

Sabbath School Lesson #2 – An Inheritance Incorruptible – 1-7 April 2017

Christ would have us share the saving present truth so that none be lost. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently*” (1 Peter 1:22).

Sunday: To the Exiles – The Lesson on Sunday goes into some discussion of who were the primary audience Peter was writing to, Jews or Gentiles. How does this discussion help the worldwide Church in acquiring an inheritance incorruptible? Well, the Lesson ends on a good note, saying: “What’s more crucial for us, though, isn’t so much who the audience was but, rather, what the message says.” On that note, let us learn from each day the message.

Monday: Elected – Who are the “elect” of God? The apostle Paul says, “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son;” and the apostle Peter tells us that the elect are “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (Romans 8:26; 1 Peter 1:2). Again we read that it is an “election of grace;” which grace is “given us in Christ Jesus” (Romans 11:5; 2 Timothy 1:9). The “calling” and “election” of God are in Christ. They apply not by ourselves, but only in Him and they apply to all that are in Him, and so “according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11). It was the fulfilling of the “everlasting covenant” of grace, which from eternity provided for the acceptance of the sinner in Christ. If then we are in Christ we are numbered with God’s elect; and if we are out of Christ we should without delay come to Him, accepting the invitation given us; for it is to all, saying, “Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17). “Whosoever will,” admits no exception.

It is without exception that every man is called and elected. Christ died to deliver every man from sin to everlasting life. All this deliverance is “according to the will of our God and Father” (Galatians 1:4). The will of God is our sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3). God will that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). God “accomplishes all things to the counsel of His will” (Ephesians 1:11). It is the love of God that whosoever believes in Christ should not perish (John 3:16). This love is extended to everyone. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). God has wrought out salvation for every man, and has given it to him; but the majority spurns it and throws it away. The judgment will reveal the fact that full salvation was given to every man and that the lost deliberately have thrown away his birthright possession.

The fact that Jesus has done everything for man is sometimes perverted. It is often said that as He fulfilled the law, keeping it for us, we have nothing whatever to do with it. That is the same as saying that because He always told the truth, we may lie with impunity; that as He honoured the Father, we are free to dishonour Him. No greater error could be conceived. It is true that He fulfilled all of the law, but it was in order “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us” (Romans 8:3). It is true that He kept the law for us, but it was that He might keep it in us. We are “saved by His life” (Romans 5:10), but not unless we have His life. And if we have His life we shall have all the obedience to the law that was in it; for He has not changed, but lives the same life today that He did when He was here in bodily form.

To live by His life, the life of Christ does us no good unless it is in us. Christ lives in us by His own Spirit, for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Romans 8:9). “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body” (2 Corinthians 4:10), so that if the life of Christ is not “made manifest in our body,” we are not Christians at all. To be Christians, He must live in us. Only when Christ is in us can we fulfill His law, for He alone can fulfill it.

The foreknowledge of God does not mean He decides who is saved and lost. A man sits in his room, looking out over the country with a binocular. Away he sees a traveller crossing the plain. The traveller can see but a few rods before him, while the man with the binocular can see for miles ahead of him, and can note all the difficulties or pleasant places in the way. Now the fact that the man with a binocular sees what the traveller is coming to does not oblige the man to come to them. It has no effect upon him in any way whatever. Even so the

foreknowledge of God does not affect the destiny of man. God knows the end of everything from the beginning, not because He studies it out, but because He is God. He inhabits eternity, and everything is present with Him. The thing a thousand years in the future is as much present with Him as a thing of today. Man by searching cannot understand God, and we are not called upon to explain all His acts; let us remember that, "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1:10).

Tuesday: Key Themes – The Lesson writer says, "The three members of the Godhead form the subject of 1 Peter 1:3-12" – if the Lesson writer meant this in the Trinitarian sense, it is relieving to know that Peter understood the Holy Spirit to be "the Spirit of Christ which was in" the prophets of old (1 Peter 1:11), and if the "Spirit of Christ" then it is not a separate Being but the "Spirit of Christ," and the very antithesis of the false trinity teaching. O would God that people do not form a god out of the Spirit of Christ! With a false concept of the Holy Spirit, many professed Christians are not Christians at all, for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Romans 8:9). Satan has led almost the entire Seventh-day Adventist Church into believing a lie that the Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of Christ! But none can ever be saved in falsehood. To us, the Holy Spirit is Christ Himself, for "the Lord is that Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:17), who after His resurrection, Christ, "the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45) and sent back into our hearts: "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts" (Galatians 4:6), and by the resurrection of Christ, God has gotten us unto a lively hope, "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not a way, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:3-6). If Christ is not living in you, there is no inheritance incorruptible for you. If you believe in the trinity, the spirit that is in you is not the Spirit of Christ, and therefore Christ is not in you. Life eternal is only in Christ, who must be living in you to inherit incorruption. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). Only when Christ is your life, will you go with Him at His second coming. The only preparation for the second coming is to have Christ as your life. If you believe someone else is in you, then you have no inheritance.

Wednesday: Living the Life of Salvation – Peter tells us that our only hope is in Jesus: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:13). This is the hope of salvation, for it is the grace of God that brings salvation (Titus 2:11), which Christ brings with Him, when He appears "the second time" (Hebrews 9:28). You live the life of salvation if you "gird up the loins of your mind," which means to have faith. True faith is that condition into which not the slightest element of disbelief enters. Who has the faith of Abraham, or Noah, or Moses? We think we have faith because we assent to the most prominent doctrines of the Bible, or to what is known as the 'Third Angel's Message.' "The devils believe and tremble" (James 2:19), but their belief is not imputed to them for righteousness; they are devils still. Genuine faith in the Third Angel's Message is evinced by practical reception of all the truths brought out by it. This includes a practical believe in true temperance, for that is a vital part of the Third Angel's Message. True temperance, or health reform, as it is termed, has been declared to bear the same relation to the last message that the right arm does to the body. Then if we do not believe and fully practice true health reform, our faith is a crippled faith.

Thursday: Love One Another – We can love one another if we are kept pure. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:22-23). "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). "Husbands, love your wives, even as 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, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27). The word of God is to purify and keep us pure. Nothing else can. When all the members of the church let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom (Colossians 3:10), and do nothing without the clearest warrant of Scripture, there will be no trouble; only then can we love one another.