

Sabbath School Lesson #2 – A Day in the Ministry of Jesus – 6-12 July 2024

Christ started His earthly ministry by calling the disciples. “And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17).

Sunday: “Follow Me” – How do you respond to Christ’s call? In the record of the call of the apostles, we have a lesson on how the Lord wishes men to obey His call, “Follow Me.” Simon and Andrew were fishers. Jesus said, “Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.” Not a moment did they hesitate, but “straightway they forsook their nets, and followed Him” (Mark 1:17-18). Peter and John were also fishers. They were in their boat, mending their nets, which had been broken by the great number of fish that they had just taken (see Mark 1:19; and Luke 5:6). Jesus called them, “and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after Him.” “And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom; and He said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him” (Luke 5:27-28). There are two great difficulties that confront people when they are asked to follow Christ. That is, most people are confronted by one or the other of them. One of them is the poverty of the one called, and the other is the wealth. One man hesitates because he has hard work to make a living, and he doesn’t know how his family will be provided for if he obeys the Lord. Another man has so extensive a business on his hands that it is impossible to leave it, at least until he has had time to arrange his affairs. Both these classes of people are represented in the above calls, but they took no account of the difficulties. We know that Peter had a family, and being a humble fisherman he could not have been wealthy. Yet he did not stop to consider how he should support his family if he obeyed the voice of Jesus, but left his nets, and went with Him. Levi was wealthy, for the office of publican was a very lucrative one; yet he left his business at a moment’s notice, when Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.” So it was with Paul. He says, “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” (Galatians 1:15-16). That is the way the Lord wishes men to obey His voice. He reveals Himself in the Sabbath of the fourth commandment—the seventh day (see Exodus 20:8-11) and says to them, “Follow Me.” Many hesitate. With some, it is their poverty that stands in the way. They do not see how they can live if they keep the Sabbath, forgetting that people who did not keep the Sabbath also die; and forgetting that it is the Creator of the heaven and earth, who calls them; forgetting that He who calls them to obey Him, says, “the silver is Mine and the gold is Mine” (Haggai 2:8), and also, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof” (Psalm 24:1). Of His power to provide for His followers, we have a striking proof in the wonderful draught of fishes that the disciples took at His word. The more wealthy are still more inclined to hesitate to obey the call which Jesus sends them in the Sabbath, because the Sabbath is the best day for business. They do not reflect that it is He who gives them power to get wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18), and that He is just as able to give wealth to those who obey Him, as He is to give it to those who disobey Him; and that, after all, “a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Men cannot be too slow to follow strange and doubtful voices; they cannot be too cautious about moving when God has not spoken; but they cannot be too quick to obey the voice of the Lord. David said, “I made haste, and delayed not, to keep Thy commandments” (Psalm 119:60). And then he declared that he would run in the way of the commandments of God. God’s will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven; and in heaven the angels “do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word.

Monday: An Unforgettable Worship Service – Read Mark 1:21-28, what is this new doctrine taught by Jesus? In the first chapter of Mark, we read of a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath day with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, and Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him; and when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him, and they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority commandeth he the unclean spirits, and they obeyed him. Talk about new doctrines. Well, reader, there is necessity for new doctrine. Christ commanded the unclean

spirit to come out of the man, and it obeyed him. That was the doctrine of Christ. There was no argument about it, no splitting of hairs, but it was the doctrine that drove the devil out of a man. What is the application? “Whoso committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.” What is this thing in me that makes me sin? There are only two powers – Christ and Satan. If Christ is not ruling in me, who is? – “The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Now what is the power that every preacher of the gospel must carry with him, if he is indeed a preacher of the gospel? What is preaching for? – To save men. From what? From sin. But in order to save man from sin, what has got to be driven out of that man? – The devil. Then if you and I are called to be ministers of the gospel, the power of our preaching drives the devil out of a man. But first it has got to drive the devil out of ourselves. That is a new doctrine. That is the new doctrine or teaching that we want.

Tuesday: More Sabbath Ministry – In Mark 1:29-34, how did Jesus help Peter’s family, and what do we learn? It is worth noting that in very many cases Jesus touched those whom He healed. When Peter’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever, Jesus “touched her hand, and the fever left her” (Matthew 8:15). That same evening, “all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them” (Luke 4:40). In His own country the people were so unbelieving that “He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands on a few sick folk, and healed them” (Mark 6:5). In Matthew we are assured that this healing of the sick was “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases” (Matthew 8:17). We know that healing went from Him to the suffering ones who thronged round Him to touch Him (Luke 6:19); and this Scripture assures us that He received into His own person their diseases, in exchange for His healing power. Now we have the blessed assurance that although He is “passed into the heavens,” He has not lost His sympathy with us, but is still “touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” He comes close to us in pity, because “He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.” In all our sin and degradation, we may have the inspiring thought that Jesus does not despise us, and is not ashamed to come in the closest companionship with us, in order that He may help us.

Wednesday: The Secret of Jesus’ Ministry – What was the secret of Jesus’s ministry? He often went to the Father for communion, seeking from Him strength. “In the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). Why? – Because He had a day before Him of revealing the Father, a day before Him of giving God to the people, and He must needs rise a great while before day, and go to the Father, and in fellowship with Him, in communion with Him, He must receive from Him what He was to give to the people. “And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering” (Luke 9:28-29). And He prayed a long prayer that night. Christ prayed His short prayers in public; but when He went to commune with God in the night season, then it was that He poured out His soul before God, reaching out in His weakness, and clinging to God, not for Himself, but for the people, for our sakes, that He might grasp divine power; and it was while He was praying that the fashion of His countenance was altered. It was when Moses was in the presence of God that his face shone with glory, so that when he came out the people could not stand before him. It was when Christ, as our representative, prayed that night on the mountain till His disciples fell asleep and the dews of night fell on Him, that the heavens were opened to Him. It is in our communion with God that glory rests upon us, and our filthy garments are changed to the white robes of Christ’s righteousness.

Thursday: Can you keep a secret? – In Mark 1:40-45, Jesus tells the healed man to go present himself to a priest for decision that he was now healed of leprosy, and he could be allowed in public in accordance to the law of Moses (Leviticus 14); why did Jesus tell him to keep secret how he was healed? “Had the priests known the facts concerning the healing of the leper, their hatred of Christ might have led them to render a dishonest sentence. Jesus desired the man to present himself at the temple before any rumors concerning the miracle had reached them. Thus an impartial decision could be secured, and the restored leper would be permitted to unite once more with his family and friends” – EG White {DA 264.2}.