

## Sabbath School Lesson #9 – The Church and Education – 21-27 November 2020

**C**hrist is the head of His Church. Pastors and elders should cooperate with Christ to nurture church members as did the apostles: “Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us” (1 Thessalonians 2:6-8).

**Sunday: True Christian Education** – To behold God and His Son is the sum and crown of true Christian education. “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Paul would know nothing but “Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2), and there is nothing to know outside of that. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24). He who does not know Christ does not know the Beginning of anything. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). So the wisdom of this world, which omits God, is only foolishness. The seeing of His everlasting power and Divinity in the things created is not given to mental acuteness. It is not for those who rely upon intellectual ability. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). Many Seventh-day Adventists are content with the unbiblical theology of metaphorical Father and Son, they do not want to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ”, and they are therefore unreceptive to true Christian education. “Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone” (Hosea 4:17). “True education is not the forcing of instruction on an unready and unreceptive mind. The mental powers must be awakened, the interest aroused” {Ed 41.2}.

**Monday: Called to Live as Light** – The work of the church is to hold forth the word of life; and it can do that only by being blameless and harmless. For while the truth of God is a light, the members of the church are not merely to hold that word forth in their hands, but are to let it shine forth from themselves, so that they themselves shall be light. As the Saviour said: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16). The church is the light of the world only when its members are the workmanship of God, “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Ephesians 2:10), and these works are constant, so that the light burns with a steady flame. Those who are in this condition are “workers together” with God (2 Corinthians 6:1). This is indeed a glorious calling. But those who are not in this condition are not of the church of Christ at all. May we be true Christians who fully reflect Christ. Have the light, and the world must necessarily see it. The darker the night, the more plainly can we see a lighted candle in the room; so the more of moral darkness there is in the world, the more distinctly should the light of truth be seen in the lives of Christians. They are to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom they shine as lights (Philippians 2:15). The world will learn of Christ through His followers. Christ is the light of the world, and Christians, receiving light from Him, are to transmit it undimmed to those around them. And this heavenly light shining in Christians shall increase more and more until it blends with the everlasting glory that shall cover the whole earth.

The life of Christ is given to the world as freely as the light, for the light is His life. No one need fear that there is not enough to supply everybody to all eternity. When people say that they cannot think it possible that the Lord can save them, they virtually say that they do not think that the Lord has life enough for everybody. But this doubt has been answered before it could be made, for the light is inexhaustible. If there were a thousand times as many people in the world as there are now, not a soul would have any the less light. By using the light, we do not deprive anybody else of it. A thousand candles may be lighted from a single candle without diminishing its light in the least. So the life of Christ is inexhaustible. He can give the whole of it to ever one in the world, and still have it all left. Proof that Christ is literally the light of the world, is given in the case of the healing of the man that was born blind. There was a man who had never seen the light. Jesus said that He was the light of the world, and

to demonstrate the reality of the saying, He made the man see. This shows us that the true light comes from Christ, and that by it we may receive salvation, if we receive it in faith. It shows us also that the Lord has not only life enough for everybody, but that He can give the light of life to those who have not the power to see. With the Lord is the Fountain of Life. If we drink from that fountain, receiving the life by faith, we shall also be light. As Christ is the light of the world, so He says to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." We have no light, however, except that which comes from the Word. We can shine only by the light of the glory of the Lord. This is given to us by the Word which commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the Beginning. We do not make the light. We can arise and shine, only because our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us. The Lord gives us light, not merely that we may enjoy it, but that we may be light and salvation to others (Isaiah 49:6).

**Tuesday: Living as Disciples** – There is great urgent need in our Seventh-day Adventist Church for all professed disciples to take the Bible as it reads without spiritualising it. When God says of Christ, this is My beloved Son, and when Christ says My Father is greater than I, we are to take the Bible as it reads. But our theologians have mystified the Father and Son to deny that God is literally the Father of Christ. Oh why should not the living disciples of Christ do as the disciples of old did in bringing the Bible to the people, so that people may read it without the misinterpretations of men? When this is done as it should be, there will be a greater reformation than has ever yet been known. As the days of old, He who appointed fishermen, unschooled in the theological schools of that time, will raise up men to finish the work – men who will take the Bible as it reads and present the plain truth to the world. As with Jesus Himself, so with those whom He chose to accompany Him, and to send forth to preach, – they were men in humble station, not having studied in the theological schools. Their learning was derived from the Scriptures. The rulers were astonished at the power and knowledge of these humble fishermen preachers, as they had been with Jesus. We are told that when the rulers "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). As of old, the disciples of Jesus are taught by Christ Himself.

**Wednesday: Seeking Truth** – Among multitude that assembled on the day of Pentecost there were two classes. First, there were "devout men" who were not merely pious, but were thoughtful, cautious, and circumspect. They were full of reverence toward God, and desirous of serving Him; yet they would not jump at conclusions. When they served the Lord they did it understandingly. So when they saw the wonderful manifestations of the Holy Spirit, they inquired, "What meaneth this?" there was in this question nothing of ridicule or of obstinate doubt; but there was a spirit of earnest seeking for truth. There can be no question but that they were among the three thousand converts, for the Saviour said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Second, there were "others" who "mocking said, these men are full of new wine." These persons are fairly represented by the seed sown by the wayside (Matthew 13:4, 19). Satan caught away the seed almost before it fell on the hard ground of their hearts. They were unthinking persons, whose strongest argument was a coarse jest. They have little influence over intelligent people; yet they are active agents for Satan, for there is a large class who are deceived by them. They themselves imagine that they have a logical mind, too great to be taught the saving truth. To carefully and candidly weigh a matter is a mark of a truly great mind. When a man stoops to ridicule and cast slurs upon that which he does not understand, he stamps himself at once as of feeble intellect.

**Thursday: Sharing Our Lives** – In the first epistle to the Thessalonians, we learn of how Paul shared the gospel. "In this first epistle, Paul referred to his manner of labor among the Thessalonians. He declared that he had not sought to win converts through deception or guile. 'As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us'" {AA 256.4}.