But when King Ahab heard all that God was going to do, he *humbled himself*. Then the Lord said to Elijah, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house" (I Kings 21:29). If He took so much notice of this wicked king's humility, surely God is much pleased when His children humble themselves before Him.

The account of the great city, Nineveh, and its deliverance from the judgment of God also shows very clearly God's attitude toward humility. Contrary to common belief, Jonah did not

explicitly preach repentance to Nineveh. He preached God's judgment: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4). He offered no way of escape. But in the face of God's decree that the city would be overthrown, the king and his subjects *humbled themselves* before God. It was indeed a great humbling, for they all fasted and put on sackcloth from the least to the greatest, and then God changed His plan of bringing judgment on the city. Even in the face of seeming to make His own messenger a false prophet, God honored their humility. The thing displeased Jonah, for it did make his message appear untrue, but God told him, "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" (Jonah 4:11).

Not only does humility bring the favor of God, but it also brings a special fruitfulness in the lives of those who exercise it. A mark of humility is a willingness to see others possess better things than we have, both in the natural and in the spiritual. Often it is harder for us to see others supersede us in the spiritual than it is to see them have more in the natural. True humility will make a place for the graces and fruit of the Spirit to be manifested in our lives.

Let us beware of feigned humility, or humility that is put on. There is nothing more disgusting to a spiritually minded person than to find outer actions of humility in one who is actually full of pride and boasting. Real humility will cause one to esteem others better than himself and will lead to a life of taking the second place and giving others the advantage of the first place. Both God and people find it disgusting and disappointing when a person feigns humility in order to receive glory from those who notice it.

To be humble is a safeguard against stumbling or falling in the Christian walk, for who ever saw one who was already down take a fall? We will not suffer in our own disappointments if we are truly humble, but we will feel the sting and disappointment when others are in trouble.

Our cry should be, "Lord, help me to humble myself and please You, and deliver me from feigned humility. Amen."

Questions on Lessons 61–70

Lesson 61

1. What type of speech does the Word tell us is not beneficial?
2. What pleasure does the Bible allow that will give us strength?
3. If we are condemned, who condemns us?
4. What treasure is held out for us in Christ?
5. What should the church do to see good results in getting people born again?

Lesson 62

1. What is the main theme of Ephesians 4?
2. If we keep the unity of the Spirit, what goal can we expect to achieve?
3. In the lesson, what is the difference between Jerusalem and Corinth?
4. What is the best way to decide how to treat another believer?
5. Whom among believers should we not have fellowship with?

Lesson 63

1. What is the first verse in the New Testament to teach that Jesus wants to save us from sin and therefore lead us into holiness?
2. What reason did Peter give that we should be holy?
3. What nation is holy?
4. How does one continue to live a holy life?
5. Why do some religious people oppose the doctrine of holiness?

Lesson 64

1. Who is qualified to worship God?
2. How will spiritual worship affect outsiders?
3. When can a person worship God?
4. What other Christian privilege will worship enhance?
5. What other way can a person worship God besides with his voice and his heart?

Lesson 65

1. What demonstrates that some people are among those who perish?
2. If a person is sincere in what he believes, why would that alone not prove he is saved?
3. Why is the Cross the best and only plan for our salvation?
4, What other cross is spoken of besides the one on which Jesus died?
5. What will this other cross do for us?

Lesson 66

1. Who has immortality?
2. Who will receive immortality?
3. When will they receive it?
4. Who is the King of kings according to Revelation 17:14?

Lesson 67

1. Who confirmed to us our great salvation?
2. To whom is the warning concerning neglect written?
3. How much authority did the word of angels have?
4. How much power did Jesus give His disciples when they preached?
5. What might a little neglect lead us to?

Lesson 68

1. What was the debt Paul owed to the unsaved world?
2. How can we pay the debt we owe?
3. Name three of the downward steps of humility that Jesus took.
4. Of all the things that the gospel has made us rich in, which is the greatest of all?
5. If we cannot pay the debt we owe, what is the next best thing we can do?

Lesson 69

1. What causes a person to be a sham when he has a good life in other ways?
2. In what way can one lie against the truth?
3. What effect does a sham demonstration have on those who would have the real demonstration?
4. What did deceit do to two people in the apostolic church?
5. What is it likely to do to someone today?

Lesson 70

1. How did Jesus demonstrate humility?
2. What outstanding thing do we notice in the teaching of humility?
3. What promise does the Old Testament give to a humble person?
4. How did God honor a king in Elijah's day because he humbled himself?
5. What did people's humility cause God to do after the preaching of Jonah?

Lesson 71
The Finished Man

Angels will not rule over the coming age. God, while making humans a little lower in nature than angels, has planned that they shall rule over the works of God in the age to come. (See Hebrews 2:5-9.)

Hebrews 2:6-8 quotes from Psalm 8:4-6. The quotation ends in verse 8 with the word "feet." The passage then explains that while everything will one day be brought under humanity, yet *now* we do not see the Scripture fulfilled in this regard. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9).

A lot of people who look at the present condition of the religious world declare that Christianity has failed, because they have heard it preached that the entire world was supposed to be converted already. God's Word does not teach that the whole world will be saved, however, but that the Lord will take out a people for His name (Acts 15:14). This is God's plan, and it is being fulfilled to the very letter. The world, as it was in the days of Noah, is condemned and must meet the judgment of God. But the Lord is saving people, like Noah and his family, out of the world.

The purpose of this lesson is to set forth some of the things God is working out in His plan. God has had a plan from the beginning, and having foreknowledge of the things that were to come, He prepared a salvation plan for fallen humanity even before people existed, for we read that the Lamb was foreordained before the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:19-20). We understand also that in God's plan the Word was with Him, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The final work in the plan of God is that He will have a nation of immortal children to be with Him throughout all eternity. He began the work by creating a world as a kind of a workshop in which to fulfill His plan. Then He began the work of a finished man, though humanity was not finished in the Garden. In His great workshop, He made people to dwell on the face of the earth. He made them male and female, and He put them on trial.

Did He know Adam and Eve would fail? He certainly did, or why would He have foreordained Jesus as a slain Lamb before the foundation of the world? Often someone asks, "Since God knew man would fail Him and plunge the whole race into sin, why did not God make man so he would not be able to sin?" We answer, "Why did not God draw a straight crooked line or make an object pitch black and pure white at the same time?" For that is what is meant by the question. We may as well ask, "Why didn't God make a being with the power of intelligent choice and yet without the power of intelligent choice?"

If a father had the power claimed by hypnotism, it would be possible for him to put his children into a hypnotic state, thus robbing them of the power of intelligent choice. He could say to them, "Sit on those chairs," "Rise up and eat," "Stop eating," and "Kiss me good night." They would obey him in it all, and unfeeling arms would be placed about his neck and unresponsive lips would be placed on him. But would there be satisfaction in it? No. A good father wants children with free wills who choose to carry out his instructions because they love him. The God who put these desires into the hearts of earthly fathers would desire no less of His children, and that is the reason He made us as He did.

But God is not through with His plan to make humanity. After humans had plunged into sin, God continued to deal with them and brought them through different ages. One was the age of promise; then He put them under His holy and righteous law to prove their inability to save themselves. Finally, He brought salvation through Jesus Christ. Because the natural man does not

understand God's plan, it looks like a failure; but there can be no failure in God. For two thousand years God has had His faithful Christians, and they have fallen asleep with bright hopes of immortality. They will not be disappointed; thousands and thousands of them will come forth at the sound of the trumpet in immortal glory, the finished work of God.

God is still working, and not only that, we are workers together with Him as we fulfill His calling. And what a wonderful work this is—the work of ministering God's Word and praying for people to receive the Holy Ghost, the seal of their precious souls for the day of redemption! All other labor is only temporal and the results temporal. No matter how many benefits we derive from our material labor, they will all end with time. But the Word of the Lord is eternal and the rewards eternal. Here is where the prophecy of Hebrews 2 will have its fulfillment. People will then be finished and placed over the works of God's hand with a body like the glorious body of the Son of God, being joint heirs with Him. Having overcome, we will sit down in the throne with Him to rule all nations (Revelation 2:27; 3:21).

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (I Corinthians 6:2-3). Yes, we are made lower than the angels, but when finished and crowned with glory and honor, humans will be higher than the angels and will be in the throne with Jesus, the precious Son of God.

Is our heart not stirred when such a plan is made plain to us and we understand that we may have a part in this wonderful work? We are compelled to do our best as we realize that we are coworkers with Christ in bringing children into glory, knowing that the power of heaven backs us up as we are obedient and true to the Lord.

Our talents and even our opportunities may not be as great as others, but it is good to know that "if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Corinthians 8:12).

When we put our lives into God's hands to work with Him for others, He is able to finish us and assure us of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom.

Lesson 72
The Threefold Gospel

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1, 3-4).

The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus we have a threefold gospel. This is in harmony with the first gospel message, when three thousand souls were added to the Lord in one day. In that message Peter told the audience plainly that they had taken Jesus and crucified Him with their wicked hands. However, after Christ was placed in the grave, God raised Him up (Acts 2:22-36). This gospel message pricked their hearts, and they cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter then told them to obey the gospel: "Repent [death], and be baptized [buried] every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [resurrection]" (Acts 2:38).

Because the death of Jesus was necessary to bring this salvation, humanity could not obtain full salvation before His death. God had proclaimed a death sentence over the entire human race, and the sentence could not be lifted unless someone died and paid the price. It took the blood of the Son of God to bring this salvation.

No passage of Scripture speaks of New Testament salvation apart from a Spirit-filled life. Some who emphasize a "fourfold" gospel teach that we first receive salvation and then we receive the Holy Ghost for power, but Paul said, "The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16).

There is no question that, at the beginning of this gospel age, the disciples thought of nothing less than baptism in Jesus' name and the baptism of the Holy Ghost when they spoke of salvation. Any teaching other than that is not based on Scripture. The outstanding experience of which the prophets spoke and of which both John the Baptist and Jesus taught was baptism in water and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. And the only experiences on record as being given after Jesus paid the price for salvation are baptism in Jesus' name and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Any doctrine of salvation that does not stress these two baptisms is subapostolic Christianity. The reason some people do not receive these experiences and yet are still satisfied is that the church went through the Dark Ages and the apostolic pattern was practically lost. Therefore, as we preach this mighty new-birth message, we meet with different conditions and experiences that people have had, and we can call them subapostolic Christianity. It would be absurd, in the face of all the testimonies that we hear, to say that God does not give definite experiences prior to a person's being born again of the water and Spirit. But experiences cannot justify continuing in unscriptural doctrines. The ministry in the early church carried the gospel to a people who had no experience in subapostolic Christianity, and so they preached a straight Holy Ghost gospel.

We have been speaking of a threefold gospel, and we often find the number three in the Bible:

Three manifestations of God: (1) God manifested as Father (Luke 1:35); (2) God manifested in the Son (I Timothy 3:16); (3) God manifested as Holy Ghost (Acts 2:4).

Three bear witness in earth: (1) the Spirit; (2) the water (3); the blood (I John 5:8).

Three yearly feasts of Israel: (1) Passover—fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ; (2) First Fruits, or Pentecost—fulfilled in the outpouring of the Spirit; (3) Ingathering, or Tabernacles—fulfilled in the Second Coming (Exodus 23:14-16). The three greatest events of the New Testament find their fulfillment in these three types.

Three nations had the gospel preached to them: (1) the Jews, Acts 2; (2) the Samaritans, Acts 8; (3) the Gentiles, Acts 10.

Three grades of fruit production: (1) thirtyfold, (2) sixtyfold, (3) a hundredfold (Matthew 13:23).

Three times the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him. Three times He told Peter to feed His lambs and His sheep (John 21:15-17).

Three times Jesus told Peter to slay and eat of the unclean meat (Acts 10:13-16).

Lesson 73
Running the Race

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

It is fitting that at this place the letter exhorts believers concerning the running of the Christian race, since it has just recorded a whole chapter on the success of a great cloud of witnesses who through faith gained the victory and finished their race with patience. With these examples of those who had been faithful, it urges Christians to lay aside every weight so that they too can run the race with nothing to hold them back, for they are in a race with an eternal prize to win.

It is a shame that any runner in this Christian race would allow some temporal thing that satisfies a selfish desire to stop him from running and completing the race. This cloud of witnesses won by faith, so when Hebrews exhorts against the sin that besets, it must primarily mean the sin of unbelief.

What will stop a runner in this Christian race quicker than to fail to believe what God says? This is the sin that stopped Eve in her sinless race. She believed a lie and disbelieved God. It is likewise the sin that has waylaid every soul that has ever stopped running this race with God. "God doesn't mean what He says." Maybe we do not say it just that way, but we act that way when we do not obey His Word, and of course, he who disobeys stops running.

Paul illustrated this Christian race with the Greek footraces, which the people at Corinth were familiar with, since it was one of the leading sports of the day. He said that in those footraces all the contestants run, but only one receives the prize. He then admonished the Christians, "So run," that is, to run as earnestly as if only one could win the Christian race (I Corinthians 9:24-25). All those who entered those footraces were temperate (self-controlled) in all things that they might be in the best physical condition possible, and they did it to obtain a corruptible crown (made of olive branches). Paul said that was just the way he was running this race, and surely we should all run in this manner for we are to receive an *incorruptible crown*. In verse 26, he changed his illustration to that of a boxer. He said he was not only a runner but also a fighter who did not beat the air. He was afraid that some selfish desire might cause him to be a castaway, so he kept his own body under subjection.

To the Galatians he wrote, "Ye did run well." He had helped them get started in running, but then he asked, "Who did hinder you?" (Galatians 5:7). Yes, there are hindrances all the way along if we pay attention to them. There are schisms, "isms," doctrines of men, doctrines of demons, false Christs, and antichrists. All these hinder those who are in the race. In the case of the Galatians, false teachers tried to persuade them that they could be saved by keeping the Jewish law.

If Satan sees a person running, he shouts to his imps, "Stop that man, or he will make it to the prize." Then all the forces of hell are turned loose on him. If they cannot stop him, they will get ahead of him and try to entice him off on some religious sidetrack.

On the day of the contest when the Greek footraces were run, comfortable seats were placed all along the racetrack in the shade, with cool, refreshing drinks to entice the weary runners from the race. And we find it so in this Christian race: the devil is doing all within his power to get those who have started in the race to turn back or to turn aside.

Paul said, "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (II Timothy 2:5). In other words, a contestant must obey the rules, or he can never win the

prize. The judges might allow a runner to run through the entire race, and everything would seem to be going well, but at the end of the race as he reached for the prize, the judges would inform him that he had not run according to the rules. We should let this warn us, so that we are not deceived, for it would be a sad thing indeed to run in this race and then after it is too late to find out that we had not run according to the rules in the Bible.

Though the apostle Paul strove hard to win the race of which we have been speaking, yet there was one race he almost lost, and that was the race of running for others. In Philippians 2:15-16 he admonished the saints to live righteously and hold forth the Word of life so that his running would not be in vain. If his converts backslid, then his labor would have been bestowed on them in vain, and he would lose the race.

Ecclesiastes 9:11 says, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." This verse says that it is time and chance that causes people to win the race, but for the Christian the time is *now* and the chance is the "open door" that Jesus sets before them. It is not just to those who have special qualifications or to the rich, but it is to all who will enter in at the door.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31). By waiting upon the Lord we receive strength to run this race. When we wait upon the Lord, we do not spend all our time speaking to Him, but we get quiet before Him and listen to His voice speaking to our hearts. Listening to the voice of God and receiving instructions from Him are necessary in gaining strength to run a successful Christian race.

Lesson 74

Prophecy and Its Fulfillment

Adapted from a tract by W. L. Stallones

The truth of the Bible stands or falls upon the fulfillment of the prophets' predictions. The Christian would certainly be put to confusion if these prophecies failed. The Bible plainly claims to be the only record of genuine prophecy in the world. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Isaiah 46:9-10). God claims to be the only one who can declare the end from the beginning, and He challenges all others who claim to be gods, "Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isaiah 41:21-23).

The prophets of old prophesied many things that have been fulfilled and are being fulfilled, and it was the Spirit of God that inspired them to accurately foretell these events. II Peter 1:21 tells us, "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Moses predicted Israel's future many centuries before the great dispersion. He foretold the siege of Jerusalem, describing the terrible distress of that time, declaring that they would be driven to eat their own children. (See Deuteronomy 28:52-53.) He then described their dispersion into all nations: "And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you" (Deuteronomy 28:64-68). After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, it is said that Jews were offered for sale in Egypt for a small sum, but no one would buy them. How did Moses know this sixteen hundred years in advance?

Moses also warned Israel that if they did not obey the commandments of God, the Lord would cut off the rain from the land (Deuteronomy 11:17). When Israel backslid, the former and latter rain ceased to fall upon their land, and the country became a desert. How did Moses know that this would happen?

The prophet Isaiah boldly declared, "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert" (Isaiah 35:6). The place of wild animals would grow grass (Isaiah 35:7). On March 2, 1927, the Jews celebrated for the first time in centuries the filling of Solomon's Pool. Streams began breaking forth in desert places, and old springs were rediscovered. After Israel became a nation in 1948, the Jews began to transform many desert areas into fertile fields. The prophets spoke in no uncertain words. They were specific. They spoke more certainly of the future than a historian could of the past.

Both Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke of the overthrow and utter destruction of Babylon, yet in their day Babylon was one of the most flourishing cities of the world. "And Babylon, the glory of king-

doms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there" (Isaiah 13:19-20). How did Isaiah know that this great city would be destroyed? The ruins of this great city have been witnesses of the accuracy of this prophecy for twenty-five hundred years. (See also Jeremiah 50:40.) These prophecies have been so completely fulfilled that one would think that these men were writing history rather than predicting future events. As long as Babylon remains a heap of ruins with no habitation, the whole world will have to acknowledge the inspiration of these prophecies.

Ezekiel predicted the future of Egypt: "It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, and they shall no more rule over the nations" (Ezekiel 29:15). "Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt" (Ezekiel 30:13). Since about 400 B.C., Egypt has been a subordinate nation just as the prophet said it would be. How did Ezekiel know this would come to the proud kingdom of the Pharaohs? These prophets predicted the future of all nations and cities about them, and the world has yet to prove that one single prophecy has failed to be fulfilled.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left. . . . And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:11-12). After World War I, many Jews began to return to Palestine from the four corners of the earth; in fact, sixty-five nations were represented at that time. After World War II, Israel became a nation again after almost nineteen hundred years. Then in 1967, Israel regained control over all of Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. Clearly, this passage of Scripture has been fulfilled before our very eyes.

Zechariah 14:1-10 says that a great war will take place in the last days around the city of Jerusalem. The last great world war will focus on Israel. At the moment when it seems that all is lost and the Jews are defeated, the Messiah shall come from heaven and gain a decisive victory over the nations. At this time He will set up His kingdom and reign over the whole earth. Although this passage of Scripture has not been fulfilled, all indications show that we are fast approaching the greatest conflict this world has ever seen. The nations are preparing for it. We as saints of God should not sleep as others do, but we should be sober and watch so that day does not overtake as a thief in the night.

Lesson 75

Will the World Be Converted?

The doctrine called "restitution of all things," or universalism, states that all people will eventually be saved. We often hear that the entire world will be converted, and in that way, the kingdom of God will come to earth. Many well-meaning people have believed this. They take such verses of Scripture as John 1:9, which says that Jesus is "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; Hebrews 2:9, which states that Jesus tasted death for every man; and Matthew 6:10, which says, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." They claim that these verses of Scripture prove that the entire world will be converted.

The purpose of this lesson is to show that the world will never entirely be converted and that the doctrine of universalism is false. Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." In Daniel 12:2 there are two classes of people at the resurrection: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Similarly, Jesus declared, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). Finally, Acts 24:15 says, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." These Scripture verses clearly teach that many people will not be converted and will be resurrected in an unrighteous state.

Matthew 25:31-46 teaches that there will be a judgment of the nations. The Son of Man shall gather all the nations before Him, and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. He shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on the left. The King shall say to those on the right, "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). To those on the left he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41).

The coming of Jesus will bring destruction upon the wicked: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9). It may seem a small thing to refuse to obey the gospel, but the Lord has planned that the gospel be preached, and "he that believeth . . . shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Jude 14-15 furthers describe the destruction that is to take place at the coming of the Lord: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

In Luke 17:26-30, Jesus gave examples of those who refused God's mercy in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot. In both cases they did not escape God's wrath but were punished. Jesus said it would be like this when He comes again.

Malachi 4:1, 3 describes the destruction of the wicked: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . . And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts."

Revelation 19:11-21 depicts Jesus coming from heaven as the King of kings and Lord of lords with the armies of heaven, going forth to fight against the nations of the earth. "And I saw the

beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Revelation 20:11-15 describes another picture: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Here we have the plain fact that the resurrected wicked dead will not be saved, but they will be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 tells us whom God will cast into the lake of fire: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

The Word says that there is a great gulf between the saved and the unsaved after death. After a person has left this life, there is no possible way to cross over the gulf. The only way we can get into this haven of rest is through Jesus, and we must accept His salvation in this present life.

Let no one be deceived into thinking that there will be a place in heaven for someone who would be out of place here in a red-hot gospel meeting or in a prayer meeting. He who lets human shame and pride keep him from receiving God's power in this life should not expect to have any place in heaven.

Lesson 76
Wisdom

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3).

There are two kinds of wisdom. First, there is the "wisdom of this world," which comes to nothing (I Corinthians 2:6). Second, there is the "wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 2:7). It is "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:7-8).

Solomon is a good example of someone who possessed the wisdom of this world. "In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said unto God . . . Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great? And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like" (II Chronicles 1:7-12). (See also I Kings 3:5-15.)

God made Solomon the wisest person on earth, and he went to the very limit in fulfilling the desire of his heart to search out and to understand the things under the sun. Solomon said, "And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11). After he had indulged in all that his eyes desired, he said, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

The earthly wisdom that Solomon possessed did not ensure that he would live a godly life, nor did it save him from ruin in the end. It is true that his wisdom kept him out of war with other nations, and because of that, he increased in riches and honor and built a huge kingdom, the great Temple, and his beautiful dwelling place. His fame spread throughout the world because of his wisdom and the glory of his kingdom. The Queen of Sheba heard of his fame, but she did not believe what she had heard, so she came to test him with difficult questions. After she had seen all his wisdom and the house that he had built, she said, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land . . . and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard" (I Kings 10:6-7).

