

Sabbath School Lesson #7 – Worship in Education – 7-13 November 2020

Christ would have us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. “Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto His name: bring an offering, and come before Him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chronicles 16:29). This requires the inner beauty of character that comes only from the Lord. Men’s judgment concerning beauty has been very much perverted. They call many things beautiful, which are really ugly; and many things in which men see no beauty at all, are the very soul of beauty. “The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). That is why when Christ, who is “fairer than the sons of men” (Psalm 45:2), came to this earth, He had no beauty that men should desire Him when they looked upon Him (Isaiah 53:2). They looked at what He appeared to be, and not at what He really was. Have you never had the experience of meeting with a person who at first seemed ugly, but who, after intimate acquaintance, was really beautiful? The first sight was outward, but when you saw what the person really was, the ugliness was forgotten. This shows that beauty of character is the only real beauty. The saints of God may be very plain outwardly, but when the hidden things are brought to light, then shall they shine forth in the beauty of holiness.

Sunday: We All Worship Something – The unbiblical worship of something other than God through His Son, is very subtle in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There is a trinity book published by our Church, authored by Woodrow Wilson Whidden, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve, entitled: *The Trinity: Understanding God’s Love, His Plan of Salvation, and Christian Relationships* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2002). In that trinity book, it says, “The oneness in nature and character of the three persons of the Godhead, raises the very useful question of prayer, praise and worship.... [That is the issue today; And then it asks the question:] But what about direct prayer to the Holy Spirit? [Good question; Here is the answer:] While we have no clear example of or direct command to pray to the Spirit in Scripture, doing so does have, in principle, some implicit Biblical support... it only seems logical that God’s people can pray directly to and worship the Holy Spirit” (pp. 272-273).

Ezekiel saw these ancient men (8:11-12), leaders or theologians, worshipping the image of jealousy. And these leaders’ understanding of the Holy Spirit here is that it is a different individual than the Father and the Son. It is a third one who has his own mystery throne. This is what is recommended by the theologians and the leaders to God’s people. They are saying, we feel that it is logical and sensible and biblical to worship and to pray to the Holy Spirit. They just told you there, “we do not have an example in Scripture and we do not have an instruction in the Scripture, but we think it is biblical.” That is a contradiction. That is adding to Scripture. These ancient men are saying, ‘while we have no example, and we have no instruction to do that in the Bible, but we think that doing that is biblical.’ That does not make sense. You have to be a theologian to reason that way, to say that ‘this is not in the Bible, but we think it is biblical.’ This is the tragedy that we have among us today, a result of believing in the trinity. And this is recommended to God’s people, and this is actually obeyed by many of God’s people. Who else prays to the Holy Spirit? We read what Rome says: “Now this is the Catholic faith: We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons or dividing the substance; for the person of Father is one, the Son’s is another, the Holy Spirit is another; but the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal” (*Athanasian Creed*: DS 75, ND 16, Traditional Catechism of the Catholic Church 2013, p 81). The Spirit is the Lord Himself (2 Cor 3:17; Gal 4:6). Our theologians create another god out of the Spirit of God.

Ellen White says that only Father and Son are to be worshipped: “The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted” {YI July 7, 1898, par 2}. “The Son of God had wrought the Father’s will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due” {PP 36.2}. “The holy pair [Adam and Eve] united with them [holy angels] and raised their voices in harmonious songs of love, praise, and adoration to the Father and His dear Son for the tokens of love which surrounded them” {SR 22.3}. “In your hands will be placed a golden harp, and touching its strings, you will join with the redeemed host in filling all heaven with songs of praise to God and His Son” {AUCR January 15, 1903,

par 14}. “And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ” {GC 678.1} “Heaven is a ceaseless approaching to God through Christ” {DA 331.3}. “All the redeemed saints will see and appreciate as never before the love of the Father and the Son, and songs of praise will burst forth from immortal tongues” {TMK 371.4}. “There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever” {6T 368.3}.

Monday: And Declare Them to Their Children – In the first chapter of Romans the apostle Paul gives a brief but comprehensive view of the state of morals among the heathen, and of the steps by which they reached the depth of degradation which is there revealed. He points to the fact that at one time the people did know God (verse 21). The Mosaic record tells us the years immediately following the creation and the flood, all the inhabitants of the earth had the knowledge of the true God. Adam and Noah – the two fathers of the race – served the Lord, and they would of course teach their children about Him and His laws. There could, therefore, be no excuse for the gross ignorance which afterward prevailed.

Tuesday: In Spirit and in Truth – The choice between false gods and the true God, is alive within Adventism. Amos warns: “I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and He said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they dig into hell, thence shall Mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down” (Amos 9:1-2). This is a stern warning with dire consequences and relates directly to whom we worship. Our Lord Jesus said to the woman at the well, “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). The Samaritans did not know whom they were worshipping. They were worshipping a god of their own devising. The Jews on the other hand were worshipping the Father in Heaven and of them Jesus said “we know whom we worship.” There is a famine coming! Do we know whom we worship? Is our God the true God or have we bowed to the modern Baal gods? “This is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Our Father is the only true God. Jesus Christ, the Son of the one true God, who has inherited all things from His Father, has directed us to worship His Father in spirit and in truth (John 4:23).

Wednesday: The Beauty of Holiness – “Consider the lilies how they grow.” They grow by the power of God in them, which they do not try to resist. You will remember that the name “Israel” was given to Jacob when he ceased all his struggling against the Lord, and cast himself wholly upon the Almighty. His strength was demonstrated to be nothing, and he let the Lord support him. Now the Lord says, “I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his rose as Lebanon” (Hosea 14:5). That is, “they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.” Their beauty will be “the beauty of holiness.” Their clothing will be not simply that which can be put on and off, but, like that of the lily, it will be the product of the growth of grace within; it will be themselves, and will endure to all eternity.

Thursday: Idolatry in Education – Idolatry begins in the heart. Ezekiel says so in Ezekiel 14:3 “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?” In Ezekiel 8 is a picture of the church and also is a picture of what is happening in the minds of church members, that there is confusion over worship in the church, and in the mind of church members, just before the close of probation. Idolatry begins in the heart, begins in the mind, and a false understanding or conception of God is idolatry. “Are we worshippers of Jehovah, or of Baal? Of the living God, or of idols?” {5T 173.3} “No outward shrines may be visible; there may be no image for the eye to rest upon, yet we may be practicing idolatry. It is as easy to make an idol of cherished ideas or objects as to fashion gods of wood or stone. Thousands have a false conception of God and his attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal. Are we worshipping the true God as He is revealed in His word, in Christ, in nature, or are we adoring some philosophical idol enshrined in His place?” {5T 173.4}. This *philosophical idol* is the inexplicable belief in the trinity that was after the death of our leading pioneers enshrined in our Fundamental Beliefs.