But Solomon with all his wisdom turned away from God to the worship of idols, and God judged him and his great house. The Temple and even his kingdom came to nothing. Solomon's life illustrates that the wisdom of this world comes to nothing.

While Solomon did not apply his wisdom to his own spiritual life, he did have knowledge of spiritual wisdom. Proverbs 8:22-23 tells of the wisdom that God possessed from the beginning, that is, before the earth was.

This wisdom that God had with Him is now a treasure hid in Christ and cannot be found outside of Him. We who belong to Christ and have Him in our lives are entitled to this hidden wisdom. I Corinthians 2:13 describes it as wisdom that "the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." This wisdom is hid from the world in Christ, and it takes the Holy Ghost

to help us search it out. As Solomon's worldly wisdom gave him an understanding of earthly things, so the wisdom of God will give us an understanding of spiritual things.

It is not wisdom alone that is hidden in Christ, but the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are also. We must take heed that we do not merely gain knowledge but lack wisdom to use it. Knowledge alone brings zeal, but wisdom helps us to direct that zeal. "Knowledge puffeth up" (I Corinthians 8:1). Therefore, along with our knowledge, we need the wisdom that James wrote about: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). If he who possesses knowledge is easy to be entreated, gentle, and so on, he will not be puffed up in his knowledge. Therefore, knowledge and wisdom should go hand in hand.

Wisdom not only brings understanding, but it also makes one wise in presenting the truth of God. We need wisdom to enable us to influence unbelievers and to shun the appearance of evil. Paul told the Roman Christians that he was glad to hear of their obedience but that he would also have them wise concerning what is good and simple concerning what is evil (Romans 16:19).

A careful study of I Corinthians 1:18-31 will give us a good understanding of God's viewpoint on the wisdom of this world compared with the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is supernatural, and when it comes on the scene, it blocks the wisdom of the world. Worldly wisdom says that Joseph was the biological father of Jesus and that the disciples stole the body of our Lord from the tomb. It cries "foolishness" to the very least move toward the wisdom of God. There is no fear of God in those who do not know God and possess only worldly wisdom. Therefore, they have nothing in common with those who possess God's wisdom, for "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

Lesson 77

Understanding and Knowing God

"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 9:23-24).

"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom." In our last lesson, we found that human wisdom brings nothing eternal to pass. In most cases it not only brings nothing lasting, but it blocks the way to things eternal. "The Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified . . . unto the Greeks foolishness" (I Corinthians 1:22-23). Today, we often meet with "wise ones" who boldly tell us our message of the gospel is too foolish to be considered. One of them said, "We can't reconcile with science your teaching of the virgin birth or the resurrection." We readily admit that they cannot, for science generally deals with the law of cause and effect; and in both these things, we claim an effect for which there is no natural scientific cause. We simply believe the Word of God on the subject, but since that class will not believe God, it is foolishness to them.

"Neither let the mighty man glory in his might." In the face of this clear command from the Lord, God still has had to judge people who gloried in their might. Nebuchadnezzar is an outstanding illustration. After he became a powerful king, he said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). The judgment of God fell upon him. He was driven from people, ate grass as oxen, his body became wet with the dew of heaven, his hair grew long like eagles' feathers, and his nails grew like birds' claws. At the end of seven years, God restored his reason, and he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and blessed and praised and honored the Most High. He said, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Daniel 4:37). All of this came upon Nebuchadnezzar because he gloried in his might.

Herod is another example. "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts 12:21-23). This same Herod killed the apostle James with the sword.

There is such a temptation for people to glory in their own might that Paul said, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . . that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Corinthians 1:26-29).

"Let not the rich man glory in his riches." Jesus told of a rich man who gloried in his riches: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:16-21).

God's Word gives many warnings about the desire to be rich in this world's goods. Jesus said

that, at times, after the Word of God has been sown in a person's heart, "The deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22). Let us notice that He spoke of the "*deceitfulness of riches*." Because of the great purchasing power of riches, people are led to believe that if they can obtain riches, they will get the happiness and joy for which they have been longing. But here is where the deceitfulness comes in. After one obtains wealth, he finds that instead of bringing the happiness he had sought, his riches bring misery. James said, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you" (James 5:1). Many who have riches live in constant fear of their children being kidnapped and held for ransom or of some disaster coming and sweeping their riches from them. "For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Proverbs 23:5).

Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:23). He did not say that a rich person could not enter into the kingdom of God, but knowing the deceitfulness of riches, He knew it would be hard for a person not to trust in his riches. There is something about money that gets into the hearts of people, causing them to trust in it and to get wrapped up in it.

In writing to Timothy, Paul said, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:9-10). In the same chapter, he said, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (I Timothy 6:17-18). James 1:10-11 gives no place for the rich man who follows a rich man's ways.

We are blessed to know that while God has warned the wise, the mighty, and the rich not to glory in their ways, He has still made a way for their salvation—the Cross. Furthermore, all those who do not have this world's wisdom, might, or riches can still come into the knowledge and understanding of God and glory because they know Him.

Lesson 78
Jesus the Christ

When we write about Jesus, we hardly know where to start, since Jesus is the greatest subject that has ever been brought to the attention of people throughout the ages. And although about two thousand years have passed since Jesus, the Son of God, came into the world, little is still known and understood about Him. Multitudes use His name as a curse on their lips, and multitudes more profess to worship Him, but only a small number of people, comparatively speaking, truly know and understand Him.

It seems strange that so little is known about Him, when He has affected human civilization and this universe so much. Neither a star twinkles nor a bird flies but that He takes notice of it. The Scripture declares that the very hairs of our heads are numbered (Matthew 10:30). "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16-17). And yet He hid His great majesty and power behind the veil of flesh when He walked on this earth.

He was the meekest and lowliest man who ever lived. In an insignificant part of Palestine, He grew to manhood in the home of a humble carpenter, becoming a carpenter Himself. (See Mark 6:3; John 1:46.) From what we can learn, He remained almost entirely unknown to the religious world and its recognized leaders until He was about thirty years of age. Then, though many believed on Him, not a passage of Scripture shows that any person fully understood Him or the things that He taught concerning the gospel. The Scriptures show plainly that even His nearest disciples did not completely understand Him during His earthly life.

Jesus said, "I am not of this world" (John 8:23). "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:51). He also claimed to be the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14 when He said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).

When He came to the end of His short ministry, all His disciples forsook Him (Mark 14:50). He died on the cross alone and was laid in a tomb. Not a person among all those who heard His marvelous teaching could give others a word of comfort. Not one could say, "I still believe He is the Messiah and will yet save us." Not even the disciples who were nearest to Him throughout His ministry had insight into the power of the Cross. The first news of His resurrection sounded like idle tales to them (Luke 24:11).

Perhaps the women had some light upon the purpose of the Cross and entertained a hope of His resurrection. But they, too, because of their natural, unbelieving hearts, had only one thing left to do—prepare spices, bring them to preserve His body, and prepare it for its final resting place. (See Luke 24:1.) What a dark hour had come upon a group of people who desired to be faithful but who had all their hopes dashed!

Our purpose in bringing this picture of gloom is to show the great contrast between the natural man and Jesus the Christ.

The prophet wrote concerning Him, "Who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living" (Isaiah 53:8). What was His generation? He had no natural one, but I Peter 2:9 tells us of His generation and calls it a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." But so dark was the picture at His death that not a soul on earth could declare His generation.

But He had left some promises to Peter: "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom" (Matthew 16:19)."When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32). Those dark and gloomy days for the disciples came to an end. What a wonderful awakening out of such

gloom! An empty tomb! A resurrected Christ! It was so great that they were terrified. When He appeared to them, they wondered if they were seeing a spirit. He said, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:38-39).

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:45-47). He not only opened their understanding, but He also gave them the gospel to preach to all nations.

We may suppose that during the forty days Jesus was on earth after His resurrection, He may have asked His disciples, "Do you not remember that I told you I was going away? And for what purpose did I tell you I had to go away?" We can imagine Peter answering, "Oh, yes, you said, 'It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you'" (John 16:7). Then Jesus said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5).

Before the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were still looking to the natural. They had not gotten away from the hope of the restoration of Israel. Jesus had dashed their hopes once by dying without restoring the kingdom, so now they asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). He answered them sufficiently to pacify them, and after once more pointing them to the powerhouse, the upper room, He ascended to heaven to take His place as our high priest in the Most Holy Place.

Jesus was gone again, and as they continued to gaze into heaven, they surely must have felt a great loneliness and perhaps disappointment. But just when they needed it, two shining angels appeared and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

They then returned to Jerusalem in obedience to His last command to them, where they were soon to have the veil taken from their eyes (II Corinthians 3:15-16). They would be made new creatures, with old things passing away and all things becoming new, for the Day of Pentecost was at hand. (See Acts 2:4; II Corinthians 5:17.) They could then declare His—the chosen—generation.

Lesson 79
Jesus in Prophecy

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counseller, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

The Old Testament Scriptures teem with direct references to Jesus and indirect references couched in types and shadows. In this lesson, we will focus on the outstanding prophecy of Him of Isaiah 9:6.

"For unto us a child is born." This was necessary to fulfill the Father's plan that He "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (I Peter 1:20). God has given us a wonderful type in Abraham to prevent false doctrines and human traditions from leading us astray. Because of Abram's faith, God changed his name to Abraham, thus declaring him to be a father while he was yet childless. Romans 4:17 says God "calleth those things which be not as though they were." Abraham rejoiced in a son when he did not have a son; in the same way, God had a Son while He was yet unborn. John 1:1 says that in the beginning the Word was with God; that is, *He was in the mind and plan of God*; and like Abraham, God had glory with His Son while His Son was yet unborn. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). Some have tried to prove from this verse of Scripture that God had a Son with Him from all eternity, different from Himself but of His same substance. This notion is, however, erroneous. The Word says, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Galatians 4:4). After God begot a Son in the womb of Mary, then "unto us a child [was] born." (See Matthew 1:18, 21.)

"Unto us a son is given." First, God *begot* a Son; then, He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). We can view Abraham as a type of God, when he offered his son, Isaac, in sacrifice. And as the Son of God rose from the dead, so Abraham received his son back from the dead, so to speak (Hebrews 11:17, 19). In regard to God giving His Son, Revelation 13:8 describes Jesus as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Of course, Jesus did not hang on the cruel cross from the beginning of the world; rather, the Cross was in God's plan from the foundation of the world. This truth is confirmed in I Peter 1:20: "Who [Jesus] verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

"The government shall be upon his shoulder." After Jesus arose from the dead, He fulfilled this claim when He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). He has been highly exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:21). This verse will have its complete fulfillment during the Millennium, when Jesus reigns as King of kings over the whole earth.

"His name shall be called Wonderful." We have been considering the humanity of Jesus, but we find that our text also speaks of His deity. He is never more wonderful than when He baptizes us with the Holy Ghost and fire. Through this experience, we know the wonderful Jesus of Pentecost.

"Counsellor." After we are filled with the Spirit, we need a counselor, and we have one in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. When the Spirit comes into our lives, He leads us and guides us into all truth (John 16:13).

"The mighty God." Can we help but worship Jesus? Yet we are commanded to worship God only. But we will worship Jesus, for He is our mighty God. It is so sweet to be filled with the Spirit and say, "I bless you, Jesus."

"The everlasting Father." Here we find that our Father is not far away from us, but our everlasting Father is *one God*, and that *one God* is *in* us: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Ephesians 4:6).

"The Prince of Peace." The world asks for peace and forms great compacts to obtain it, but peace slips farther and farther away from them as the days go by. Peace will never again be on the earth until Jesus, the Prince of Peace, comes and renovates it. And so we say, "Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus." (See Revelation 22:20.)

Lesson 80
Jehovah the Savior

"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

We have often used this text to show that God did not save His people *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. In this lesson, however, we shall focus on the name of Jesus and its significance.

First of all, this name is not of human origin, for an angel from heaven announced the name to both Joseph and Mary. (See Matthew 1:19-21; Luke 1:31.) Our text gives the reason for calling His name Jesus: He shall save His people from their sins. Matthew said that this name fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Emmanuel means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Mary fulfilled the prophecy concerning the virgin, and the name of Jesus fulfills the statement, "They shall call his name Emmanuel." The name of Jesus must mean what Emmanuel means in order to fulfill that prophecy.

Jesus told the Pharisees, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). When God revealed His name, Jehovah, to Moses (Exodus 6:3), He made known the meaning of that great name by saying, "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14). "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD [Jehovah] God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations" (Exodus 3:15). When Jesus said He was the "I am" whom Abraham knew, He was claiming to be Jehovah, whom Moses met at the burning bush. This was more than the Jewish leaders of His day could accept; they took up stones and attempted to stone Him for His statement.

God declared that Jehovah would be His name forever, and this could not be true unless Jehovah is a component of the name Jesus, which is the supreme name of God in the New Testament. Jesus declared Himself to be the "I AM;" therefore, the name Jesus fulfills the prophecy that says His name is to be Emmanuel, meaning "God with us." Such Bible teachers as R. F. Weymouth and others correctly teach that the name Jesus means "Jehovah the Savior" and not merely "Savior," as is often taught.

Because God said His name would be Jehovah forever, when we say "Jesus," we are really saying "Jehovah the Savior." The name Jesus covers both the deity and humanity of Christ. In contrast, before the Incarnation (I Timothy 3:16), the name Jehovah was the name of deity. But in the Incarnation, God added authentic humanity to His divine nature. At the same time, He also added to His name; thus the name of the Messiah, the God-man, is "Jesus."

For further proof of this, Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43). Moreover, He received His excellent name by inheritance (Hebrews 1:4). As the Father was in the Son (John 14:9), so the name Jehovah is in the name Jesus. Therefore, Paul could say that God gave the Messiah a name that is above every name (Philippians 2:9). Obviously, no name could be higher than the Father's name, so to fulfill that verse of Scripture God had to give His Son *His own name*.

No wonder there is power in the name of Jesus to cast out demons, to speak in new tongues, and to heal the sick! And no wonder the angel said He would be called Jesus because He would save His people from their sins. Acts 4:12 says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Let us also notice the following verses of Scripture which teach that salvation is in the name of Jesus: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). "That believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is con-

demned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

Paul said, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). He further said, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17).

It is not surprising, then, that after God revealed the truth of His name to the apostles, they baptized in the name of Jesus, thus fulfilling Jesus' command to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19). "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). "For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:16). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:5).

Questions on Lessons 71–80

Lesson 71

1. What is the position of natural humans compared to the angels?
2. How can we demonstrate that God knew humans would fall into sin after He created them?
3. What did God show humanity by giving the law?
4. What is the difference between the results of a material work and that of a spiritual work?
5. What will be the standing of finished humans in comparison to that of the angels?

Lesson 72

1. In what special way is the text of this lesson in harmony with Acts 2:38?
2. What is the difference in preaching the gospel now and when the apostles preached it?
3. What event fulfilled the Passover?
4. What event fulfilled the Feast of First Fruits?
5. What event will fulfill the Feast of Ingathering (Tabernacles)?

Lesson 73

1. What is probably the greatest sin that so easily besets us?
2. What is the prize we are running to win?
3. Who hindered the Galatians from running well?
4. If a person is striving for mastery, how may he fail to receive the crown?
5. In Philippians, what race was Paul concerned about losing?

Lesson 74

1. Who can declare the end from the beginning?
2. What did Moses prophesy about Israel that came to pass?
3. What did Isaiah prophesy about Palestine that came to pass?
4. What did Ezekiel prophesy about Egypt that came to pass?
5. What prophecy of Zechariah is likely to come to pass soon?

Lesson 75

Name five biblical writers who wrote about the wicked being lost, and state something each of them said concerning this subject.

Lesson 76

1. Because Solomon asked for wisdom, what else did God give him?
2. What was Solomon's conclusion after he had gone to the highest heights in wisdom?
3. How did the final outcome of all of Solomon's wisdom demonstrate what Paul said about the wisdom of this world?
4. Where will we find the real treasure of wisdom?

Lesson 77

1. When the wise person glories in his wisdom, what does he deny himself?
2. What judgment came upon Nebuchadnezzar because he gloried in his might?
3. What does God call a rich person who glories in his riches?
4. Why is it hard for a rich person to enter heaven?
5. To whom only does God give the right to glory?

Lesson 78

1. Why was Jesus so misunderstood when He walked here on earth?

2. How many people believed and understood that Jesus was the Savior of the world while He was in the tomb?
3. What proof do we have that even the women did not expect Him to rise?
4. When the disciples first saw the resurrected Christ, they thought they were seeing a spirit. How did He prove that He was not merely a spirit?
5. What proof do we have that even after He had risen, the disciples still looked to the natural?

Lesson 79

1. What had to happen before the Son of God was born?
2. When did God give His Son?
3. When does Jesus' name "Wonderful" become supremely real to us?
4. We are to worship no other God but Jehovah. Why may we worship Jesus?
5. How near is God the Father to us? How does this statement clarify the oneness of the Godhead?

Lesson 80

1. Who made known the name Jesus to Joseph and Mary?
2. What is the meaning of the name Jesus? Give scriptural proof.
3. To whom did God make known the name Jehovah and explains its meaning of "I AM"?
4. What was the highest name God could give the Son?
5. What does Paul say we should do in the name of Jesus?

Lesson 81
Christ in the Scriptures

"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27).

As Jesus walked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, He began at Moses, since Moses gave us the first five books of the Bible, and then used the rest of the Old Testament to expound the things in them concerning Himself.

It would indeed be interesting to know which passages of Scripture He used. In this lesson, we will discuss some of the outstanding ones that He probably quoted. We will begin with Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here the Scripture mentions Christ as the seed. We can trace this seed throughout the Scriptures from Eve to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Epistles make references to the seed as well. (See Galatians 3:16.)

God protected this lineage by saving Noah from the flood and by calling out Abraham, from whom the promised seed came through his son, Isaac, and then his grandson, Jacob. Next the Scripture says the seed would come through Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10).

Some of the outstanding characters in the line through which the seed came were Boaz, Jesse, David, and Solomon. (See Matthew 1:5-6.)

When Balak called the prophet Balaam to come and curse Israel, Balaam prophesied, "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth" (Numbers 24:17). This prophecy undoubtedly refers to Jesus.

Deuteronomy 18:15 says that Jesus would be the Prophet: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

Psalm 110:4 calls Him the coming high priest: "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Isaiah 11:1-4 says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." We should note that He set the example that we, too, should judge, not after the seeing of the eye, nor the hearing of the ear, but with a righteous judgment.

The entire twelfth chapter of Isaiah speaks of Him. It tells of His anger being turned away and speaks of Him comforting His children. This harmonizes with Jesus' promise of the Comforter, which God gave to His followers on the Day of Pentecost. He Himself has become our strength, our song, and our salvation. Furthermore, Isaiah prophesied of how, in our day, people would say, "Praise the Lord!" and would draw water from the wells of salvation with joy. Truly, the Holy One of Israel is in our midst!

In expounding the Scriptures to the two disciples going to Emmaus, Jesus surely told them that He had fulfilled Isaiah 35:4-6. He, as their God, had come and healed them: the eyes of the blind had been opened, the ears of the deaf had been unstopped, the lame man had leaped, and

the mute had sung. Oh, yes! The disciples had seen all that fulfilled.

From there He probably took them to a passage of Scripture they had overlooked, in Isaiah 53. It speaks of Him as having neither form nor comeliness nor beauty that, when people see Him, they would desire Him. He was despised and rejected of people, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Though He was oppressed and afflicted, He did not open His mouth. He was numbered with the transgressors, and He made His grave with the wicked. No doubt Jesus showed them that He had fulfilled this passage of Scripture to the very letter in the last few days of His life.

The Book of Micah contains a verse that was fulfilled at the birth of Jesus: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Zechariah 9:9 was so completely fulfilled when Jesus rode into Jerusalem that this verse reads more like history than prophecy: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."

Malachi 3:1-3 describes His coming, following John the Baptist.

Outside the direct prophecies concerning Christ, many Old Testament characters prefigured Jesus: He is prefigured in Adam (Romans 5:14), in Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18), in Isaac (Genesis 21:2-3; 22:6-12), and in Joseph (Genesis 37:28; 45:5). Moses, Joshua and David are also types of Jesus. In fact the Scriptures are filled with the testimony of Him. (See John 5:39.)

Lesson 82
The Elect by Grace

In this study of Romans 11, we want to answer four questions: (1) Who are the elect by grace? (2) Who are the natural branches? (3) When were the natural branches broken off? (4) When will they be grafted in again?

Who Are the Elect by Grace?

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5). Those of Israel who received Jesus when He presented His gospel to them were not broken off and are called the "election of grace." The reason the rest were broken off was not just that they should fall, but that through their fall, salvation could come to the Gentiles (Romans 11:11). Because God broke some of the natural branches off, the Gentiles were grafted in with the remnant that was not broken off. This establishes that believers in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles, compose the church and are the "election of grace."

Who Were the Natural Branches?

The Israelites, God's chosen people, are the "natural branches." John 1:11-12 states, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." When He came to His own, He came to the natural branches, but His own did not receive Him, so they were broken off. But God did not break off "as many as received him"; they are the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5).

Some teach that Jesus did not come to Israel but only to the people of Judah, who are called the "Jews." However, Moses gave the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15-18 to the children of Israel: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." This prophecy is about Jesus, for Peter said in Acts 3:22-26 that Christ's being raised from the dead and being sent to bless them and turn them from their iniquities was a fulfillment of the prophecy made by Moses.

Again Peter said in Acts 2:36, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Peter here was preaching to all Israel, not merely to Judah. Moreover, his declaration that Jesus was the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Moses was not merely for Judah, for Moses said He would be raised up unto Israel, not merely a portion of Israel.

When Were They Broken Off?

Romans 11:11 says that Israel stumbled so that by their fall, which it calls being broken off, salvation came to the Gentiles. Let us look further into the Word concerning the stumbling of Israel, for we want to know when this took place. I Peter 2:7-8 says, "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." Acts 4:10-11 declares, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of

you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Also Romans 9:31-33 says, "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Clearly, the coming of Jesus to Israel is the stone over which they stumbled and were broken off, but unto us who believe, "He is precious."

It was not only the portion of Israel known as Judah that stumbled over Jesus. "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Isaiah 8:14).

This is a prophecy from Isaiah, who lived in the days when Israel was divided into two kingdoms, each under a king. It would have been in keeping with the theory we have mentioned if the verse said, "He shall be a snare to the house of Judah only." But Isaiah said this stumbling stone would be a sanctuary to some, and we understand now that He is that only to those who received Him and who called Him "precious." Furthermore, Isaiah said that Jesus would be a stone of stumbling to both houses of Israel, and this harmonizes with what Jesus said to His disciples when He sent them out to preach, before He was crucified. He said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:5-6). We should also notice that Paul said in Acts 26:6-7 he was being "judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come."

When Will They Be Grafted in Again?

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved" (Romans 11:25-26). Clearly God will graft Israel in again when the times of the Gentiles have ended and Israel turns back to God. We should not confuse those who are to be grafted in (Israel who will turn to Jesus in faith) with believers today (who inherit spiritual promises originally given to Israel). This event is not the present-day election of grace, but it is the election of Israel to their natural inheritance, as promised to their fathers, for the gifts and callings of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are without repentance (Romans 11:29).

Lesson 83
Proving God's Will

In this lesson, we will study Romans 12:1-10.

Verse 1. Since God is so compassionate, we should present all our faculties to Him, as an acceptable, living, and holy sacrifice. When we consider His mercy, this is only a reasonable service to render.

Verse 2. One cannot have God's best, which means growing in the knowledge and grace of God, with a divided mind, which means being led by the customs of the world. We need an entire renewal of our minds, as this is the only way to prove what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Verse 3. As an apostle and teacher, Paul warned everyone not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, that is, not to place himself into a rank higher than God has advanced him. He also says one ought to think soberly. It is possible for a person to be intemperate or intoxicated with the blessings of God, so that he will exalt himself and thus block his progress in God. But regardless of the blessing of God, one should hold himself down and prove each step of the way, for it is far better to understep than to overstep. It is far better to remain in a low place until a promotion comes from God than to be pushed off a high place and abased. "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

As Christians, we should strive to live in God's perfect will and to remain "hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). One man, whom God exalted in an important ministry, said, "If you can keep out of the ministry and keep well saved, do so by all means, for no man is fit for that high calling who does not have an attitude of 'Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel'" (I Corinthians 9:16). He who will not do anything for God unless he gets some "cheer from the gallery" never gets far in the ways of God. Thousands have shipwrecked their faith because of this very thing, who otherwise could have been greatly used of God.

Sometimes we will hear a fretful, up-and-down Christian say, "I would like to be in the service of God." Perhaps that very person is living right in the midst of golden opportunities. He may have a father, mother, sister, brother, neighbor, or friend who needs the help of a consecrated and holy child of God—someone who takes pleasure in the service of the Lord because the love of God is poured into his heart. Some feel they are not in the service of God unless they are in the limelight.

David found five little stones, long hid but washed clean in the brook. Larger stones would have been used in a building, but they patiently waited for God's call.

Five little pebbles lay in a brook,
Mentioned with honor in God's Holy Book.
Be thou a pebble, contented and low,
Ever kept clean by His mercies' pure flow,
Hidden and ready till Jesus shall look
And choose you and use you, a stone from the brook.
—Carter

Verses 4-5. In these verses we have the proof that this chapter is to those "baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13). There are many members, but one body, and all members do not have the same office. Every person who is baptized with the Holy Ghost needs to see the truth that we are one body and have need of each other (I Corinthians 12:21-22).

Verse 6. Members of the body have gifts that differ according to the work God has chosen for

each one to do. Each individual must find the will of God for his own work. Ephesians 4:1 says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." If someone's gift is to prophesy, he should speak according to the proportion of faith. (See I Corinthians 14:3.) In other words, he must be careful not to exalt his gift beyond what God has given. He must not take advantage of his gift in order to promote himself but keep in harmony with God and His Word.

Verse 7. The ministry here could be the ministry of the Word, or it could be some other ministry such as supplying in some material work of the church, or the office of a deacon. But whatever the ministry is, the person is to "wait on it," that is, fill it faithfully. A teacher should also exercise sound judgment in his duties.

Verse 8. A pastor or teacher or lay member may fill the office of an exhorter. This ability is found in one who has a good, fervent testimony and has a burden for weak and faltering members. His exhortations are uplifting, and he may also have an appeal to the unsaved.

In the same verse, we find a ministry that seems to be quite overlooked, and perhaps it is quite neglected by those who have it in their power to fulfill it: the gift of giving. This is a wonderful ministry for a person who has the ability to accumulate wealth. For instance, a farmer who knows how to make a farm profitable becomes a steward over his farm after he has surrendered all to Jesus. He produces God's potatoes and God's apples on God's land. He who plants potatoes shall eat of the potatoes, and he who feeds a flock shall drink the milk of the flock (I Corinthians 9:7). But after he has his living, he can use the increase to bless God's work.

There is also a ministry of showing mercy. Since God has such a variety of ministries, offices, and gifts, everyone should occupy a place in God's service. Showing mercy should be exercised on those who are in need of comfort, and it is to be done cheerfully.

Verse 9. We should have sincere love toward others. II Corinthians 6:6 speaks of the unfeigned love the apostles had for the church. Therefore, it must be possible to put on a feigned love. Those who are so nice to someone's face and later stick a knife in that person's back are practicing feigned love.

Verse 10. As for Christian love, we are to be affectionate to one another. As for worldly honor, we are to yield to one another.

Lesson 84
Obeying Rulers

In this lesson, we will consider Romans 13:1-6.

People often debate over to what extent Christians are subject to the rulers of the nation in which they live. To those who want to do the perfect will of God, there naturally is a great desire to know what God requires of them. Some believe that they are no longer required to obey anything but the laws of God set forth by the Scripture for the church's spiritual walk. They have interpreted this chapter to refer only to those who exercise spiritual rule over a new covenant people. But such an interpretation will not stand the test of the Scriptures.

As we carefully study this passage in connection with other verses of Scripture, we will find that the rulers mentioned here are those who have charge of national, state, or civic affairs.

Verse 1. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." This statement often makes Christians wonder how this can be true, since so many evil rulers have had charge of national, state, and civic affairs. But as we broaden our view of how God is working out His plan, we understand that nothing can happen except what His direct or permissive will has ordained. If God can raise up a Pharaoh to work out His will with the Israelites (Romans 9:17), He can set every king, president, governor, mayor, and even town marshal into office, so as to work out His plan for the ages. And that is what He has done and has declared in the Scriptures. God is the one who has ordained the principle of civil government. He thus tells us, His children, to be subject to civil authorities: "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Verse 2. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." This statement clearly shows us that God commands His people to give honor to those in charge of the government of this world because they are filling offices that exist for the purpose of correcting and punishing evil. Those who rebel against civil law are resisting God's will and will justly bring punishment upon themselves.

Verse 3-5. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same" (verse 3). This teaching harmonizes with what Peter said: "Submit, for the Lord's sake, to every authority set up by man, whether it be to the Emperor as supreme ruler, or to provincial Governors as sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and the encouragement of those who do what is right. For it is God's will that by doing what is right you should thus silence the ignorant talk of foolish persons. Be free men, and yet do not make your freedom an excuse for base conduct, but be God's bond-servants. Honour every one. Love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the Emperor" (I Peter 2:13-17, Weymouth).

As Christians live in obedience to rulers, they need not be afraid of them. In fact, when we live this way we earn the ruler's confidence, and we shall "have praise of the same." Judges and magistrates do not punish people for well doing, but for evil conduct. God has favored us with earthly governments that we might have protection to live out a quiet life in the fear of God. These rulers protect our homes and places of worship from evil people. We are not only to be subject to them to escape the wrath they inflict on evildoers, but we also are to submit to them for conscience's sake. A clear conscience is of great value.

Verse 6. We are to pay our taxes for this very reason, for tax money is used to give us protection. We also have free roads, sidewalks, schools, and so on because of tax. We can only have these things if someone is in authority to punish evildoers and collect taxes.

At this point, we have covered only one side of the question, that is, the laws that stand against

evildoers. On the other hand, we are faced with the question of how far a Christian can go in obedience to the laws that call for service to a nation.

II Corinthians 5:20 says, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." And Philippians 3:20 states, "We, however, are free citizens of Heaven, and we are waiting with longing expectation for the coming from Heaven of a Saviour" (Weymouth). According to these verses of Scripture we are ambassadors in this world, with our citizenship in heaven, representing our King and His kingdom. If we find out what is required of an ambassador in the country where he is sent, we will know our duties here on earth. We know that an ambassador is required to live up to the laws against evil and to respect and honor the ruler of the country in which he lives. He must represent his own country well at all times. He would not be honoring or remaining loyal to his own government if he attended banquets or places of amusement where his own government was mocked and ridiculed. Neither would it be in keeping with his duties as an ambassador to take up arms to help that nation fight if it went to war against another nation.

We will please our King and remain an honored citizen of heaven if we faithfully fulfill the work of an ambassador. Our work as an ambassador for Christ in this world is to beseech people, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God.

Finally, if the laws of a nation would tell us to disobey God's law or to endorse evil, our response must be, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Lesson 85
The Law of Love

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8).

We must endeavor to stay out of debt, to pay all the debts that we have, and to pay them on time. As a general principle, we should not incur debts unless the debt is covered by property such as a car, home, or furniture. In that case, if one were unable to pay, the debtor would be the loser because he would lose what he had paid. It is not God's way for us to contract debts with nothing to back them and thereby incur debts that we cannot pay.

We should make every attempt to pray for our needs and live within our means, for unbelievers will heap great reproach on the church when believers, who profess a victorious life, leave their debts unpaid. It is quite puzzling to sincere people how some believers can go on testifying boldly with unmet obligations behind them, while others who are more conscientious feel condemned and lose their testimony because they are unable to pay their debts.

The songwriter of old was in keeping with the Scriptures when he wrote, "The debt of love I owe." We are to owe no one anything "but to love one another"; and if we do that, we fulfill the law. This statement makes it quite difficult for those who would have us turn to the deeds of the law for our justification. They teach that when Jesus said He came to fulfill the law, He only meant that He came to keep the law and that He would give His followers grace to keep it also. In other words, Jesus would give us power to be justified by the deeds of the law. But actually we are justified by faith "*without the deeds of the law"* (Romans 3:28).

Was the law sinful? No, it was holy, just, and good (Romans 7:12). It was even spiritual, but those under it were carnal, sold under sin (Romans 7:14). Were the patriarchs under the law from Adam to Moses? No, God added the law 430 years after He made the promise to Abraham (Galatians 3:17). Why was it added? To bring the knowledge of sin and to work wrath (Romans 3:20; 4:15). It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come (Galatians 3:19). It was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (the seed) (Galatians 3:24). But since faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Galatians 3:25).

But if Christ's claim that He came to fulfill the law does not mean that He came to keep the law, how then did He fulfill it? Jesus fulfilled the law by meeting its greatest demand, for it demanded death. If one person murders another person, does the officer rush out and demand that the murderer should keep the law that says murder is a crime? No. The officer arrests the murderer, for he cannot now fulfill the law by not murdering in the future. No, the only demand the law has on him now is the penalty of his crime, which in many cases is death.

When Christ came, He found a world in which all had sinned and had come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). That brought all people into the same class as the guilty murderer we have just mentioned. And while they were in this sinful state, what was the demand of the law? Was it that they be good people and not transgress any more? No, the law demanded death. But our wonderful Christ, with His clean and spotless life, took the sins of the whole human race upon Himself. He fulfilled the law by tasting death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9).

During His ministry He prepared His messengers as much as possible for their future work. After His crucifixion, He rose from the dead and met with them, and by their faith in Him, they were completely freed from the demands of the law. The Lord commissioned them to proclaim the wonderful news everywhere that He had fulfilled the law with its demands and that all who believe in Him will be delivered from every claim of the law.

Jesus put the new covenant into force. Those who have been baptized into Christ have put on

Christ (Galatians 3:27) and have become the seed of Abraham and heirs of the promise. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). We get a new birth (John 3:3), a new tongue (Mark 16:17), a new name (Revelation 2:17), and new wine that will not stand to be put into old bottles (the old covenant) (Matthew 9:17).

Along with the new things we receive in the new covenant, it is fitting that we have a "new commandment" also. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). This brings us back to our text in Romans 13:8, "Owe no man any thing but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

In summary, Jesus came and, by His death, fulfilled the law by meeting its demand, for the law has no more demand on a dead person. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to send the Holy Ghost to believers, and we have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that He has given to us (Romans 5:5). Since Jesus has fulfilled the demands of the law for us and has baptized us with the Holy Ghost, we can fulfill the law by keeping the new commandment. We are justified by faith without the deeds of the law (Romans 3:28).

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31). How is the law established? It clearly works wrath upon every person outside of Christ, but the believer is no longer under the law but under grace (Romans 6:14). "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4). "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?" (Romans 6:15). "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2). We are not only dead to sin, but we are also dead to the law, that we might be married to another, even Christ, who has been raised from the dead (Romans 7:4). If we remain under the law after we come into Christ, we have two husbands and are adulterers. (See Romans 7:3.) We are now, however, delivered from the law (Romans 7:6).

It is interesting to note that the two greatest commandments according to Jesus are not from the Ten Commandments, but they summarize and encompass them. (See Mark 12:28-31.)

Lesson 86
Meats and Days

Romans 14 gives us valuable teaching on the attitude we should have regarding the eating of meats (foods) and the keeping of days. It also shows that there can be differences among us concerning nonessentials, or nonmoral issues, while we still receive each other as brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

The first verse commands us to receive a weaker believer; nevertheless, we are not to bring in controversy because we differ. There will be differences in what one believer can do with a clear conscience and what another believer can do without feeling condemned. "One man's faith allows him to eat anything, while a man of weaker faith eats nothing but vegetables" (Romans 14:2, Weymouth). Furthermore, we are not to despise or judge each other in these things, for "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean" (Romans 14:14).

In this connection we should note what Jesus taught in Mark 7:14-15: "And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: there is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man." The disciples did not understand His teaching, so they "asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them . . . whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats" (Mark 7:17-19). By these words, Jesus pronounced all foods clean. (See Weymouth.) Jesus went on to explain, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:20-23).

It is human traditions that say, "Do not taste this, and do not touch that." "If you have died with Christ and have escaped from the world's rudimentary notions, why, as though your life still belonged to the world, do you submit to such precepts as 'Do not handle this'; 'Do not taste that'; 'Do not touch that other thing'—referring to things which are all intended to he used up and perish—in obedience to mere human injunctions and teachings? These rules have indeed an appearance of wisdom where self-imposed worship exists, and an affectation of humility and an ascetic severity. But not one of them is of any value in combating the indulgence of our lower natures" (Colossians 2:20-23, Weymouth).

These passages of Scripture ought to prove to us that God is not concerned about what we eat, but He is very much concerned that we "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3), even though we may differ greatly on these things we are now considering. Romans 14:3-4 clearly says that whether we eat or do not eat certain foods, we are all servants of one Master. We are not to judge another's servant, for to his own Master he stands or falls. Yes, God is able to make him stand.

Romans 14 then discusses the keeping of the Sabbath or other holy days in the same way, since there is a difference of belief among believers in this regard also. "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Romans 14:5). The keeping of a day is like refusing to eat meat: it has no power in combating the things that defile a person. Colossians 2:16-17 teaches us not to judge each other regarding foods or in the keeping of the Sabbath: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a

shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

There is no verse of Scripture, after the new covenant came into effect, that commands believers to keep a Sabbath or that describes where Christians kept the Sabbath as a mandatory law. The only biblical instructions regarding activities on the Sabbath are in the Old Testament, in which God commanded Israel to keep the seventh day as a day of rest.

Most professed Christians do not keep the day they call their Sabbath according to the Sabbath rules in the Bible. Therefore, they have no right to judge others, even if some believe they can do more work on that day. For instance, one may feel free to peel and cook potatoes on that day, but if a neighbor went to the garden and dug potatoes before cooking them, the other would judge him as a Sabbath breaker. But the fact is they both broke the Sabbath according to Old Testament law, for that law said they were to be put to death if they gathered sticks to make a fire or did any work on that day. Romans 14 forbids Christians to judge each other on this issue, for the New Testament has no such rules. But he wrote, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Romans 14:5).

Many people believe in keeping, in some manner, either the seventh or the first day of the week as a Sabbath. Therefore, we should be careful not to say more than the Word of God has said in these verses of Scripture we have considered.

So far we have only been dealing with the wrong in judging one another in these matters. It is not wrong to refrain from eating certain foods or to keep certain days, but it is wrong to judge others who differ from us in our beliefs in these matters.

However, Romans 14 also tells us not to put a stumbling block in a fellow believer's way (Romans 14:13). For example, we may feel clear, as far as the law of God for this age is concerned, to do many things on Sunday. However, since Sunday is a recognized rest day, even for many unsaved people, in a sense we esteem it above other days. First, because it is a day when most of God's people are not working and can assemble together, we make it a special day of worship. Second, we avoid any activities that might be a stumbling block to fellow believers who esteem it as a day to refrain from labor.

Lesson 87
The First Day of the Week

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts 20:7).

Some use this text in an attempt to prove that Sunday is the Christian's Sabbath. A careful study of this verse in context, however, will show that Paul, instead of keeping this day as a rest day, left Troas on the first day of the week and traveled that day. It is evident that the twenty-four-hour day started at sunset, which was the Jewish custom, instead of at midnight, as it does now. As an example, in Mark 1:32 people brought the sick to Jesus in the evening after the Sabbath had passed, for they feared what the Jewish leaders would say if Jesus healed the sick on the Sabbath (Mark 3:2). From this we see that the Sabbath ended on Saturday at dark, not at midnight.

Paul met with the saints at Troas on the first day of the week to break bread. Since Paul preached until midnight, he undoubtedly began the meeting after sunset. They broke bread on the first day of the week even though it was after midnight.

A second verse of Scripture that some use to prove that Sunday is the Christian's Sabbath is I Corinthians 16:2. Here also, nothing is said about the first day of the week being the Sabbath on which the Christians rested. It merely says that upon the first day of the week they were to set aside an offering as God had prospered them.

The seventh-day Sabbath of the old covenant is in keeping with the nature of that covenant, in that it proved to be a covenant that brought death (Romans 7:5). The seventh day comes at the end of the week, or when the week dies.

On the other hand, it is quite significant that Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, making it possible to fulfill the new covenant. The first day is the beginning or resurrection of a new week, so it is in keeping with the new covenant that we now enjoy, since we have been resurrected from dead works and live a new life in the Spirit. We, therefore, can esteem the first day of the week above others as the day to worship the resurrected Christ. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

In conclusion, the most scriptural practice is to keep Sunday as a day of worship and work as little as possible to avoid causing anyone to stumble. We find spiritual rest in the fulfillment of Isaiah 28:11-12, Acts 2:4, and Matthew 11:28-30. We have rest for the soul seven days a week. That rest is in the Holy Ghost.

Lesson 88
Division Makers

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18).

Romans 14 exhorts us to bear with those who do not believe as we do on certain things; it is blessed to get such teaching from God's Word, since it promotes unity among God's people. But like most subjects, the truth lies between two extremes, and in this lesson, we are brought face to face with the other side of a great truth. Some who desire unity refuse to heed the words of our present text and stress unity at all cost. Just as we are commanded to hold unity on one hand, we are also commanded to break unity on the other. The trouble is that so many times the division maker, described in our text, is someone with a pleasing personality who can make his message attractive, for "by good words and fair speeches" he deceives the hearts of the simple.

These verses have been literally fulfilled many times by ministers who originally came to help in another's assembly as an evangelist or supply pastor. They took advantage of the opening, however, and gained the influence of a portion of the assembly. Even though the pastor entertained and fed them and took offerings for them, they still pulled away some of the believers and formed an assembly for themselves. By doing this, they proved that they "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly [selfish desires]." We are commanded to put a mark on such people and avoid them.

No minister who is following Jesus and has the work of the Lord at heart to bring glory to God could ever do such a thing as that. It is hard to understand how people who profess to be spiritual could follow such a leader and have fellowship with such division makers. Those who do are "simple," meaning, perhaps, a class who are either spiritual babes, recently converted, or the people described in Hebrews 5:12 who ought to be teachers but who have never grown up from babyhood.

The best remedy to keep from having such division makers is to organize true ministers, having real principles as the foundation for the organization. They should all stand behind each other, and when someone proves himself to be a division maker, the whole body of ministers should *mark him* and *avoid him* and not have fellowship with him until he repents and makes restitution as far as he can.

It makes no difference whether the division makers are ministers or lay members, they should be marked and avoided. In Acts 20:29, Paul called some "grievous wolves" who enter in, not sparing the flock. He said that people would arise even from the true assembly who would draw away disciples after themselves. Let us be careful lest we through some selfish motive find ourselves division makers, disapproved of and judged by God.

Lesson 89
Carnality

In this lesson, we will consider I Corinthians 1:1-15 and 3:1-8. These words were originally written to "the church of God which is at Corinth."

In our former lessons, we found that the church of God is the body of Christ, having its beginning on the Day of Pentecost, and it is the Lord who adds members to the body. They are added by being baptized by one Spirit into this body. Thus when Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, he was writing to a group of people baptized by the Holy Ghost, as in Acts 2:4.

This assembly of believers had its beginning under the ministry of Paul. Acts 18 contains some information regarding how this church began. Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, was one of the first believers in Corinth, followed by many other Corinthians who believed and were baptized. Paul said that his preaching to them "was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Corinthians 2:4-5).

The church at Corinth had a good beginning. Paul addressed them as "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (I Corinthians 1:2). Not only that, he also declared that in everything they were enriched; they excelled in teaching, preaching, and knowledge, as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them. For a person to have God's New Testament message or testimony confirmed in him means that he is not only Spirit filled but also a witness to those about him. Furthermore, Paul wrote so that the Corinthians would come behind in no gift as they waited for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a much higher state of experience in this life than what is described here; but in the face of all these blessings, the Corinthian believers focused their eyes on different ministers and became divided as to which leader they should follow. One group accepted Paul, another group proclaimed Apollos as their leader, and another group said that they were under Cephas (Peter). Still another group claimed Christ as their only leader.

In our day many assemblies have proven themselves to be like the Corinthians. But sadly, the modern Pauls, Apolloses, and Cephases have often proven that they do not have the noble character that these apostles had. The Corinthian church could not carry their division very far because the leaders refused to accept this division. How sad it is to see ministers, whom God could use in a blessed way, lay aside the beautiful principles of a faithful man of God and stoop to the low place of helping promote division, simply because disgruntled and selfish believers have influenced them to do so!

Paul tried to shame the Corinthian church by asking them, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Corinthians 1:13). He added, "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name" (I Corinthians 1:14-15). The wise, keen, and alert apostle to the Gentiles gave them no encouragement in such a thing but rather reproved them.

Since they were divided, Paul told the Corinthians that he could not speak to them as spiritual but as carnal, even as babes in Christ (I Corinthians 3:1). He had to speak to them as babes who must have milk, since they were unable to eat meat. No doubt they had been in the truth long enough that they should have been able to eat meat. Only spiritual believers, however, can eat meat, but they were carnal: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (I Corinthians 3:3).

Here we see that a people who had the highest kind of record to begin with, being Spirit-filled and blessed, had trouble with the self-life, that is, the old nature. It is neither eradicated nor destroyed at our conversion or at any other time in this life; furthermore, it will sit on the throne

of our will and rule us, if we do not allow the Holy Spirit to have full control of our lives, which would give us the victory. Let no one be deceived into believing that at some point in this life an instantaneous work of grace will eradicate his old nature. We will only be victorious by knowing the truth; it is the truth that makes us free. When we acknowledge our weaknesses to Jesus and call on Him for grace, *He will keep us in victory*.

In I Corinthians 3, Paul did not mention the class who said they were of Christ, when he told the Corinthians that they were carnal. Let us take warning, then, and refrain from saying that we are of Smith or of Jones, for we are all of Christ if we are in Him.

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (I Corinthians 3:5-8).

It is very important to find the truth concerning the place that God's ministers hold in the church. They are to be honored as leaders but not to the extent that the church becomes divided over the minister of their choice. Imprudent saints have greatly harmed the work of the Lord by showing favoritism to individual persons and by only supporting the minister of their own human choice.

On the other hand, ministers should be very careful not to encourage such saints and thus cause a division in the church; for if the ministers hold together, the saints shall hold together also. If they have no one to lead them, they cannot hold out long in their division.

When the world sees these things, they have a right to ask, "What kind of religion is this?" We can answer them, even if they do not understand, that this is just "Corinthian Pentecost." Even though it is plain that such things existed in the early church, any group should be ashamed if it holds no higher standard than what Paul reproved.

Lesson 90
The Only Foundation

The subject of this lesson is I Corinthians 3:9-23.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (verse 9). Paul and Apollos were laborers with God; the church was the result of their labor. At the time Paul wrote this epistle, they were still building, for it was God's husbandry (field) still in the making.

Paul had laid a sure foundation, and others had entered into the labor. Paul said, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (verse 10). There is no other foundation that can be laid except Jesus Christ, but it is possible to fail in building on this foundation. Those who do not have Jesus Christ as their foundation cannot even be called Christians. But the sad part is that those who have built on the true foundation but have failed to get their instructions from God have not built with materials that will stand the fire, namely, gold, silver, and precious stones (verse 12). Three kinds of materials mentioned shall not stand the test of fire: wood, hay, and stubble. The material with which he builds will be the test of a person's labor for God; it will also determine whether he will be rewarded or suffer loss.

Some have interpreted these verses of Scripture to mean that a person once saved cannot be lost. They say he may live an evil life and not get a reward for his works, but his salvation is sure regardless of what he does. God's Book does not teach this doctrine, however. Galatians 6:7-8 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Moreover, Romans 8:13 declares, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." These plain passages of Scripture speak for themselves and do not leave a chance for a person to inherit eternal life who lives after the lusts of the flesh.

In our lesson, we are not dealing with salvation itself. We are dealing with the believer and the works he is building on the true foundation. It is clear that many in our day have indeed begun on the true foundation, but they have not erected their building out of material that will stand the test of His Word. One of the most obvious materials that will not stand the test of fire is self-righteousness. The more one carefully studies the Word, the more he is convinced that self-righteousness is the building material that is often used with a great outward show of authenticity. It is more deceptive than some others because it makes such a great show of being Christian.

Some people tell children, "Be a good boy and you can go to heaven when you die." Everyone will admit it is good advice to tell a child to be good. But if we tell a child that this will allow him to go to heaven, and he takes it seriously enough, this may cause him to build himself up into a very righteous man but still not obtain eternal life.

All over Christendom, thousands of ministers and religious workers have built with this kind of material on the Christian foundation, and all their works shall surely be burned up in God's fire. But God has sent out a rescue army going everywhere trying to bring the self-righteous hay, wood, and stubble into the righteousness of God—the gold, silver, and precious stones. This is a supernatural work, for nothing but a miracle can change any person from his own righteousness to the righteousness of God. Some leaders do not want the supernatural to come in, so they fight to bar the truth from their followers. And if one of them breaks over the fence and gets into the clover field of God's righteousness, the leader will cast him out as evil.

We are brought face to face with the plain fact that at least one class that builds on the true foundation will not stand the test of the fire, and in most cases the leader will go with his works

into the fire of God's wrath. But there is a chance for the laborers to be saved, if they will take God's way and be willing to let the fire of God's power purge them. They will suffer loss, in that among the fruit of all their labors, there will not be one person they have been able to lead into the righteousness of God. So they lose their reward, but they themselves are saved on condition that they are willing to take God's way and let the fire of God purge them.

Here and there we find a person who has come into the light and has discovered that in his entire ministry he has not built anything that will stand the test of God's fire. But when he sees himself in this light, all those whom he has helped into their self-righteous condition will turn and become his persecutors, as he receives the Holy Ghost.

This is straightforward teaching, but it needs to be made known. The Scripture declares that no one can have the righteousness of God without God *imputing* it to him or *imparting* it to him.

God imputed righteousness to Abraham, for his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. But Paul had the righteousness of God both *imputed* and *imparted* to him, for he lived under the new covenant. Thus he was able to be baptized in Jesus' name and baptized with the Holy Ghost. By the indwelling Holy Spirit, he was able to experience the impartation of Christ's righteousness (Romans 8:1-4, 10).

Abraham did not live in the days of the new covenant and so was not privileged to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit that Paul received (John 7:38-39). If he had lived till Paul's day, he would have been able to receive the promise. (See Galatians 3:14.) But he died like the other notable men and women of the Old Testament without receiving the promise, God having provided some better thing for Paul and other New Testament believers (Hebrews 11:39-40).

God counted many to be righteous by their faith, who did not received the promise. However, it is reasonable to believe that if the experience that imparts righteousness is here, God will no longer impute righteousness to people who refuse to accept this biblical experience.

Questions on Lessons 81–90

Lesson 81

1. Identify some passages of Scripture that Jesus could have used in expounding to the disciples the things concerning Himself.
2. What outstanding prophecy did God give to Moses concerning Jesus?
3. What verses of Scripture used in this lesson to teach that Jesus is God?
4. Where in the Old Testament do we find much concerning the humanity and atoning sacrifice of Christ?
5. What prophecy concerning Jesus was fulfilled when the multitudes took part?

Lesson 82

1. Who are the elect by grace?
2. Who were the natural branches?
3. Who did Peter say to let know that Jesus was Lord and Christ?
4. What passage of Scripture prophesied that people would stumble at the stumbling stone?
5. When is Israel to be grafted in again?

Lesson 83

1. For what reason did Paul say we should present our bodies to the Lord?
2. What must happen for us to understand God's perfect will for us?
3. What attitude has caused the shipwreck of many?
4. When in our Christian life should we enter the service of the Lord?
5. What gift in Romans 12:8 may we all have to some degree?

Lesson 84

1. What should be our attitude toward the rulers who are in office to keep the peace?
2. How can we put to silence the ignorant talk of foolish people?
3. How does the government help us as worshipers?
4. What benefit is there in paying taxes?
5. What is the best way to judge how far we should go in government affairs?

Lesson 85

1. What sort of debt can a Christian feel good about incurring?
2. Why was the law given?
3. Explain how Jesus fulfilled the law.
4. According to Scripture, how many people broke the law?
5. What new commandment did Jesus give?

Lesson 86

1. How should Christians treat a weak brother or sister?
2. About what was Jesus more concerned than the eating of meats?
3. What was Paul's teaching concerning the keeping of a Sabbath day?
4. What did the law demand for the breaking of the Sabbath?
5. What would be wrong concerning the Christian's attitude toward others in the matter of meats and days?

Lesson 87

1. What proof do we have that when Jesus was on earth the Jews reckoned a new day as beginning at evening time?

2. On what day did Paul meet with the saints in Troas to break bread?
3. In what way does the seventh day symbolize with the law?
4. What harm could result from Christians not keeping Sunday as a day of worship?
5. What is the true fulfillment of the Sabbath rest for the Christian?

Lesson 88

1. What does the Bible say to do to those who cause division?
2. How do division makers get their influence?
3. What type of people do they deceive?
4. What is a good way to handle those who cause division today?
5. What did Paul call divisive people in Acts 20:29?

Lesson 89

1. How Paul identify and describe the Corinthians in the opening of his first letter to them?
2. Why did he call them carnal?
3. Why could they not eat spiritual meat?
4. What group was not mentioned as being carnal?
5. Who were Paul and Apollos, and what was their work?

Lesson 90

1. What did Paul say the saints were?
2. What was the foundation that Paul laid?
3. What will become of wrong works that are built on this foundation?
4. What happens to the person who builds with the wrong materials?
5. What is one outstanding thing that will not stand the fire?

Lesson 91

A Spiritual Father's Plea

A careful study of both of Paul's letters to the Corinthians will help us understand I Corinthians 4. First, we should notice the nature of the preaching under which these saints were brought to the Lord. Paul had come to Corinth from Athens, where he had approached certain philosophers who spent their time in telling or hearing some new thing. Paul used logic and reason to present the gospel to them, and he left there seeing little accomplished. (See Acts 17.)

But his coming to Corinth was different. I Corinthians 2:1-5 contains the testimony he gave concerning his coming to Corinth. He told how he laid aside human wisdom and yielded himself, in weakness and much trembling, to the Spirit's power, demonstrating the gospel in the supernatural. The wise of this world would call his preaching foolishness, but he preached with the power and the wisdom of God. The faith of this church did not rest on human wisdom, but on the power of God. God used Paul mightily in Corinth to establish a church that was blessed in utterance and knowledge and that came behind in no gift.

Experience has taught us that assemblies established by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power will never be satisfied with anything short of the supernatural moving of God's Spirit in their midst. But herein lies a danger, for unless the believers maintain holiness of the heart and crucifixion of the flesh, the demonstrations become tainted by flesh, and so become unfruitful.

From a study of the two letters to the Corinthians, we find that while Paul referred to their original state of spirituality, at the same time he called them carnal. He also rebuked them for allowing a person who committed a very wicked sin—fornication with his stepmother—to remain among them. He said they made no effort to purge the sin out of their midst.

From I Corinthians 14, we understand that they abused the gift of tongues. They no longer felt their need to have Paul as their instructor; and when Paul found this out, he wrote, "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Corinthians 4:1). Then verse 3 says, "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self." The reason was that he had made himself nothing, and when one has obtained that place, he is past judgment. While he was conscious that he had not in any way been unfaithful, he did not use even that to justify himself, for he left all of that to the Lord.

A carnal Christian is a spiritually blind Christian. Paul wanted the Corinthians to see where their puffed-up condition had brought them, so he wrote, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you" (verse 8).

In God's order, the apostles had the first position of authority in the church, but the Corinthians had reversed the order. Paul wrote to them, "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (verses 9-15).

Paul held his position as the spiritual father of the church in Corinth; while the Corinthians

may have had ten thousand instructors, it was Paul who had won them to Christ, through the gospel.

He, indeed, had a claim on them, such as having the right to be supported by them, but he had proven that this claim did not arise from selfish desires. The one desire that he had was not for their material goods, but that they might be faithful saints and make it to glory. None but those who have had this experience know the suffering that a spiritual father has when he sees those he has brought to the Lord fail and lose interest in the things of God. On the other hand, it brings great joy when the saints walk in the truth and live in victory. The apostle John said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 4).

Paul earnestly pleaded with the Corinthians, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (I Corinthians 4:16). He went on to say, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power" (verses 17-19).

We might ask, "Paul, when the very ones whom you have loved so much cause you to suffer, does it pay after all?" We would hear him say, "Yes, it pays if but one soul, out of all my labors in Corinth, joins me in glory. To know he is there because of my labors will have paid more than all that can be measured by human measurement."

If we desire to be ministers like Paul, let us labor on for the kingdom. We must preach the Word, lead people to be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire, and in the face of all discouragement, keep moving on. There awaits a crown at the end of the way.

Lesson 92
Fornication

In the last lesson, we saw that Paul tried to get the Corinthian saints to see the puffed-up and carnal condition they were in. In this lesson on I Corinthians 5-6, we will see how he brought them face to face with the awful sin of fornication, which they had allowed to exist in their midst. They had made no effort to rid themselves of the offender. Paul told them that they were puffed up, rather than being mournful, as they should have been.

This great man of God possessed the gift of discernment of spirits, which enabled him to know and to judge their condition even though he was not in bodily presence with them (I Corinthians 5:3). Spiritual discernment is a wonderful gift. It is no marvel, then, that he suffered for the churches (Colossians 1:24), since he could know their spiritual condition while yet in his closet alone with God. He told them that so closely did he feel their fellowship and carry a burden for them that when they were gathered together, his spirit was with them.

Paul knew things were taking place in the Corinthian church that should not have. When he knew of this particular instance of fornication, he told them to turn the offender over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh that his spirit might be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus. It is sometimes difficult to carry out this apostolic injunction, because of the need to have unity in the assembly when dealing with this type of transgression. If the saints are divided over conditions of this kind, not only will the assembly suffer, but the guilty party will be hindered from repenting because of the sympathy he receives from one group of saints. Paul, however, taught that fornication is a wicked thing that we should purge from our midst, or it will corrupt the whole assembly. Therefore, if a member of the church persists in unrepentant sin of this nature, he must be put out of fellowship so that he might repent.

Paul's method in dealing with such open, unrepentant sin was different from that mentioned by Jesus in regard to the tares (Matthew 13:24-30). Jesus said, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Obviously, there is a vast difference between fornication and the sins that the sowing of tares among wheat represents. The tares that Jesus spoke of were counterfeit wheat with such close resemblance to the authentic wheat that it took great skill to discern the difference. They were sown so close to the wheat that to pull them up would destroy the wheat also, so He said to let them grow together till the harvest. Some ministers with years of experience have been able to see some of the tares in their assemblies but, knowing what Jesus said to do, have been tolerant of them. But when a wicked, unrepentant offender, such as a fornicator, is discovered in the assembly, God has demanded that the church's leaders expel that wicked person from the assembly.

In I Corinthians 6, Paul rebuked the Corinthian church for not judging this matter. He spoke to their shame that they had not allowed this matter to be judged by even those least esteemed in the church and that there was not a wise enough man among them to judge this matter. He reasoned that since the saints shall judge the world and even angels, they should have been able to judge this wicked thing. He upbraided them for not settling their affairs by the wisdom of believers. Instead, brother had gone to the law against brother before unbelievers. It does not take two Christians long to settle a difference between them, if both are willing to go God's way, that is, to suffer wrong for the work's sake.

All the disorder in this church came about because the people had not asked for and accepted counsel from those whom God had placed over them in the Lord. Time and again assemblies experience disorder, with some being wrecked forever, because the people set aside the church's leadership, believing they could have more freedom by "letting the Holy Ghost be their leader." Fleshly messages and demonstrations became the ruling force, and the Holy Ghost had no chance to lead.

If He had led, He would have set wise leaders over them to discern between flesh and Spirit and good and evil.

We must remember that it is the Holy Ghost who sets the leaders in the church. He also gives supernatural gifts to leaders, including the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. Paul demonstrated that he had the word of wisdom by the great work he did in planting churches. He gave Apollos credit for having great spiritual leadership, perhaps including the word of knowledge, for he said Apollos "watered." It takes knowledge to be able to water, for saints well-watered will grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Paul, the great holiness preacher, asked, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" (I Corinthians 6:9). Though we are not saved by our righteousness, if we possess God's righteousness, we will live a holy life. People who continue to live in sin will not inherit the kingdom of God. Then he said, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (verse 11).

As we study the Word of God, we have to conclude that multitudes of people are deceived, having a form of godliness but lacking the power to live above the flesh. They do not claim to live a holy life, and yet they still have a vain hope of going to heaven. They are out of place in a real, red-hot Holy Ghost prayer meeting where folks pray earnestly, shout, and rejoice in the Lord, and yet they hope to spend eternity in a heaven where the saints gloriously shout for joy. Surely that class of people would be more out of place there than in a prayer meeting here. Many of them become real enemies to those who love the Lord so much that they praise and worship Him in the Spirit.

Paul told the Corinthians that their bodies were members of Christ and forbade them to take the members of Christ and join them to a harlot. "Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (I Corinthians 6:16-18). Clearly, a person who sins does not only do it with his body but with his spirit also; therefore, one cannot claim that his spirit is holy while his body sins! The believer who commits fornication sins in his spirit and also sins against his own body, which is the temple of God.

Lesson 93
Marriage

In this lesson, we will study I Corinthians 7. After our relationship with God, our marriages are the most sacred part of our lives. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Husband and wife hold secrets in their married life, and it is not only their right to keep them to themselves, but it would be dishonorable to make them known.

The Word of God upholds the marriage relationship of husband and wife and in no way teaches that a single life is more holy than a married life. But Paul, in writing about believers, expressed his judgment that if someone possesses sufficient self-control, it is better if he remains single, particularly during times of persecution and social turmoil. But all do not possess the gift of celibacy. Therefore, if a person cannot maintain self-control, he should marry.

Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." This teaching harmonizes with I Corinthians 7:3-5, which states that a husband and wife are not independent of each other, but each owes the other certain rights. These they may refuse by mutual consent, for a time, that they may give themselves to prayer. Such plain teaching ought to silence teachers who have caused great harm by proclaiming that singles are holier than married couples. Of course, single Christians who are holy do live a celibate life. Furthermore, a married couple's intimate life with each other is entirely their own business, and they should not discuss it with others. Nevertheless, if someone advocates celibacy as a more holy lifestyle than marital intimacy, they have missed God's Word.

Paul recommended a single life when the person in question has the gift of celibacy, particularly in view of the unsettled circumstances that faced believers in his day. He reasoned that the person who gets married will have trouble in the flesh. Thus, people who contemplate marriage should get the best information available concerning the problems of married life before making such a sacred vow.

Paul explained that a married person has responsibilities that the single person does not have. "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife" (I Corinthians 7:32-33). Then there is usually the added responsibility of caring for children, who will likely come along. To board, clothe, and school a family is expensive. In some cases, mighty men of God have ceased preaching in order to earn an increased income for their family.

Every soul who goes into the vineyard of the Lord should carefully consider these matters and seek God's will in this regard. It is good for a couple who plan to marry not to be too hasty about it but to take plenty of time after they have known each other, in order to prove God's will. This is not only for their own benefit but for others also who will see their example. Marriages that take place after a short acquaintance often fail.

Many people have misunderstood I Corinthians 7:36-38. The Weymouth translation says: "If, however, a father thinks he is acting unbecomingly towards his still unmarried daughter if she be past the bloom of her youth, and so the matter is urgent, let him do what she desires; he commits no sin; she and her suitor should be allowed to marry. But if a father stands firm in his resolve, being free from all external constraint and having a legal right to act as he pleases, and in his own mind has come to the decision to keep his daughter unmarried, he will do well. So that he who gives his daughter in marriage does well, and yet he who does not give her in marriage will do better." In Paul's day, it was customary for a father to give his daughter to the suitor of his choice, or he could keep her from marriage altogether. This custom clarifies this passage of Scripture, so that we can understand what it means.

I Corinthians 7 also reveals God's will for the Christian husband or wife whose spouse is unsaved. II Corinthians 6:14 declares that a believer should not be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever. While this primarily refers to personal relationships, it can apply to business partnerships and other things as well. It is good that Paul gave believers instruction in I Corinthians 7, so they will know what to do if they are married to an unbeliever. The only time this should occur is if two unbelievers have married and later one of them turns to the Lord. The Word clearly teaches that an unmarried Christian should not marry an unsaved person. In Deuteronomy 7:3-6, God commanded Israel not to intermarry with other nations, since a non-Israelite would often lead an Israelite into idol worship.

I Corinthians 7:12-13 teach that if a believer is married to an unbelieving spouse and the spouse is pleased to dwell with him, he should not leave her. I Peter 3:1-2 also gives good instructions for such cases: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation." I Corinthians 7:39-40 says that a widowed believer can marry again but "only in the Lord." Weymouth says, "Providing the man she marries is a Christian." Such teaching is in keeping with good judgment, for there are many heartbreaking stories of Christians receiving cruel and often abusive treatment from unbelieving spouses. Why any Spirit-filled young man or woman want a worldly spouse who only enjoys worldly amusements?

Lesson 94
Meat Offered to Idols

Paul addressed the subject of eating meat offered to idols in I Corinthians 8. "Now as to things which have been sacrificed to idols. This is a subject which we already understand—because we all have knowledge of it. Knowledge, however, tends to make people conceited; it is love that builds us up. If any man imagines that he already possesses any true knowledge, he has yet attained to no knowledge of the kind to which he ought to have attained; but if any one loves God, that man is known by God. As to eating things which have been sacrificed to idols, we are fully aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no God but One" (I Corinthians 8:1-4, Weymouth).

The greatest of all virtues is love, and every test of Christian character or conduct is proven to be genuine when it stands the test of love. Let no person think he can dodge this issue and be justified before God. Love can never fail, because God is love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (I John 4:8).

In Paul's day, there were many gods and many lords, but to the believer there was only one God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ. Everyone, however, did not have this knowledge, so he exhorted the believers to prevent the liberty that this knowledge brought from becoming a stumbling block to them. One who had knowledge that the idol was nothing could eat meat offered to an idol, and it would not mean anything more to him than eating meat not offered to idols. On the other hand, some weaker believers who saw him might stumble over his freedom.

While few people in our society today worship idols as people did in the first century, we can learn a great lesson from Paul's teaching. There are many ways in which we may turn someone away from seeking the Lord by our carelessness. We might feel justified in our conduct, but the freedom we take could be a stumbling block to someone else.

There are those about us who hold a high standard for Christians. They declare that if they ever become Christians they want to live up to that standard, and naturally they are looking for someone who is living such a life. They hear our testimony of the glory and grace we have received in the Holy Ghost, and they naturally look for the fruit of our confession. They watch us wherever we go, and we will either convince them by our right conduct or turn them away by our wrongdoing.

Paul held a very high standard for his life lest he be a stumbling block to others. It was indeed an unselfish stand he took when he said, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (I Corinthians 8:13). The eating of meat is so common among all people today that there is not much danger of any Christian stumbling and falling over a minister of the gospel eating meat. Nevertheless, Paul left a wonderful lesson for the sake of winning and holding souls in Jesus. His self-denial may be the reason why the apostle had such power in his life, a power that is very much needed in the church of our day.

Lesson 95

Paul Vindicates His Apostleship

In I Corinthians 9, Paul discerned that the Corinthians had a high estimation of themselves, and in this condition they felt they no longer needed Paul and his leadership. It seems the Spirit let Paul know in advance that, as the Corinthians read his letter, they would resist his plain words, for he first corrected them for a division in the church, and then he sharply reproved them for allowing fornication to remain in their midst.

One group had said they were of Paul; and where carnality gets in, one can expect most anything to follow. Someone has said concerning a group of carnal saints that first they idolize a pastor, next they criticize him, then they scandalize him, and finally they ostracize him. The Lord directed Paul's letter to counteract the Corinthians' changing view toward him. He placed his apostolic authority before them and even emphasized it by saying, "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord" (I Corinthians 9:2).

Later he asked, "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" (I Corinthians 14:36). His answer would be, "It was not you who received the word by revelation of Jesus Christ to go out from you to others, but it came to you from me."

Then he asked if they thought, because he traveled and worked with his hands while preaching the gospel and did not have a wife like Peter and some other apostles, that he was just a weak man. He went on to tell them that he had the same right to live by the gospel as any others did, and that he also had the right to take a wife with him as others did. However, he had not taken advantage of his rights of being supported by the gospel, so that, by not being a burden to any, he might win more. He gave them scriptural proof that he had a right to live by the gospel. The law of Moses taught that if oxen were used to tread out grain, they should not be muzzled but allowed to eat of it. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?" (I Corinthians 9:11-12). The church at Corinth only existed because Paul had fought a good fight and, with much persecution, had established the church.

No doubt these believers felt the shame of having to be corrected for what they had allowed in their midst. They would have been glad for Paul not to return and use a firm hand to bring them back to their former humble state.

The sad part is that this spirit did not die with the Corinthians, but many times we find it manifested against faithful leaders in these days, and the same wise apostolic authority is needed to save an assembly from ruin. Nothing can be more helpful to a faithful leader than to have members in his flock who will stand by his leadership and help to build up and edify the assembly. Those who conduct themselves in a way that their leader can depend upon them are not only useful to the work of the Lord, but they are happy and blessed in their own lives.

Lesson 96

Old Testament Examples for Us

We should remember, as we study of I Corinthians 10, that the only Bible Paul had to preach from was the Old Testament. In this chapter, Paul gave the account of Israel's deliverance from Egypt through the Red Sea.

He showed it to be a beautiful type of our birth of water and Spirit, for he said that they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (verse 2). Here we have both Spirit and water baptism in one type. The same cloud that was bright and glorious to the Israelites had a dark side to Pharaoh and his army. Weymouth says, "For I would . . . have you remember, brethren, how our forefathers were all of them sheltered by the cloud, and all got safely through the Red Sea. All were baptized in the cloud and in the sea to be followers of Moses. All ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they long drank the water that flowed from the spiritual rock that went with them—and that rock was the Christ" (verses 1-4).

In the next few verses, Paul recounted the sins that Israel committed in the wilderness. They lusted after evil things. They became idolaters and fornicators and tempted Christ. They murmured against Moses and turned from him until God destroyed many of them. All that happened to them is a warning to us in the end of the age that we should not murmur and sin against God as they did. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (verse 12). It seems impossible that after they had gone through such a marvelous experience of being delivered from Pharaoh, and having the cloud with them by day and the fire by night, they could become murmurers and complain and tempt God as they did.

But indeed such a warning is timely and needful for the Christian, for on every side are those who once passed through water and Spirit and once enjoyed the glory of God, but now they are again entangled in a life of sin and are overcome.

But in the face of the great danger of falling away, Paul said, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (verse 13).

In this chapter, we clearly see that there are three classes of people in the world: the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church of God. The last class is made up of both Jews and Gentiles who are born again. Paul urged, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (verses 32-33).

Let us keep in mind as we read the Old Testament that it is not merely a history of some far-off people, but every incident contains a special lesson, spiritually speaking, to the church of God.

Lesson 97
Cutting of the Hair

I Corinthians 11:1-16 presents an issue relevant to the present day. We have the Word of God on the subject, and to be silent would not be preaching a full biblical message.

In the earlier twentieth century, as society stressed the equality of men and women, there arose a trend among some women to behave as men did. Many women began to dress like men and look as much like them as possible. As a result, it is now common to see women wearing the same style of clothing as men and having their hair cut like men.

God intended for there to be a distinction between men and women in dress and also in hair length. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 22:5). While this is an old covenant teaching, it still reveals to us the mind of God regarding the subject, for it describes something that God detests in every age.

In this lesson, we will consider the subject of appropriate hair length for men and women. That Scripture addresses this topic shows that God has an order for His people to which they should take heed.

"Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (I Corinthians 11:14-16).

Some have interpreted verse 16 to mean that if a contention is raised over the subject, Paul would rather that women have short hair than to have contention over it. But is that a logical interpretation? If it is, then all it would take to overthrow Paul's entire teaching on the subject would be to raise a contention, and thus give all women (and men) a right to do as they please regarding long or short hair. Surely Paul would not give the teaching concerning the will of God and then add, "However, you need not obey it if someone is contentious over the matter." No, that is not reasonable. Instead, Paul said that people may indeed contend against his teaching; nevertheless, the church has only one custom regarding hair length: men should have short hair and women should have long hair.

The Amplified Bible confirms this interpretation of verses 15 and 16: "But if a woman has long hair, it is her ornament and glory[.] For her hair is given to her for a covering. Now if any one is disposed to be argumentative and contentious about this, we hold to and recognize no other custom [in worship] than this. . . ."

Lesson 98
Communion

I Corinthians 11:17-34 discusses the subject of communion. The Scriptures teach that communion is an ordinance in the church to be observed till Jesus comes.

Some people teach that Jesus broke bread with His disciples before He died, but after He died, rose again, and poured out the Spirit, He ate it with them "anew" in the kingdom from that time on. Thus, they claim that the fulfillment of this passage is communion in the Spirit, such as the disciples had when the Spirit fell on them (Acts 2:4) and such as I Peter 1:8 describes—"joy unspeakable and full of glory."

But let us go to the Book of Acts and the Epistles to see how the apostles actually fulfilled this teaching. In Acts 20 as well as I Corinthians, we see that the disciples partook of literal communion after Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension. Their practice confirms it as an ordinance in the church till Jesus comes.

It is compelling to note that I Corinthians was written by Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. He was not one of the twelve with Jesus at the Passover Feast; and he did not get his teaching from Jesus in the flesh as those disciples did. But the message he preached came by revelation from Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Corinthians 11:23-26). This teaching without a doubt establishes communion as an ordinance in the church till Jesus comes again.

There is also a question concerning what was used in the communion, whether it was fermented or unfermented wine. Some say that fermented wine was used. However, the Scriptures simply speak of the "fruit of the vine" and "the cup." In any case, we should not insist on a practice that could cause division or temptation. We should apply the same principle as for the eating of meat: If the drinking of fermented wine at communion offends my brother or sister (causes someone to stumble), I will refrain from it. (See Romans 14:21; I Corinthians 8:13.)

The Word of God does not explicitly state how often the saints should gather together to take communion, even though some claim that communion should be served the first day of each week. They use Acts 20:7 to substantiate their claims, but that verse of Scripture does not explicitly teach that it was a weekly custom in the early church. So we are left with the words: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Corinthians 11:26).

Lesson 99

Love

Part 1

In the first three verses of I Corinthians 13, called "The Love Chapter," Paul contrasted love with some of the most prized things of the Christian religion. He declared them to be cheap and worthless when compared to love. In verses 4 to 6, he gave an amazing analysis of this supreme virtue. As we see a skyrocket burst into so many beautiful colors—red, blue, violet, orange, and the other colors of the rainbow—so Paul took "love," and after passing it through his inspired intellect, broke it up into its elements.

The following is an analysis from the writings of Henry Drummond:

Patience ....."Love suffereth long."
Kindness ....."And is kind."
Generosity....."Love envieth not."
Humility....."Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."
Courtesy ....."Doth not behave itself unseemly."
Unselfishness ....."Seeketh not her own."
Good temper....."Is not easily provoked."
Guilelessness....."Taketh no account of evil."
Sincerity....."Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the truth."

Patience. "This is the normal attitude of love; Love passive, Love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things. For Love understands, and therefore waits."

Kindness. "Love active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things—in merely doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply making people happy, in doing good turns to people. There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world, and that is holiness; and it is not in our keeping; but what is largely to be secured by our being kind to them. 'The greatest thing,' says someone, 'a man can do for his heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.' I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it! How easily it is done! How instantaneously it acts! How infallibly it is remembered! How superabundantly it pays itself back—for there is no debtor in the world so honorable, so superbly honorable, as Love. 'Love never faileth.' Love is success, Love is happiness, Love is life. Where Love is, God is. He that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God. God is Love. Therefore love. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; especially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps ye each do least of all. There is a difference between trying to please and giving pleasure. Give pleasure. Lose no chance of giving pleasure; for that is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit. 'I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.'"

Generosity. "'Love envieth not.' This is Love in competition with others. Whenever you attempt a good work, you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Envy is a feeling of ill-will toward those who are in the same work as ourselves, a spirit

of covetousness and detraction. Even Christian work does not protect us against un-Christian feeling! That most despicable of all the unworthy moods which cloud a Christian's soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with this grace of magnanimity. Only one thing need the Christian envy—the large, rich, generous soul which 'envieth not.'"

Humility. "After having learned the art of good-will you must learn a greater thing, Humility—to put a seal upon your lips and forget what you have done. After you have been kind, after Love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides even from itself. Love waives even self-satisfaction. 'Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.'"

Courtesy. "The fifth ingredient is a somewhat strange one to find in this *summum bonum*, that of Courtesy. This is Love in society, Love in relation to etiquette. 'Love does not behave itself unseemly.' Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to love. Love cannot behave itself unseemly. You can put the most untutored person into the highest society, and if he has a reservoir of Love in his heart he will not behave himself unseemly. He simply cannot do it."

Unselfishness. "'Love seeketh not her own.' Observe: seeketh not even that which is her own. In Britain the Englishman is devoted, and justly so, to his rights. But there come times when a man may exercise even the higher privilege of giving up his rights. Yet Paul does not summon us to give up our rights. Love strikes much deeper. It would have us not seek them at all, ignore them, eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations. There is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving. Half the world is on the wrong scent in pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting and in being served by others. It consists in giving and in serving others. 'He that would be great among you,' said Christ, 'let him serve.' He that would be happy, let him remember that there is but one way—it is more blessed, it is more happy, to give than to receive."

Good Temper. "This ingredient is a very remarkable one. 'Love is not provoked.' What a striking remark! We are inclined to look upon bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to take into very serious account in estimating a man's character. And yet here, right in the heart of this analysis of love, it finds a place; and the Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature."

Guilelessness and sincerity. "It is a wonderful thing that here and there in this world there are still a few rare souls left who think no evil. Sincerity is the ability to rejoice in the truth, not in what one has been taught to believe, or in this or that doctrine, but 'in the truth.'"

Lesson 100

Love

Part 2

I Corinthians 13:8 points out the reason why love is the greatest of all virtues. It is permanent, for it will never have to be changed. It is really surprising how many things, so necessary to our Christian life today and upon which we are so dependent, are only temporary and will soon pass away. This passage enumerates some of these temporary things and contrasts them with the permanency of love.

"Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." Prophecies have their place in the plan of God, but the office of a prophet is only for time and not for eternity. Great prophets have arisen and predicted future events, and how wonderfully accurate their prophecies have been fulfilled; but in spite of all this, the prophets belong only to the present, temporal age.

"Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." Tongues are God's beautiful code language that come by the Holy Spirit and so edify the one speaking. They, too, are a blessing to the church when in proper order, but tongues are only for the gospel age and will cease.

"Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." Knowledge! Just think about how we crave it and seek for it and how precious it is. There is such an endless stream of knowledge in the world today that no matter how diligently we study, we have only touched the border of what there is to learn. At the present, "We know in part," but we are assured that perfection will come. Then we will not have to seek knowledge, for we will know, even as we are known.

II Corinthians 4:18 says, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The things that people call great and mighty will all pass away. I John 2:15-17 commands, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The only things that last are faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love (I Corinthians 13:13).

We continue in the words of Henry Drummond:

"Some think the time may come when two of these three things will also pass away—faith into sight, hope into fruition. Paul does not say. We know but little now about the conditions of the life that is to come. But what is certain is that Love must last. God, the Eternal God, is Love. Covet, therefore, that everlasting gift, that one thing which is certain to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the Universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. You will give yourselves to many things; give yourself first to Love. Hold things in their proportion. Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character and it is the character of Christ—which is built around Love."

Questions on Lessons 91–100

Lesson 91

1. What difference do we find in Paul's preaching at Athens and his preaching at Corinth?
2. What danger is to be avoided in an assembly that has been established in much demonstration of the Spirit?
3. What can we say of Paul's relationship to the Corinthians that could be said of no one else?
4. For what purpose did Paul send Timothy to Corinth?
5. In view of the church's carnality, was it worthwhile for Paul to suffer as he did to establish a church at Corinth?

Lesson 92

1. What proof have we that Paul was used of the Lord in the discerning of spirits?
2. What did Paul say must be done with the guilty party of I Corinthians 5?
3. For what wrong did he reprove the leaders of the church?
4. What was the cause of so much disorder in the Corinthian church?
5. What class of professing Christians would find themselves very much out of place in heaven?

Lesson 93

1. What passage of Scripture teaches that marriage and marital intimacy are sacred in the sight of God?
2. What advantage does a single person have in gospel work?
3. What type of marriages often end in failure?
4. What custom existed in Paul's day regarding the giving of a daughter in marriage that is much different from our day?
5. Under what conditions may a Christian woman remarry after the death of her husband?

Lesson 94

1. What is the greatest test of Christian character?
2. What characteristic is often manifested when someone has knowledge without love?
3. How can our testimony become unfruitful?
4. What sacrifice was Paul willing to make in order that he might not be a stumbling block to others?
5. What may have been one of the secrets of Paul's power?

Lesson 95

1. In what ways do carnal saints sometimes act toward a good pastor?
2. What did Paul use as proof that he was an apostle?
3. What did the other apostles do that Paul had a right to do, but did not?
4. What did Paul say is the duty of saints in return for ministry in spiritual things?
5. In what way do many saints today resemble the Corinthian church?

Lesson 96

1. Of what were Moses and the Israelites a type when they passed through the Red Sea and under the cloud of God's glory?
2. What example did the Israelites in the wilderness set for us?
3. What supernatural provision remained with the Israelites for forty years?
4. What kind of deliverance does I Corinthians 10:13 promise?
5. What three classes of people does I Corinthians 10:32 mention?

Lesson 97

1. What cultural and social change in the early twentieth century brought about different styles for hair and dress?
2. What Old Testament verse shows that it is God's will to make a difference between the dress of men and that of women?
3. What does nature teach us, according to I Corinthians 11:14-15?
4. What is a woman's covering?
5. What does I Corinthians 11:16 mean when it says, "We have no such custom"?

Lesson 98

1. How can we prove that communion is not just a spiritual feast but a literal ceremony?
2. During what period of time is the ordinance of communion to be kept?
3. What New Testament fact confirms that communion was to be carried on after the death of Christ?
4. Why do ministers typically it best to use grape juice rather than fermented wine communion?
5. Is it necessary to have communion each week?

Lesson 99

1. What is the normal attitude of love?
2. How does love in action manifest itself?
3. What one thing is a Christian privileged to envy?
4. What are some evidences of humility?
5. Name two other ingredients found in love.

Lesson 100

1. When will tongues cease and prophecies fail?
2. What does I Corinthians 13 say will never fail?
3. With what eternal entity is love associated?
4. What great thing gives people a desire to live?

Lesson 101

The First Resurrection

Since I Corinthians 15 does not speak of the resurrection of the unjust, that is, the second resurrection, some say that there will not be a resurrection of the unjust. But this passage deals only with the resurrection of the saints. Only the blessed and holy will have part in this resurrection, so it was unnecessary to discuss anything concerning the resurrection of the wicked, which is to be a thousand years after the first resurrection. (See Revelation 20.)

Apparently some people in the Corinthian church said that there would not be a resurrection of the dead, so in order to counteract this false teaching, Paul brought forth the blessed truth of this chapter. He reasoned with them: "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (I Corinthians 15:16-18).

It took the resurrection of Christ to bring us deliverance from sin. If there were no resurrection, not only would we still be in sin, but, when we die, we would cease to exist altogether, rather than going to be with Christ. (This point shows us that New Testament salvation was not in effect until after Jesus died and rose again.)

After showing how inconsistent it is to base our salvation on the resurrection of Jesus and yet to teach that there will be no resurrection from the dead, Paul declared, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (verse 20). Then verse 23 gives the order of the resurrections: "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

"Then cometh the end" (verse 24). Some teach that at the coming of the Lord, all prophecy will be fulfilled and eternity will begin. But as we carefully study the Word of God, we find that the thousand-year reign of Christ will follow the coming of the Lord. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (verses 25-26). God will not destroy death until a thousand years after the first resurrection (Revelation 20).

God has been preparing the human family so that at Christ's coming His saints will come forth from their graves and reign with Him. He has promised to take them to His throne, where they will reign with Him for one thousand years. Revelation 2:26-27 clearly says that overcomes will rule with Christ. In addition, Revelation 2:25 teaches that this promise will be fulfilled after Jesus comes again. So this reign of peace will take place *after* He comes. Some teach that the saints only reign with Christ here in this gospel age. However, we have the promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

"How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (I Corinthians 15:35). Paul answered these questions with an illustration of how a grain of wheat, or some other kind of grain, dies and then brings forth a new body. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (verses 42-44). The first Adam was of the earth and was made a living soul, but the second Adam is a quickening Spirit and is the Lord from heaven. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (verse 49). Thus we see that in the resurrection of the dead we will come forth in an immortal body, in which there can be no death.

Furthermore, this chapter reveals that some will be alive at the coming of the Lord, and they will not die physically. They will be changed in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, and will go up to meet the Lord in the air with those who have been resurrected from the dead. Paul gave us a

beautiful picture of this event in one of his other epistles: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:5-6).

Lesson 102

James, the Practical Teacher

James has been considered by some to be the most practical of all the New Testament writers. There were at least three disciples of the Lord in the New Testament who bore the name James. The writer of this epistle is sometimes known as James the Just. He was the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19) and was the bishop over the church at Jerusalem. His flock consisted of a great multitude of Jews, all zealous for the law (Acts 21:20). This no doubt accounts for his addressing his epistle to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, and for emphasis on works that demonstrate faith, and for his practical teaching.

Martin Luther, with his newly found freedom in the message of justification by faith, called the Book of James "an epistle of straw" because of the vital importance James put on works. He thought it contradicted his doctrine of justification by faith. When we this book, however, we find that its teaching does not contradict other New Testament teachings, including the writings of Paul's, but it presents the same basic faith, but from a different angle.

James gave us a number of good things in chapter 1. His teaching on how to obtain wisdom is very helpful. We are to ask for it in faith without doubting, for a person who doubts is like the waves of the sea; they make a big show but are tossed to and fro and so come to nothing. After reading his words, if we remain ignorant it will be our own fault, not James's. It seems that it would be much easier to ask in faith for wisdom than to ask for healing, when we might have pain and distress holding us back. In asking for our financial needs to be supplied, we could be hindered by the fear of our family coming to want, but to obtain wisdom we simply need to battle being double-minded because of doubt.

"Blessed is he who patiently endures trials; for when he has stood the test, he will gain the victor's crown—even the crown of Life—which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12, *Weymouth's Translation*).

James then said that a person who is tempted, is not tempted by God, but rather he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. It is in the realm of the self-life that one is tempted. Even the temptation is not sin; it is only when temptations are pondered and entertained in the heart that they become sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings death.

In the closing of chapter one, James gave a great definition of pure religion. There are two sides to it. One is the good works that love urges the Christian to do, such as visiting the fatherless and the widows; the other side is to keep unspotted from the world. Some stress only one side of this true religion. They try to justify themselves by their good works. Some are very faithful in doing good works, and yet they remain lovers of the world and the things of the world. Others keep themselves from the world and worldly things, but lose sight of the suffering and needy and forget their duty toward them. But James said that in order to have this pure religion, we must do both. He gave a full gospel message.

Lesson 103
Justification by Works

Many, before completely understanding James 2, have felt that they have found a contradiction between James and Paul's teaching in Romans 3:28, which clearly says that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law. We want to show in this lesson that James does not contradict Paul's teaching.

One thing that has confused people in reading this chapter is the illustration of a man poorly clothed and without food. If we tell that man to be clothed and filled and yet do not give him the things he needs, it profits nothing. Then he added, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead" (verse 17).

James did not intend that we associate the feeding and clothing of this man with the works he was talking about. He only used this illustration to show that there were two aspects: (1) telling the man to be filled and clothed and (2) furnishing him the food and clothing. The point is that we cannot separate true faith from the practical expression of faith.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (verse 19). Even though the devil believes that there is one God, his faith is merely a mental understanding and not a reliance or commitment; it does not justify him. He has no works to demonstrate genuine faith; he goes right on acting like himself.

James made his point clear by using Abraham as an example. When Abraham offered his son upon the altar, he was justified—shown to be righteous—by works. If Abraham had said, when God called him to offer up his son, "Yes, I believe You, Lord," but had remained at home without attempting to sacrifice his son, his faith would have been dead, being alone. Abraham did not call in his destitute neighbors and feed and clothe them and thus produce works to go with his faith; however, the works that showed his faith to be genuine were works that acted out his faith. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (verse 21). When we act out our faith, we show that it is alive. However, we cannot earn our salvation or assist in our salvation by performing works of the law or any other works of righteousness.

Joshua could have camped with the Israelites on the bank of the Jordan River, declaring that he believed God until he grew old and feeble; but the water would never have stopped flowing to let them across until he put some works with his faith. He showed his faith in God by starting out to do the seemingly impossible. When the soles of the feet of the priests dipped into the water, it stopped flowing and let them go across on dry ground (Joshua 3:13, 17).

Lesson 104
The Tongue

James warned, in chapter 3, against an excessive desire to be a teacher, for all people fail in many things, and the teacher will have a stricter judgment. He said that if one does not err in word, he is a perfect teacher and will be able to control all human desires. As a horseman uses a bit in the mouth of a horse to guide it, and as a captain uses a very small helm to guide a ship, so the tongue is small but has tremendous power. Unfortunately, it is inclined toward evil: it boasts great things.

The tongue is necessary and useful, but it is very destructive when controlled by the devil instead of the Lord. As an analogy, firearms were generally beneficial to humanity as they came into general use. They were a great improvement over the bow and arrow and spear in protecting humans from wild beasts and savage men and in securing meat among the wild game. Likewise, explosives can be beneficial when used to blast away rock for construction or to destroy an old building. Even though these inventions can be beneficial, these same firearms have been used by criminals and have become weapons of mass destruction in war. These high explosives have caused great destruction in the bombing of cities and have caused terrible civilian casualties.

Likewise, the tongue is a blessing to humanity when used constructively; on the other hand, it is a dangerous thing if used incorrectly. "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:6-8). It is good to know that what a person cannot do, the Lord can; we are not left helpless, since He can put a bridle on our tongue and make it a blessing.

Proverbs 6:16-19 mentions seven things that the Lord detests. The second sin is "a lying tongue." The trouble is that one may have a lying tongue and still feel innocent. When the tongue repeats a lie, even though the speaker believes it to be the truth, the tongue is made an instrument of evil. It may do damage that a lifetime cannot rectify.

To illustrate, let us imagine taking a pillow, shaking out the feathers in the wind, and then attempting to gather them up again. He who broadcasts an evil report, later finds it to be untrue, and then attempts to go out and rectify the situation is as helpless as one trying to gather the feathers that the wind had carried away.

According to an old saying, an evil report will travel at the speed of a racehorse, while a good report goes at the gait of a snail. The more sinful the report, the faster it will travel. A thousand ears are open to hear an evil report, and a thousand tongues are ready to carry it quickly to the next neighbor, while only one ear is open to catch a good report, and only one tongue is ready to speed the good news along.

"Have you heard the latest?" asked Mrs. Loose-tongue to Mrs. Open-ear, as the latter stopped at her gate. "Now, don't tell any one I told you, but there has been a young man calling every day lately up at Richard Roe's home. He always leaves before Richard gets home."

"You don't say so! And yet I am not surprised, for I have felt that she did not love her husband very much. But who is that going there with the axe on his shoulders?"

"Oh, that is just Deacon Jones; he has been cutting up some wood for the Widow Smith."

"Oh, well, that is kind of him," said Mrs. Open-ear and she added, "I must be going on home now." But she did not get home until she had stopped at every single house on the road with the latest report about the Richard Roe home.

In a few days, the "racehorse" news carriers had raced through the entire valley, and everyone had been informed about the latest news concerning the Roe household. All of this was caused by an evil, surmising neighbor who did not know that Mr. Roe was having his house wired for electricity, and an electrician, driving out from the city, was doing the work. Not only did this scandal spread quickly over the land, but the tongue full of deadly poison fed upon it. By the time it got to the lower end of the valley, the report was not only that a man was visiting the Roe home every day during the hours that Mr. Roe was away from home, but that Mr. Roe came home and found that Mrs. Roe had run away with this man, leaving her children to be cared for by her broken-hearted husband.

A whole week passed. Then because of a remark made by Mrs. Open-ear's husband concerning how the poor Widow Smith was getting along, Mrs. Open-ear remembered and said, "About a week ago I heard that Deacon Jones went over to her house and cut her some wood." So at last the snail arrived with the report of the good deed that had been done by a kind neighbor.

Without question, this is the way of the world, but sadly, God's children, who are supposed to love their neighbors as themselves, sometimes do not bridle their tongues. They become guilty of spreading an evil report. Should not the spirit of Christ within us teach us to have compassion on someone about whom an evil report has been circulated? We should desire to shield the person from the evil report rather than becoming a party to help spread it.

The tongue, when it is used for the wrong purpose, becomes "a fire, a world of iniquity . . . and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." On the other hand, if it is yielded to God, it is set on fire by the flames of glory. When we receive the Holy Ghost and fire, and our tongue is loosed and under God's control, our whole frame becomes alive with the fire of God, and no tongue can tell the joy that flows through our mortal beings.

The Holy Spirit tames the tongue as we receive Him and speak in other tongues. And it is God's plan that we so live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit that the tongue will never again become an unruly member.

Lesson 105
Our Warfare

When sin entered the world, warfare began in the human family and has continued to rage until this present day. Christians are also engaged in warfare; however, our battle is of a different kind. The battle in which we are engaged is not carnal, and it is not fought with carnal weapons. Nonetheless, our conflict is more important than any conflict that nations could ever fight, for we fight to obtain eternal life.

James asked, "From whence come wars and fightings among you [God's children]?" (James 4:1). Then he answered it by saying that they come from the lusts that rise from our sinful natures. "Ye lust . . . ye kill, and desire to have . . . ye fight and war. . . . ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (verses 2-3).

A certain young lady was sick, and the doctor told her she would be in bed for weeks. She sent for the elders of her mother's assembly to pray for her to be healed, so she could attend the Easter ball. God's people should not ask for such things, but James said that we do, at times, ask for things amiss, so that we may satisfy our lusts. Even a preacher may lust for a prominent position; he may even ask God to empower his work so that it will place him in the limelight in the ministry. Lusts that war within us become enemies of God because they betray our desire for human praise.

Yes, the battle is on. The writers of the Scripture knew where the enemy was, and they uncovered his hiding place. The honest heart says, "Thank you, James, for warning me and putting me on my guard so the enemy cannot entice me to his side and cause my defeat."

After John baptized Jesus, Jesus met the enemy in the wilderness and won the victory over him by the Word of God. (See Matthew 4:1-11.) The three main things that cover all temptations were put before Jesus: "The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (I John 2:16). Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). We understand that the threefold temptation of Jesus covered every point of temptation that can come to humanity. When we are tempted, we can know that Jesus already has been tempted on that point. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).

Galatians 5:17 says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." But verse 16 states, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

After we are born again, if we become a friend of the world, we will be the enemies of God and guilty of spiritual adultery (James 4:4). (See Romans 7:1-4.)

Lesson 106
The Poor Rich Man

It seems that we are living in the last days spoken of in James 5:1-12. James said that rich men would heap together riches for the last days. In our day, there are more affluent people than ever before. There are more millionaires and billionaires than ever before in history.

God foreknew this situation and inspired James to give us a clear picture of today's society. The description of the rich shows that in many cases they obtained their wealth by defrauding laborers.

It is interesting to note the three classes of people that James mentioned: the rich, the laborer, and the brethren (people of God). James made an appeal to the people of God to be patient, for the Lord had heard their cries. When we see these things being fulfilled before our very eyes, we realize that the coming of the Lord draws near. We are living in the last days, and we can expect the Lord to come at any time for His called-out people, who have obeyed the gospel message. The message of the hour, preached under the power and anointing of the Holy Ghost, is that people should be full of the Spirit and ready for the coming of the Lord.

What good are riches to the rich but spiritually poor person, when judgment comes upon him? James advised us not to envy a rich person, lest we develop the spirit of covetousness and thereby come under condemnation.

How encouraging it is to read that in the last days James also spoke of the latter rain that would prepare the harvest (James 5:7-8). Since we are living in the time of the latter rain, we can surely look for our Lord to come from heaven to deliver us out of the great destruction that is soon to come. The Lord Jesus said, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). James also referred to the patience of Job and told how the end of our Lord's life displayed His great pity and tender mercy. If we are to come into the inheritance promised to us, we need to follow these examples, so that we keep the door of escape open, which is promised to the people of the Lord.

Lesson 107
Prayer for Healing

Since God has poured out the latter rain on the earth, many have again turned to James 5:13-20 for guidance when in need of a physician. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church" (James 5:14). No verse of Scripture tells a Christian to call on anyone other than the Great Physician, the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are not healed after we personally call on Jesus, James directed us to call the elders of the church and let them pray over us, anointing us with oil in the name of the Lord.

But first we read, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray" (James 5:13). This passage of Scripture has been misused, and many have been hindered by wrong interpretations of this verse. Some teach that James was making a distinction between someone who has a bodily affliction and someone who is sick. For instance, some say people who have been crippled by an accident or by a disease such as infantile paralysis come under the class of the afflicted, and they should do their own praying. But, they say, those who are merely sick with a fever or some other illness should call for the elders.

But as we study how the Scriptures use the word "affliction," we find that in most places the word does not refer to a bodily affliction but to an affliction of the soul. (See II Corinthians 1:6; 2:4; 8:2; I Thessalonians 1:6; 3:3; Philippians 1:16; Hebrews 11:37; James 4:9.) This meaning harmonizes with the rest of the passage: if a person is pressed down and *afflicted in his soul* let him *pray*. We note the contrast at the end of verse 13: "Is any merry? let him sing psalms."

Is everyone who is prayed for, healed? No. Some do call for the elders to pray over them, anointing them with oil, but are not healed. The Word says that the prayer of faith is required to save the sick.

Some teach that if a person is sick he must have committed sin, for they say all sickness comes from sin. But James 5:15 says *if* he has committed sin, God will forgive him. If sickness were always due to the sick person's sin, then the statement would need to read, "And the sins he has committed will be forgiven him." Some also try to argue away the blessed truth that God can heal the body. They say this verse of Scripture refers only to the healing of the sin-sick soul. But if this were true, it would be inconsistent for James to say, "If he has committed sin."

We conclude that James 5:13-20 contains the true instructions for the Christian to follow if he is sick in body. It is helpful to notice that James used Elijah as an example of one who prayed the prayer of faith. If we read the account of Elijah praying for rain, we will find that he was a man who prevailed in prayer. He did not give up when he had prayed once, but he prayed again and again till he received evidence that God had heard him (I Kings 18:41-45). Likewise, we should not give up when we have prayed once. Rather, we need to search for anything that has hindered our faith and then pray again.

Lesson 108
Doubt

Most unsaved people with whom we as gospel workers will come into personal contact will doubt what we say, and it is very important to know how to handle such doubt. Someone has said that doubt is "can't believe" while unbelief is "won't believe." With these connotations, we can say that doubt is honest, but unbelief is willfully being contrary. Doubt looks for light, while unbelief is content with darkness.

Jesus unsparingly attacked the unbelief of the scribes, but with those who honestly doubted, like Philip and Thomas, He was very kind and generous, instructing them in the way of truth. (See John 14:8-12; 20:24-29.)

Doubting is part of the natural man's intellect; therefore, doubt will color his thinking and speaking as long as he lives in the world, for humanity is, and always will be, limited in knowledge. What normal child does not naturally begin questioning everything? Therefore doubt is neither malicious nor needless; it demands facts and is a forerunner of knowledge.

It is very important to know how to deal with the honest doubter, whom we will often meet. The Dark Ages church would have called him a heretic and said, "Burn him." The modern church would say, "Brand him." But Christ would say, "Take him and teach him."

We should have sympathy with those who doubt, because all important spiritual things are of a doubtful nature to the natural man, for they are spiritually discerned. If we are to help the person who doubts, we must be able to present facts to him. On the Day of Pentecost when the people doubted and asked one another what it all meant, Peter answered with facts (Acts 2:12). While he had himself been an eyewitness to the resurrection of Jesus, for the sake of those who doubted he connected his message to something they could "see and hear": God had fulfilled an Old Testament passage and had poured out His Spirit upon the believers.

We need to meet the doubter with facts. One fact that we can bring to him is the testimony of someone who has been redeemed from the depths of sin and is living a good, clean life. But the doubter can reason even that fact away by saying that the person has reformed himself by his own willpower, so we need miracles and healings in our midst to demonstrate the power of God and to give faith to the doubting heart.

A certain class of doubters will heap abuse on churches, ministers, and doctrines, and sometimes their claim is legitimate. We do not have to disregard the facts they bring, but we should listen and express our understanding. After we have gained their confidence, we can tactfully present some facts to them. And the doubters may receive light that otherwise would not be brought to them.

Lesson 109

Perfection

Part 1

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

There has been much misunderstanding concerning this verse of Scripture, and many have tried to argue it away. There are several opinions concerning its meaning.

Nevertheless, it plainly tells us that Jesus demanded God's children to seek the perfection of the Father in heaven. There can be no higher perfection than that of God our Father. His perfection is original, independent, absolute, and unlimited. His nature never changes, nor do His attributes change. His love is constant and is ever boundless to all His creatures. Well may the angels cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3). Humanity has never obtained such a state in this life, nor will he do so in his mortal body.

What could Jesus have meant, then, when He demanded that we, as His followers, be perfect even as the Father is perfect? Simply this: for children of a holy God, He must set a standard no lower than His own. To ask for a single percent less would be but a human standard and would open the way for humans to set their own standard that they feel they can attain by their own power.

While God demands perfection, all people find themselves helplessly short of it. However, they can cry out for mercy. God in His great mercy has made a way in His wonderful plan of redemption for humans to meet this high demand.

The perfection of which Jesus spoke is not angelic perfection, for angels stand before God in spotless purity. Never having sinned, they are undefiled by the ravages of sin, which all humans have to undergo. Their knowledge is perfect in their sphere of operation, their judgment is unerring, and their obedience is complete. Human nature is a great contrast to this; humans cannot attain such a state in this life.

God's perfection is not the same as Adamic perfection, even though some teach that in salvation we are supposed to be restored to the state Adam held before he fell. But such is far from God's thought and plan. The first Adam was a living soul who was of the earth, but the second Adam was the Lord from heaven; he is a quickening Spirit (I Corinthians 15:45, 47). He came to redeem us unto Himself, not back to the innocent place that Adam held before he fell. We know both good and evil, and there is nothing in the plan of redemption that provides for the removal of this knowledge from us. So while Adam and Eve held a high and pure state before they fell, they were the only humans who had that position.

Perfection is not sinless perfection, even though some claim that such a state is possible. It is unscriptural and not at all workable. They have done their best to attain sinless perfection, but no other teaching has caused as much doubt and uncertainty as this doctrine. If entire sanctification and the eradication of the old man were God's plan and could be attained in this life, we would use all our strength and energy to lead people into such a wonderful experience.

Those who teach the doctrine of sinless perfection have three classes of people among them: (1) those who are always seeking for this experience but are never able to claim it, (2) those who claim it and are always losing it, and (3) those who claim not only to have obtained it but to have lived it over a period of months and years. Regarding the first two groups, God often opens their eyes to the truth, and therefore people find God's blessed and free way of holiness. But the third group can easily become so self-righteous that it is almost impossible to reach them with the truth. To claim perfection by being sinless is not only unscriptural but also very dangerous.

When we are born again, God does not to eliminate our old nature and make us sinless, as the

eradication doctrine holds, but He gives us an entirely new nature that is as pure as heaven holds. That new nature is none other than Christ Himself coming into the temple that He has cleansed by His own blood. Instead of perfecting our old nature, He gives us a new nature; thus, we have two natures within us.

Consequently, Paul taught about the war that rages between the flesh and the Spirit (Galatians 5:17). If the old man were eradicated and our natures totally transformed at the new birth, we would have been perfect from the hour that we obtained that experience. There would never be a chance for us to be anything other than a finished product, infallible in time and eternity. How could we be led away by our own lusts and enticed (James 1:14), if the old man has been eradicated? Who would be left to tempt us? If this teaching were true, humans would not only be without sin but they would also be without internal temptation.

Surely it would be wonderful if in this life we could obtain the eradication of the old man, but God did not promise us this experience. Instead, we have the opportunity to satisfy the demands of a holy God by believing and obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we do, we have "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

If Christ ceases to dwell in us, then we become "reprobates"—disqualified or backslidden (II Corinthians 13:5). Thus we are totally dependent upon Christ for our perfection. When we were helpless, He made a way for us to be justified before God. Just as Christ becomes our righteousness by dwelling within us, even so He becomes our perfection by giving us His own nature, and thus we are able to meet God's command to be perfect.

Lesson 110

Perfection

Part 2

The following illustration will help us to understand more clearly the subject of perfection.

The chief of police has called for a special meeting of certain policemen. They are to gather at a certain hour without fail. But one of them finds himself downtown dressed in his civilian clothes in the midst of rushing traffic. The meeting place is some distance away, and he is delayed by the traffic. Even if he should reach the place, he could not enter without a police uniform, so in his desperation he hails another policeman who is in uniform, just retiring from his duties of the day. He tells him of his predicament, and the uniformed man says, "Grab hold of me and hang on." He lays hold of him and together they go. The shrill whistle of the policeman and the white-gloved hand thrust up cause brakes to squeal and everything to come to a standstill. Together they make it safely through the congested traffic. In a short time they reach the place of the meeting, and the generous policeman steps into the side room with his man and quickly they exchange clothing. Thus the man who was so helpless walks into the meeting on time and in the proper clothing. He has fulfilled all the demands that were laid on him.

Can we give a clearer picture of a poor sinner than that illustrated by this man, who was wonderfully delivered from his perplexing condition and who found himself fully qualified to hold his place in the meeting? Immortal perfection is the goal, but a sinner is helpless in his sins. Like the stranded policeman, he looks for deliverance, and someone preaches Jesus to him. If he believes and obeys the gospel, he will take hold of Jesus and make Him his all. His race will be through thick traffic all right, but if he holds to his deliverer, the white-gloved hand of authority will be held up against his enemies, and they will have to halt and step backward. And he goes on in victory, approaching the time when the Son of God will come in power, the dead will rise, and the living saints will be changed. Then Christ himself, the One to whom he has been holding, will give him the robe of immortal perfection, and he will stand perfect in the holy convocation, meeting all the demands of a holy God.

Philippians 3:12 says, "I do not say I have already won the race or have already reached perfection. But I am pressing on, striving to lay hold on the prize for which also Christ has laid hold of me" (Weymouth). He who said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8) will lay hold on us if we lay hold on Him. Jesus is our perfection, and He imparts His nature to us. We ourselves must take a second place and let our new nature rule, so that we can walk in newness of life.

Our goal is to live a victorious life over sin, but we cannot claim to attain sinless perfection in this life. Those who think they have attained eradication of the old man and sinless perfection must consider the following verses of Scripture and apply them to their lives. Romans 14:23 declares, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Is every act of our lives in line with our faith, or have some actions gone against our own convictions of what is right? James 4:17 says, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Have we always done everything that we know a Christian ought to do?

The perfection of the believer is not in himself; it is in Christ. The person who believes in sinless perfection seeks perfection where it cannot be found. Failing to find it in himself, he lowers the standard to the level of his imperfection. To admit the necessity of a perfect standard would call for a confession of sin. Yet God demands absolute perfection, and since we cannot find it in ourselves, we must accept what God has provided. Through the death of Jesus, the believer has a perfection that needs no mending and that cannot be improved. It satisfies the conscience, pro-

vides a perfect standing before God, and fills us with an undisturbed and heavenly peace. "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).

The believer has a new, perfect, and sinless nature. It is not the old nature purified and transformed, but it is an entirely new nature sent down from heaven. The old nature remains, but a new one is added. This new nature is as incapable of defilement as a sunbeam is. This new nature, also called the "new man," cannot sin. To be able to sin would be a transgression of the very law of God's nature, for the new nature is none other than God's Spirit coming into the believer. It is Christ within us.

The Scripture tells us to be blameless, and this no doubt is as near perfection as we will find ourselves, for in perfection there cannot be even one fault. One can be blameless and still not be faultless. The following story illustrates this point.

A mother, before she has finished and hung out her week's washing, is called out on an important errand. She leaves a note for her little daughter, so she will know her mother's whereabouts when she comes home from school. The child arrives home and sees neither the washing finished nor on the line, and she decides to give her overworked mother a lift. So the child, by working fast, has all the clothes on the line to dry when the mother returns. The mother is shocked to see those streaked, unrinsed clothes out on the line, and she immediately begins to gather them in. They have only been through the suds and have not been rinsed. The good mother does not speak harshly to the child for her act but rather blesses her little heart for the work of love she has done. The child was blameless, but she was not faultless. If the clothes had been rinsed and ready for the line, and the streaks had been made by the child's carelessness, then she would have been to blame as well as at fault.

To be blameless is all that God requires of a believer. That is to know nothing against ourselves (I Corinthians 4:4), to have a conscience void of offense (Acts 24:16), and to keep ourselves from all known sin. We cannot say that we have not sinned in the past, nor that we have no sin to be cleansed of at present (I John 1:7). Let us remember that there is only one sinless, perfect man—Christ Jesus.

Questions on Lessons 101-110

Lesson 101

1. Of which resurrection does I Corinthians 15 speak?
2. What caused Paul to discuss the resurrection in I Corinthians 15?
3. What awful condition would exist if Christ had not risen?
4. After Christ, the first fruits, what resurrection is next in order?
5. How does I Corinthians 15 describe the resurrected saints?

Lesson 102

1. What must we guard against if we would receive wisdom from the Lord?
2. How may we obtain a victor's crown?
3. What does James say is the source of temptation?
4. When does temptation culminate in sin?
5. How does James define pure religion?

Lesson 103

1. What truth does the devil believe, which a great number of professed Christians do not understand?
2. Why is the devil's belief different from the faith that justifies sinners?
3. How was Abraham justified (shown to be righteous) by his works?
4. What works of Joshua at the Jordan River demonstrated his faith?
5. How can a sick man demonstrate faith to be healed?

Lesson 104

1. Why should we be cautious about desiring the office of a teacher?
2. What goal must one attain in order to become a perfect person or a perfect teacher?
3. Why is the tongue called "the unruly member"?
4. Who has the ability to tame the tongue?
5. How may the tongue become a blessing?

Lesson 105

1. What is the origin of warfare?
2. What is the difference between the warfare of a Christian and that of a nation?
3. What is the enemy's most successful method of getting the victory over a saint?
4. How did Jesus defeat the devil in the wilderness?
5. What did James say our standing would be if we were friends of the world?

Lesson 106

1. What type of people does James 5 give warnings to, particularly in view of the last days?
2. What three classes of people does James 5 mention?
3. Which of the three classes has a bright hope in spite of their present condition?
4. What good thing, spoken of in James 5, are we enjoying today?

Lesson 107

1. What command and promise does James 5:14-15 give God's people?
2. What does James mean by someone who is "afflicted"?
3. What is one reason why some people fail to receive healing?
4. How do we know that not all sickness is directly caused by individual sin?
5. Why was Elijah a good example for James to use concerning prayer?

Lesson 108

1. What distinction does the lesson make between doubt and unbelief?
2. What typical attitude of a child helps us to understand the doubter?
3. How should we deal with an honest doubter?
4. Why should we have sympathy for those who doubt the gospel?
5. Of what one thing does the doubter need to be convinced?

Lesson 109

1. Why does God demand perfection of His children?
2. What are two incorrect teachings concerning the subject of perfection?
3. What wrong attitude is apt to be created by the doctrine of sinless perfection?
4. What is God's plan for the perfecting of the saints?
5. What proof do we have that the old man is not eradicated?

Lesson 110

1. How will we be able to meet the demands of a holy God?
2. When did Paul expect to be perfect?
3. What two verses of Scripture indicate that we do not have sinless perfection in this life but need a continual cleansing of the blood?
4. How may we daily meet God's demands of perfection?
5. Who is the only perfect One?

Lesson 111

Sowing and Reaping

Adapted from the writings of W. L. Stallones

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

God will judge every person's works, which are seeds sown for eternity, whether good or evil, for joy or for woe. The reaping time will come. It is the law of the harvest. Just as sure as the person who sows wheat will reap wheat, so also the person who sows good or evil in the spiritual realm will reap accordingly. The harvest is at the end of the world (Matthew 13:39).

The flesh is devoted to selfishness, and the end of a selfish life is destruction (Philippians 3:18-19). "For he that soweth to his [own] flesh [with a view to fulfilling the desires of the flesh] shall of the flesh reap corruption [or his harvest will be corruption and death]; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8). By being led of the Spirit and walking in the Spirit, we escape the corruption that is in the world. "Because the creature itself [our bodies] also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21). "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). "It is the spirit that quickeneth [gives life]; the flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63).

This is why the law could not save us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). The Galatian church had begun in the Spirit but had been persuaded to turn to the works of the law. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3). Those who sow tares cannot reap wheat, and only those who sow to the Spirit will reap life everlasting. (See Psalm 126:6; Proverbs 11:18; 22:8; Hosea 8:7; 10:12.)

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9). When we do good, we should persevere in it without fainting. "Weary in well doing" refers to the will, and "to faint" is to give up. It was, no doubt, a common thing to see men grow weary and finally faint and have to be carried from the fields during harvesttime. But with the prospect of a spiritual harvest before us, we must keep our spirits up and our willpower stimulated, for soon the time for reaping will be here. If we faint before that time, we will have no power to reap the reward.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). Now is the season of sowing; and since this life is so short, the sowing season will soon end, and the harvest will come. For this reason, we should do all the good we possibly can, while we still have the opportunity. Let us be stirred by the brevity of the season to greater zeal in well-doing and in promoting the kingdom of God.

Our efforts and good deeds should be for everyone. In this way, we will let our light shine, "that they may see [our] good works, and glorify [our] Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Every sound-minded person does good things for the members of his own family. God's people are one great family; they are all members of the body of Christ and every one members one of another (Romans 12:5). "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13).

When God's people realize that the most foolish and absurd thing they can do is to oppose one another, they will begin to obey the Word of the Lord: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Instead of looking for an opportunity to try to kill

one another's influence, we should seek the opportunity to bless or do good to one another. We shall then realize God's blessings in a greater way than ever before.

When we think of the sowing one can do in a short lifetime, we would have a hopeless outlook indeed, if we did not have in the gospel of Jesus Christ something that is not present in any other religion in the world. But we do—the Atonement. No other religion offers redemption from sin. Sowing to the flesh brings death, so the poor sinner would be in an awful state were it not for the Atonement. But Jesus stepped in and canceled our sin by His death, which included all our sowing to the flesh, and now we do not have to reap the harvest of death for sin. We are made free, for whom the Son of Man sets free is free indeed (John 8:36).

Let the one who is in Christ believe all that is written for him, for he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and all things have become new. We must be very careful about how we sow and what we sow after entering into this new life. He who sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Lesson 112

Dangers of Spiritual Pride

Adapted from the writings of W. L. Stallones

Paul produced ample proof of his sincerity in his defense against the slanderous reports of his enemies, by referring to what he had suffered for the cause of Christ. In II Corinthians 12:1-10, he continued his defense by referring to heavenly visions that he had seen. However, he was modest in his account of these experiences. He did not dwell on the glory that God had bestowed on him, but on his infirmity, which served to magnify the power of Christ. This account shows that God had his hand on Paul in a very special way, but it was not proper that he should glory, for it was God who wrought through him these great works and supplied sufficient grace to him, in spite of his infirmities.

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord" (II Corinthians 12:1). If anywhere boasting might be thought harmless, it would be in reference to visions and revelations. Visions refer to things seen in the Spirit, and revelations refer to things that are heard or made known in some way. In revelation, there is always an unveiling of truth. It is a wonderful privilege to be granted such revelations.

"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven" (II Corinthians 12:2). "I know a man" is the correct translation. Paul evidently spoke of himself, as we see by the personal account he gives. He purposely distinguished between the rapt and glorified person of this experience and himself in the natural, as the infirmity-laden victim of the thorn in the flesh. Such glory did not belong to the natural man, but the weakness did. He was so completely taken out of the natural that he did not know whether he was in the body or out of it; therefore, he knew the glory was not his.

Paul wrote this letter about A.D. 57. Therefore, the vision occurred about A.D. 43, which was at the time of his second visit to Jerusalem. (See Acts 22:17.) As far as we know, this was the first time he mentioned this experience. He was so completely caught up into the spiritual realm that he did not know if his spirit had left his body or if he was caught away bodily. He was not only permitted to see the things of heaven but also allowed to hear unspeakable things, not lawful to utter. God designed these things for Paul's own consolation, and he was not to communicate them to others. It is probable that they were so deep that the natural man could not comprehend them. A person in the spiritual realm may see and hear more than he may speak.

"Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but an mine infirmities" (II Corinthians 12:5). Paul put his natural man in the background, except when glorying in his infirmities, and his glorying was in his other self to whom God gave the revelations. God did not give the visions to Paul in order to give glory to his natural man but to reveal the contrast between the infirmities of his flesh and the glory of God, so that the giver of the visions might receive all the glory.

In the light of these wonderful things, if Paul had desired to boast, as did his foes, he would not have been considered a fool. He had things to boast about that were not mere external, fleshly advantages, which often cause people of worldly ambition to boast, but he termed such glorying, folly. (See II Corinthians 11:1-17.) "But now I forbear" (II Corinthians 12:6). He refused to say more on the subject, lest anyone should form too high of an opinion of him. He wished everyone to respect him for who he was and what he taught, not by his boasting of past experiences. Some people live on past experiences and build their whole reputation upon past blessings, but Paul did not desire to do this.

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (II Corinthians 12:7). How dangerous self-exaltation must be if the great apostle required such self-restraint, lest he be "overmuch uplifted." There was a danger of his becoming exalted because of the abundance of revelations that God gave to him. Therefore, God allowed Paul to have a thorn in his flesh. We can only speculate on what this thorn in the flesh was. However, he made it clear that it was a messenger of Satan to buffet or strike him. It must have been painful to the flesh, as implied by the term "thorn." It certainly was something personal, affecting him individually, causing him pain and also shame. It is possible that he referred to a bodily infirmity here and in Galatians 4:13-14.

God permitted it to buffet him continually, lest he should be exalted by reason of the visions. So it is that the chastisement of the devil often follows the wonderful revelations of heaven, but God allows it for a good purpose, for pride comes before a fall. We may question many things that God permits to come upon us, but the all-wise Judge knows what is best for us. He desires to keep us in His perfect will, although He may have to use unpleasant means to do it.

Paul did not like this shameful thing in his life and asked God three times to remove it. God did not answer the first or second prayer, but the third time Paul received an answer that, no doubt, was a disappointment, but it satisfied his faith and caused him to bow his will to God's will. "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Corinthians 12:9). Though the trial endures, the grace of God will also help us to endure it, and it will never fail. A person's weakness is the very element in which God's power is exhibited. Instead of desiring the infirmity to depart, Paul rather gloried in the infirmity, so that the power of Christ might rest upon him all the more.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities" (verse 10). He was content in the weakness of his flesh, in the insults of his enemies, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses for Christ's sake. The Lord desires that we acknowledge our weakness rather than our strength because His strength is perfected in our weakness. Our strength is often a rival of His strength. Our weakness is His servant, drawing on His resources and His great power. Truly human extremity is God's opportunity, while human security is Satan's opportunity. God's way is not always to deliver us from the trial, but to endow us with grace and strength to bear it.

Lesson 113

The Preacher

Adapted from The Preacher and Prayer *by E. M. Bounds*

Religion is always trying to improve, hoping to become more successful, but God is looking for preachers whom He can trust, put His Spirit upon, and show His power to. God's plan is to preach the gospel through human messengers; furthermore, the success in keeping this work spiritual has depended on preachers who would pay the price, so that the Spirit and power of God could rest upon them. All the revealed truth that we have today came line upon line as God led people to bring it out of the Word by the illumination of the Spirit.

What Christianity needs today is not more and better machinery, but preachers filled with the Holy Ghost and fire, having a vision to glorify God with their ministry. God does not anoint plans, but He anoints preachers of prayer. The preacher makes or mars the message from God to humanity; he is the golden pipe through which the divine oil flows. The pipe must not only be golden but open and flawless so that the oil may have a full, efficient, and unhindered flow.

God must make the preacher. The messenger is, if possible, more than the message. The preacher is more than the sermon; that is, if the message is to be food, it must come through the vessel that gives flavor to the message by a broken and blended spirit to the divine will. The treasure is in an earthen vessel, and coming forth it may give a sweet and healthful flavor, or it may be distasteful because of the unsanctified vessel. Preaching is not the performance of an hour; it takes as long to make the sermon as it takes to make the man. That is why messages from men still in the making are not so tasty. The sermon grows because the preacher grows. The sermon is forceful because the preacher is forceful; the sermon is holy because the preacher is holy. The sermon is full of divine unction because the preacher is full of divine unction.

Paul called it "my gospel," and well he did, for his whole life was wrapped up in it, and out of him came what he himself was by grace. That is, what he was in God, so was his ministry. What makes the simplest message great, so that it feeds the saints, is not the eloquence of the speaker but the eloquence of the life from which the message flows, an eloquence developed through meditation and prayer. The sermon cannot rise higher than the person who preaches it. Dead preachers give out dead sermons, and dead sermons kill. Everything depends on the spiritual character of the preacher.

Preachers' lives must always be blameless before God if they are to have that something in their messages that grips the soul. Their sermons must be more than good sermons that they have written out or memorized; they must come forth from a blameless life. They must be living words anointed by the Spirit, which flows through the life of a live preacher. The secret of this process is that the preacher has stored up holy truths in his heart, on which he lives and feeds. Moreover, he brings them forth to minister to those who need them.

The preacher must, through the Holy Spirit, personify the gospel. Its divine, most distinctive feature must be embodied in him. The energy of self-denial must be his being—not only be *in* his being, but be his being. He must go forth clothed in humility, abiding in meekness, wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove. The preacher must zealously throw himself into his work for souls with all the abandonment of a perfect, self-emptying faith.

Too many preachers who could be used of God allow too much loose motion in their machinery, and they become mere time-servers, place-seekers, men-pleasers, or men-fearers. Some aspect of self or the world breaks their self-denial, so they cannot take hold of the powerhouse.

God is just as willing to work miracles today as He ever was, but the preacher must have a divine order in his life to enter into these things. Conditions in the church have much to do with

hindering his entrance into these things. It is hard not to be a part of existing conditions, such as the partisan spirit that is so prevalent in many places. It is easy for us to desire the working of miracles to show that our group is honored of God. And it is a battle to rid oneself of this attitude, when every day one is brought face to face with these conditions. But the preacher who expects to be used in miracle-working power must learn that he cannot hold a partisan spirit and get far in the power of God. It takes a vessel that is broken to bring the power; and when the vessel really is broken, it will rejoice more over twelve souls filled with the Holy Ghost in another assembly than ten in his own. Oh, the snares and pitfalls the enemy has laid for the feet of God's preacher, and yet God is able to guide him safely past them all!

The preacher's sharpest and strongest preaching should be to himself; his most difficult and delicate work must be with himself. Preachers are not just sermon makers, but soulwinners.

Preaching is to give life; however, it may kill. The preacher holds the keys; he may lock as well as unlock. Preaching is God's great institution for the planting and maturing of spiritual life. When in God's order, its benefits are untold; however, when wrongly executed, no evil can exceed its damaging results. It is an easy matter to destroy the flock if the pastor gets out of line. It is the devil's business to see to this, and wise indeed is the man of God who discovers Satan's devices and casts him out.

In the face of all this, the question is never out of order: "Who is sufficient for these things?" (II Corinthians 2:16). "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (II Corinthians 3:5-6). It is not great talent or great learning or even great preachers that God needs, but people great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, great in God—preachers who preach holy sermons because they live holy lives.

Lesson 114

The Preacher and Prayer

Adapted from The Preacher and Prayer *by E M. Bounds*

C. H. Spurgeon said, "Of course, the preacher above all others is distinguished as a man of prayer; he prays as an ordinary Christian, else he is a hypocrite; he prays more than an ordinary Christian, else he is disqualified for the office he has undertaken. If you as ministers are not very prayerful, then you are to be pitied; and not only will you need to be pitied, but your flock should be pitied, and the day cometh when you will be ashamed and confounded."

The praying that makes a powerful ministry is not the hurried prayer, but the prayer of waiting upon God. It must be the soul of the minister's life. Prayer requires the best of our time.

There are three main things in a minister's life: the closet, the study, and the ministerial duties. If our praying is shallow, our preaching will be shallow. But if our praying is deep and we put our best into it, then our sermons will be deep and easily gotten hold of and our preaching will be powerful.

The character of our praying will determine the character of our preaching; light praying will make light preaching. Prayer makes preaching strong; it gives it unction and makes it stick. Every ministry that has been weighty and had divine results has always made prayer a serious business. Only in the school of prayer can the heart learn to preach. No learning in a Bible college can make up for the failure to pray. No earnestness, no diligence, no study, no special talent will supply its lack.

Talking to people for God is a great responsibility, but talking to God for people is greater still. A preacher will never successfully preach to people for God until he learns to successfully talk to God for people. Moreover, prayerless words in the pulpit and out of it are deadening words. Prayer must have the primary place in the life of the preacher. To him it is given to be with his Lord "all night in prayer." In training himself in self-denying prayer, he is charged to look to his Master's example: "Rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1:35).

Preachers are human and are exposed to and are often caught by the strong pull of human currents. Praying is a spiritual work, and human nature does not like taxing itself in things unseen. Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favoring breeze, over a smooth sea. Prayer is humbling work; the kind of prayer we have been writing about abases human intelligence and pride. It crucifies vainglory, and it will leave no place for the flesh to have glory. It is easier not to pray than to bear the loss of our human standing, and so the crying evil of these times, maybe of all times, is little or no praying. And of these two evils, little praying is perhaps worse than no praying, for it soothes the conscience; it is a kind of make-believe, a farce, and a delusion.

There are two extreme tendencies in the ministry: one is to completely shut oneself off from the people, desiring to be always alone with God, and the other is to leave God out completely, desiring to be always with the people. These extremes are both, of course, unfruitful. The preacher who shuts himself off from the people to be with God like the monks and hermits of old will soon find that he has an idle mind, and as it has been said, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."

On the other hand, the preacher who gives his entire time to the people and has no time for God will no longer be God's man. He can be a good person and give his time to serving the people, but it will count for nothing in the kingdom of God.

The right way, as is usually the case, lies between the two extremes. A preacher must mix with the people, but before he mixes with them, he must meet with God. Prayer is the one thing that he cannot leave out and still have success. Every minister who has left his mark on history has been a person of much prayer.

For example, Charles Simeon devoted the hours from four to eight in the morning to God in prayer. John Wesley spent two hours daily in prayer; he began at four in the morning. One who knew him well wrote, "He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else, and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity next to shining." John Fletcher stained the walls of his room by the breath of his prayers; sometimes he would pray all night. His prayers were always with great earnestness; his entire life was a life of prayer. "I would not rise from my seat," he said, "without lifting my heart to God in prayer." His greeting always to a friend was, "Do I meet you praying?"

Luther said, "If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get by without spending two hours in prayer." He had a motto: "He that has prayed well has studied well."

John Welch, the wonderful Scottish preacher, thought the day ill spent if he did not spend many hours in prayer. His wife would complain when she would find him on the ground weeping. He would reply, "O woman, I have the souls of three thousand to answer for, and I know not how it is with many of them."

Payson wore the hardwood boards into grooves where his knees pressed so often and so long. His biographer wrote, "His continuing instant in prayer, be his circumstances what they might, is the most noticeable fact in his history, and points out the duty of all who would have his success. To his ardent and persevering prayers must no doubt be ascribed in a great measure his distinguished and almost uninterrupted success."

Brethren, let us pray!

Lesson 115

Unction

Adapted from The Preacher and Prayer *by E. M. Bounds*

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (II Corinthians 4:7).

No one has ever been able to describe the divine presence that comes upon the preacher during a sermon. It causes a tender, loving touch upon every fiber of his body. It draws his heart and mind out into the dew of heaven, while his thinking and reasoning power is greatly increased, so that truths, heretofore not understood, become clear in his mind. Holy words formulate in his mind, and as he speaks, he feels the words go off his tongue as if oiled. When one is in this blessed condition, he is spoken of as "having the unction" or "being anointed."

In II Corinthians 1:21, Paul said that the one who had "anointed" him was God. I John 2:27 says, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." From these verses of Scripture, it is clear that the anointing made the preachers in the days of the apostles. In every time of revival, God has His anointed man, and great grace is upon him and upon those to whom he ministers. Power is always manifested when the unction is on the meeting and the preacher is charged with holy fire. A real, God-anointed meeting will have that unseen, but graciously felt, presence, that "something" that even the unsaved can recognize, for they can feel it in the meeting. We call it the unction when it rests on the preacher.

It is said that unction is the art of preaching. The preacher who has never had this unction has never had the art of preaching. The preacher who has lost this unction has lost the art of preaching. He may retain the art of sermon making, the art of eloquence, the art of clear thinking, and the art of pleasing an audience, but he has lost the art of preaching. This unction makes preaching living and life-giving; for even though it is God's truth, if it is spoken without the unction it is light and deadening. Unction is something that we cannot manufacture, and its counterfeits are worthless. Yet it is, in itself, priceless and needful beyond measure if we would edify believers and bring sinners to the Lord.

We call it unction. It is the anointing that makes the Word of God "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). This unction gives to the words of the preacher such sweetness and tenderness that they become food to the saints and give them new life, and it gives such sharpness to his words that they cause friction and stir many a dead congregation. The same truths have been told in the strictness of the letter, smooth as a human tongue could tell them, but they have caused no stir, no pulse throb, and all has been as peaceful as a grave and as dead. But let the same preacher be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire and he will have the unction upon him, and this mysterious power will quicken and fire the letter of the Word.

Unction is the divine in preaching. It comes to the preacher not in the study, but in private prayer. It carries the Word like dynamite. It softens, cuts, and soothes. It makes the Word a revealer; it makes the hearer either a sinner or a saint. It is not found in the halls of learning; it is a gift from God to the chosen true and brave ones who have sought this anointed honor through many hours of tearful, wrestling prayer. This divine unction separates and distinguishes true gospel preaching from all other methods of presenting the truth. It creates a wide spiritual gulf between the preacher who possesses it and the one who does not. It supports and illuminates revealed truth with all the energy of God, for unction is simply putting God into His own Word and His Spirit on His preacher. It gives the preacher a power that is greater than intellectual

power. Tenderness and purity flow out of the heart because of it; freedom, fullness of thought, and simplicity of utterance are the fruits of this unction.

We often mistake earnestness for unction. He who has the divine unction will be earnest because that is the very nature of the Spirit, but one can be quite earnest and not have the unction at all. Earnestness may be readily substituted or mistaken for unction, but a spiritual eye and a spiritual taste can readily tell the difference. Earnestness may be sincere, serious, full of passion and heat, and persevering. It puts force into the thought, but its forces do not rise higher than the human level. If a preacher is preaching the truth with earnestness, souls may be carried away with his personality and ability as he proclaims the truth. Some may think of him as having the unction, but to the saint who lives in the sanctuary of God, it is empty and earthy. That it is just manpower is clear to the spiritual ear and eye.

The earnestness with which a lawyer pleads his case or the politician his cause is from the human spirit; nevertheless, such earnestness often powerfully stirs people's emotions. One may grow very earnest over his own message and plans, and earnestness may simply be stimulated selfishness.

What is unction? It is the indefinable in preaching that makes it preaching. It is what separates preaching from all other forms of address. It makes preaching sharp to those who need sharpness. It makes preaching refreshing to those who need refreshment. This unction is not something that belonged to some past age, but even now it belongs to every preacher called of God. He who is called of God and does not have it has not fully obeyed the Word of God, for the Word, which is the will of God, demands that the gospel preacher be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49). This unction is a conditional gift and is obtained by unceasing, earnest prayer to God, urged on by a passionate desire to live a separated life unto God and to please Him in all things.

Lesson 116
Healing

"By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12). Before sin with its blight came into the world, there is no record of either sickness or suffering being present. When sin entered the world, the curse followed it, bringing sickness, sorrow, suffering, and death to the human race. The twofold result of the fall was spiritual death and physical sickness; disease became the physical penalty of sin. Through the ages of time, sin and sickness have gone hand in hand. This does not mean that if someone is sick, he has sinned personally. It was the sin of Adam, the official head of the human race, that caused sickness and disease to come upon humanity.

We find many cases of healing throughout the entire Bible. The Lord healed in answer to the prayers of Abraham, Moses, and other Old Testament prophets. (See Genesis 20:17; Numbers 12:13-14.) We only need to scan through the Gospels to see that Jesus performed many healings while on earth. In the early church, many miracles of healing accompanied the ministry of the apostles. And we have heard the testimony of hundreds who have been healed by the Lord during the days of the latter-rain outpouring.

These many witnesses clearly establish that God can heal, but merely a knowledge of God's ability to heal is hardly sufficient to cause faith to spring up in the heart of those suffering, giving them confidence that they too can be healed. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). God's Word inspires faith for healing because it teaches that healing has been purchased and paid for by the Atonement and that it belongs to those who will accept it.

It is almost impossible for people to boldly claim something from God if they are not sure it is God's will for them to have it. It would be very difficult to get a sinner to *believe* for salvation without first showing him that he *could* be saved; likewise, it is hard to inspire faith for healing without first showing the sick person God's Word concerning the matter.

Our Twofold Redemption

Let us take a look at the work Jesus did to purchase redemption for both our souls and bodies. Just as sin affected both the spiritual and physical part of humanity, so our redemption from sin also includes both the spiritual and physical. First, we will consider the plan of redemption in several outstanding types.

The type we will consider in this lesson is the Passover. The Book of Exodus is sometimes called the book of redemption, and many times the book proclaims the plan of redemption through types. "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb. . . . Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year . . . and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. . . . And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:3-13).

Let us notice the benefits that the Israelites received from the slain lamb. They were told to take *the blood* and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post. When the destroying angel passed through the land, wherever he saw the blood he did not enter; thus the lives of the firstborn were saved. Many sermons have been preached and many songs have been written concerning the blood of the Lamb and the wonderful deliverance it has brought to trusting hearts.

But there is another outstanding benefit that the lamb provided for Israel, which I think is sometimes overlooked.

God also told them to eat *the flesh*; this was to give them strength, or a physical benefit. Psalm 105:37 says, "He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes." What an unusual thing: over a million people without one feeble person among them! We can scarcely go into a home nowadays without finding someone who is either sick or afflicted. But what a company they were! Not even a dog dared bark at them. (See Exodus 11:7.) This state of health among the Israelites lasted until they sinned in the wilderness.

I Corinthians 5:7 says that the Passover lamb was a type of Christ: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." Did those Israelites get more benefit from the Passover lamb, which was only a type of Christ, than we can obtain from Christ, our Passover? It would not be a true type if we could not find in the antitype itself (the thing the type pointed to) all that the type symbolized. As we study carefully, we find that the *blood* and *flesh* of Jesus provides a twofold benefit, as the Passover lamb did.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:26-28). Jesus plainly said that the benefit we receive from His shed blood is remission of sins. Jesus Himself did not say much about His body, but Paul said, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you" (I Corinthians 11:23-24). For what purpose was His body broken, or in other words, what benefit may we derive from His broken body? Isaiah declared, "With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Paul told the Corinthians, "Many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep," since they did not discern the Lord's body, the body that was broken (I Corinthians 11:29-30). Some were dead and others were weak and sickly because they did not realize what Christ's broken body purchased for them.

The Passover, with its benefits, pointed forward to the sacrifice that was to come, while the Lord's Supper, with the bread and wine, points back to Calvary, lest we forget the two great benefits that Christ has purchased for us. Jesus purchased healing and forgiveness at the same time, and He offers both on the same basis. The bread stands for healing, physically and spiritually, just as the blood stands for the remission of sins. This truth makes the gospel much greater, for it covers *every need* of humanity, no matter what that need may be.

Lesson 117
The Year of Jubilee

The Year of Jubilee is another type that portrays God's plan of salvation. Jesus Himself likened this wonderful gospel age to the Year of Jubilee when He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord [the Year of Jubilee]. . . . This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:18-21).

It was a custom in Israel that if one could not pay his debts, his land could be taken in payment, or he himself could be taken as a slave. During the great Year of Jubilee, a trumpet was sounded throughout the land and the proclamation went forth, "Return every man unto his possession" (Leviticus 25:13). At that time, one who had lost his possessions had them returned to him; and if he had been taken as a slave, he was set free, provided that he wanted his freedom.

When humans fell into sin, they lost everything and became slaves to Satan and sin; but in this glorious gospel age, God has restored to us the possessions we lost in the Fall. The two outstanding possessions He has restored are health for the soul and health for the body. In the days of Israel the message of liberty was for "every man," and today the gospel is to be preached to "every creature." The reason why many are sick today and in bondage to sin is that they have not heard the gospel message of deliverance.

Isaiah 53

Having taken up several of the types that teach healing, we will now consider the antitype, that is, the Atonement itself, in which Jesus took our place. There was only one way in which the human race could be set free from the penalty of sin—to have a sinless person take our place and pay the penalty for us. Jesus did this when He suffered in our place, satisfying divine justice.

Isaiah 53 begins, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" (verse 1). The report is the good news that by the death of Jesus, God provided redemption for the soul and body of humanity. Isaiah looked down through the ages of time and described beforehand the sufferings the Lamb of God would go through to redeem us. It was indeed a wonderful thing that happened about two thousand years ago, which has made healing for soul and body available to all who meet the conditions. The answer to the prophet's second question is that the arm of the Lord is revealed to those who hear the report and believe it.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (verse 4). "Griefs" and "sorrows" mean "sicknesses" and "pains," respectively. (See *Young's Analytical Concordance.)* Throughout the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for *griefs* is typically rendered as "disease" and "sickness," and the Hebrew word for *sorrows* is typically rendered as "pain." Some say that a better rendering here would be, "Surely he hath borne our sicknesses," but they believe that these sicknesses refer only to the sickness and disease of the soul. Matthew, however, interpreted it differently: "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17). If this Scripture passage referred exclusively to the diseases of the soul, then Jesus' healing of *sick bodies* would not have fulfilled it!

The word "borne" in the fourth verse also has great significance. When it says, "Surely he hath borne our griefs [sicknesses], and carried our sorrows [pains]," it does not mean that He entered

into the fellowship of our suffering, but it means that He took these things off us and put them on Himself. It is as if we were carrying a load and He came and carried it for us. Surely, if the Lord has taken our infirmities and has borne our sicknesses, He does not want us to bear them.

Verse 5 says that by His stripes or bruises we would obtain healing. (See I Peter 2:24.) "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him" (John 19:1). The scourging that Jesus received was a form of inflicting punishment upon an evildoer. Those who were scourged were stripped of their clothing and tied to a whipping post. One or two soldiers would then beat them severely and unmercifully with a scourge made of leather lashes or cords, having pieces of sharp glass or steel or bone fastened in the ends. These would tear the very flesh from the bones, leaving the victim looking more like a beast that had been slaughtered than a human being. All of this Jesus suffered to obtain healing for our souls and bodies. It seems that Pilate intended the scourging of Jesus to be a compromise between a death sentence and acquittal, to placate the Jews who wanted Jesus punished. He said, "I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise [scourge] him, and let him go" (Luke 23:22). But that was not in the mind and plan of God, for inasmuch as He was purchasing a twofold deliverance for humanity—for the soul and the body—He had to suffer a twofold punishment—scourging and crucifixion.

After Jesus had been scourged, He was led away to Calvary to be crucified. On the cross, He shed His life's blood, which purchased the redemption of our souls. He took our sins upon Himself and suffered until He had satisfied God's justice and wrath against sin. He bore our punishment that we might go free.

It is true that Jesus healed the sick prior to Calvary and that He also forgave sins, yet both of these benefits were bestowed on people in view of the Atonement. The psalmist David prophesied about what Jesus would do for us at Calvary when he said, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:2-3).

Lesson 118
May All Be Healed?

Many believe that God can and does heal some, but they are not sure concerning His willingness to heal them. Some believe that it is God's will for some of His children to be sick and diseased, that God may get glory from their sickness. When Jesus was on earth, the people brought multitudes who were sick with various diseases to Him. We do not find that Jesus healed some and said to others, "I cannot heal you now; I want you to suffer a while that I may receive glory from your sickness." No, "He healed them all" (Matthew 12:15). "And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel" (Matthew 15:30-31). The *healing* of those people brought glory to God, not their sickness.

Neither Jesus nor the apostles ever suggested that God wants some of His children to remain sick for His glory. Just because people are prayed for today and are not healed is no proof that it is not the Lord's will to heal them. One time during Jesus' earthly ministry, a father brought his son who could not speak to the disciples to be healed, but they were not able to cast out the evil spirit from the boy. He then brought the child to Jesus, and He healed him. It would have been wrong for them to conclude that just because the child was not healed when the disciples prayed for him that it was not God's will to heal him. Jesus explained that unbelief kept the boy from being delivered. Unbelief hinders God from working on behalf of people: "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief" (Mark 6:5-6).

No one ever appealed to Jesus in vain for healing. The following verses of Scripture reveal that He healed *all* who came to Him during His earthly ministry: Matthew 4:24; 12:15; 14:35-36; Mark 3:10; Luke 6:19. The Scriptures also reveal Jesus' motivation for healing the sick: He was moved with compassion. (See Matthew 14:14; 20:30-34; Mark 5:19.) We know that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, and to day and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). His great heart of love is still moved with compassion for sick, suffering humanity.

Jesus never intended for His great ministry of healing the sick to end with His own life. He told His disciples, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). After He ascended to heaven, "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one" (Acts 5:16). Some admit that the apostles did do mighty miracles, but they say that God gave this power only to the Twelve. But Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe [not just the apostles]; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18).

Another proof that healing is for this age is that the Lord has given the gifts of healing to the church. (See I Corinthians 12:9.) Jesus performed healings by the power of the Holy Spirit that dwelled in Him. (See Acts 10:38.) And the Lord will do the same things through His children, who are filled with the Holy Ghost and yielded to Him.

James wrote to the church, "Is any sick among you? [not just certain ones, but *any*] let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (James 5:14-15). "Any" here is as inclu-

sive as the "any" to whom Jesus offered salvation in John 7:37: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

James described this prayer of faith that saves the sick: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). Then he used Elijah as an example of one who prayed the prayer of faith. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are" (verse 17). Moffatt's translation says, "He had a nature just like our own." How comforting it is for us to realize that, though Elijah was a prophet of God, he was still subject to the same discouragements and failures that we are. Often the devil will try to tell us that because we sometimes fail, the Lord will not hear our prayers and that there is no use in praying. But Elijah got the attention of God with his prayers.

Let us notice the manner in which he prayed. "He prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:17-18). "He cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" (I Kings 18:42). He prayed for rain and then sent his servant out to look for a cloud or some evidence of rain, but the servant came back and said, "There is nothing." Elijah prayed again and again and each time sent his messenger out. After the seventh time the servant came back and said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (I Kings 18:44). Very soon after that, the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, and it rained.

Although God had told Elijah that He would send rain (I Kings 18:1), Elijah still had to pray with great persistence before the rain came. The same is often true in praying for the healing of the sick. God has promised to heal, but many times it takes holding on and possibly praying seven times, as it were, before the answer comes. One reason many do not receive an answer to their prayers for healing is that they quit praying before the answer comes.

When someone is not healed, the reason could be unbelief, or it could be lack of persistence in prayer. However, in some cases we do not understand why healing does not come. In these situations, we should continue to trust in God, realizing that we do not always receive answers to prayer in the time and manner that we expect. Furthermore, we will not receive the complete benefits of the Atonement until the Lord returns for His church and transforms our bodies into immortality. Whatever healing we do not receive in this life, we will receive in the resurrection.

Lesson 119

Healing Revealed by God's Redemptive Names

Jehovah (usually LORD in the King James Version) was the redemptive name of God in the Old Testament. God has many names, but in this lesson we will focus on His seven compound redemptive names in the Old Testament. They provide us a continuous and increasing revelation of God and His relationship to humanity, as each name shows God meeting some particular need of humans. Our salvation consists of the possession and enjoyment of all the blessings revealed by His seven redemptive names; in fact, God revealed these names to us to show what our salvation includes. (Much of this information is taken from the *Scofield Reference Bible*.)

1. Jehovah-jireh, "The LORD will provide" (Genesis 22:13-14). God provides for our needs, but this name teaches a far deeper truth. In the context, Jehovah had just provided the substitutionary sacrifice that saved Isaac's life, and Abraham's faith grasped that God Himself would supply the lamb for us. This was a type that was ultimately fulfilled in Christ and His atoning sacrifice on the cross. He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

2. Jehovah-nissi, "The LORD our banner" (Exodus 17:8-15). By the help of the Lord, Israel triumphed over Amalek in battle. Moses built an altar and called it Jehovah-nissi, for he realized that the Lord had given them the victory. Moses probably did not realize the full meaning of that name, but he spoke prophetically. The foes we fight today are not flesh and blood but principalities, powers, and other demonic forces. Jesus triumphed over Satan and his forces on the cross and gives us the victory over these enemies. (See Colossians 2:14-15.) "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (II Corinthians 2:14).

3. Jehovah-shalom, "The LORD our peace" (Judges 6:24). After the angel of the Lord gave Gideon a message of peace, Gideon built an altar to the Lord and called it Jehovah-shalom. How beautiful it is that the Lord purchased peace for us! "The chastisement of our peace was upon him" (Isaiah 53:5). In other words, "He took on Himself the chastisement whereby the peace (reconciliation with our Father) of the children of God was to be effected" (*Commentary* by Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown). Therefore, Jesus could say, "My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27).

4. Jehovah-raah, "The LORD my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1). The entire twenty-third psalm is an exposition of the shepherd name of Jehovah. Here we see His tender care for His own who are in the world. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus gave His life for the sheep (John 10:11) and thus purchased them by His own blood. The Atonement purchased for us the privilege of being the sheep of His pasture.

5. Jehovah-tsidkenu, "The LORD our righteousness" (Jeremiah 23:6). Jeremiah gave this name, prophesying of another great benefit that Jesus purchased for us. Jesus became our righteousness by bearing our sins on the cross. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

6. Jehovah-shammah, "The LORD is present" (Ezekiel 48:35). This name reveals to us the redemptive privilege of enjoying His presence. Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matthew 28:20). The Atonement provides for this blessing, in that we are "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

7. Jehovah-rapha, "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). This name was given to reveal to us our redemptive privilege of being healed. The Atonement provides for heal-

ing as well as our salvation: "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17). He took our sicknesses and gave us His health.

The Cross alone has secured all of these blessings, which are revealed by God's redemptive names. Every person has a right to obtain the gift of righteousness because the Lord has become "our righteousness." Jehovah-jireh has become the substitutionary sacrifice for all who will accept Him. Since these other benefits were purchased for all, everyone also has the redemptive right to obtain healing from Jehovah-rapha. This should be an encouragement to any who doubt that God still heals today.

Some may ask, "Why put so much emphasis on healing? Is not the salvation of one's soul far greater than the healing of the body?" Indeed it is, but the ministry of healing has its place, too. When miracles take place and the supernatural is demonstrated, great crowds come from every quarter, even as they did in the days of Jesus, to see what is going on. After the crowd has come together to see what it is all about, they have an opportunity to hear the gospel. When the sick are healed, people's hearts are stirred and many seek the Lord for salvation. If it took miracles for Jesus to draw the crowds, can we expect to do so with anything less?

Lesson 120
Summary

In conclusion, let us summarize the most important lessons in this volume.

Lesson 1: "Consecration." Here we have the secret of finding out for ourselves that the Bible is the Word of God. The Book is not only the infallible Word of God, but it also contains directions as to how the seeker for truth may know for himself that it is God's Word. Jesus said, "If any man will do his [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). Therefore, if any person will read the Word of God and obey it, that person will know the glory of God in such a manner that no one could ever convince him that God did not author it!

Lesson 3: "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth." The Bible becomes a new book to us when we understand the nature of the books of the Bible and their purposes. Of particular importance is realizing that we should base doctrine foremost on the New Testament. Moreover, the New Testament church was not established in the Gospels, so we will find the clearest instruction concerning apostolic doctrine and practice in the Book of Acts and the Epistles.

Lesson 4: "The Two Covenants." It is essential to understand that we are not under the old covenant but the new covenant. We see the contrast between the two covenants as we compare Deuteronomy 4:12-13 and Exodus 34:27-28 with Hebrews 8:7, 13 and II Corinthians 3. We are not under the law of Moses but the privilege of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Lessons 11 and 14: "The Church" and "One Body." The church is the body of Christ. We are to maintain the unity of the Spirit and seek to build up the body.

Lessons 12 and 22: "Pentecost" and "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire." John the Baptist declared that those he had baptized with water Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 3:11). John, of course, baptized more than twelve apostles. Jesus also taught that He would baptize with the Holy Ghost (John 14:16, 26; Acts 1:5). In Acts 2:4, God confirmed His Word when He poured out the Holy Ghost upon the 120 believers.

Lesson 15: "The High Priest and the Holiest of All." Matthew 27:50-51 speaks of the Holiest of All that was made with hands. This is the last time the Scripture recognizes the earthly sanctuary. According to Hebrews 8-10, our high priest is Jesus. After offering Himself as one sacrifice for all time, He ascended to heaven itself, which is the present Holiest of All. It was necessary for Jesus, as our high priest, to enter into heaven (the present Holiest of All) and occupy His office of high priest, so that He could appear in the presence of God for us. Furthermore, He could not fulfill this office until after the Resurrection, and He could not pour out the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost until after He fulfilled it.

Lessons 38-41: "Sanctification through the Blood"; "Christ Our Sanctification"; "Sanctification by the Spirit"; and "Sanctification by the Word." Our sanctification comes both by the Word and the Spirit. Since it comes by the Word, it is a progressive work, for we do not receive all the truth at once. And since it comes by the Spirit, we remain sanctified only as the Spirit indwells our hearts and rules over the natural man.

Lessons 43 and 44: "Born of the Spirit." In order to enter the new covenant and inherit the kingdom of God, we must be born again. There is a definite parallel between Jesus' words to Nicodemus about the new birth (John 3:1-8) and Peter's command on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38).

Lesson 55: "The Godhead, Part 10: The Baptismal Formula." The Bible teaches us that we are to be baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ. The following passages reveal this truth: Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5.

Lesson 56: "Repentance." Repentance is essential for everyone. Matthew 3:2 records the preaching of John the Baptist concerning repentance. In Matthew 4:17 and Luke 24:47 Jesus preached repentance. Acts 2:38 records Peter preaching the same message. In this verse of Scripture we find that to repent means more than turning away from sin: it means to die to self and to be dead enough to be buried!

Lesson 65: "The Cross." The preaching of the Cross is foolishness to those who are lost, but to the saved it is the power of God and the wisdom of God (I Corinthians 1:18). Humans in their earthly wisdom think that by doing good works they can earn an entrance into heaven; therefore, to humble themselves before the Cross is foolishness to them. But there is no other way to be saved but by faith in the Cross of Christ.

Lesson 72: "The Threefold Gospel." I Corinthians 15:1-4, along with other Scripture passages, proclaims the threefold gospel. As Jesus died, was buried, and rose again, so we must repent (die), be baptized (buried), and rise again (Holy Ghost baptism) in order to obey the gospel. This is God's message today for all who are pricked to the heart and inquire about the way of salvation.

Questions on Lessons 111-120

Lesson 111

1. What are the unavoidable results of wrong sowing?
2. What condition made it necessary for Paul to correct the Galatian church?
3. Why should we do good at every opportunity?
4. Why should we do good to the household of faith?
5. What has Jesus done for the sinner who has been sowing to the flesh?

Lesson 112

1. What did Paul say caused the power of God to rest upon him?
2. Why did Paul have a thorn in the flesh?
3. What usually happens to the preacher who exalts himself?
4. What answer did Paul receive when he asked the Lord to remove the thorn from him?
5. What virtue is produced in the life of a Christian through the bearing of difficult trials?

Lesson 113

1. As discussed in this lesson, what is God seeking for and what does He desire to use to make an impact upon the world?
2. As discussed in the lesson, what is one great need in Christianity today?
3. What helps to make a preacher's sermon powerful?
4. What keeps preachers from taking hold of the "powerhouse?"
5. To whom should a preacher do his sharpest preaching?

Lesson 114

1. What will happen to the preacher who leaves prayer out of his life?
2. What three important things in a preacher's life are mentioned in this lesson?
3. Which one of the three is the most important?
4. In what greater activity can a preacher be engaged than that of talking to people for God?
5. What should a preacher do when he comes in contact with the two extremes mentioned in the lesson?

Lesson 115

1. What do we mean when we speak about "unction"?
2. How does unction benefit one's preaching?
3. Between what two things does the lesson say there is a spiritual gulf?
4. What substitute is often used in the place of unction?
5. How is unction obtained?

Lesson 116

1. What was the twofold result of the fall of humanity?
2. How does God's Word inspire faith for healing?
3. What benefits did the blood and the flesh of the Passover lamb bring to the Israelites while in Egypt?
4. What benefits do we receive from the blood of Jesus and His broken body?
5. Give one reason why we should partake of communion.

Lesson 117

1. What great benefit did the Israelites receive during the year of Jubilee, and of what is this a type?

2. What was the only way by which the human race could be delivered from the penalty of sin?
3. In the original Hebrew of Isaiah 53:4, what is the meaning of the words "griefs" and "sorrows"?
4. How does Matthew 8 apply the meaning of Isaiah 53?
5. What psalm of David brings out the twofold benefits purchased at Calvary?

Lesson 118

1. Give two verses of Scripture which show that Jesus, while on earth, healed all who came to Him for healing.
2. Was it the will of the Lord for healings to continue after His ascension? Give Scripture reference.
3. What is another proof that it is the will of the Lord for healing to continue during this age?
4. What wonderful promise does James give to those who are sick?
5. Whom does James give as an example of someone who prayed the prayer of faith?

Lesson 119

1. Of what does our complete salvation consist?
2. The redemptive names of Jehovah show that we are entitled to what great blessings?
3. When were the blessings purchased that are revealed by the seven redemptive names of Jehovah?
4. The redemptive work of Calvary was done for whom?
5. Why is the ministry of healing so important?