

## Sabbath School Lesson #6 – Inside Out – 3-9 August 2024

**C**hrist said, “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” (Mark 7:15). He also said, “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). That is just the difference between the teaching of heathen philosophy at its best, and the teaching of Christ and the Gospel. They are as different as earth and heaven. One could climb to the stars by burrowing in the earth, as well as he could find the truth by studying the writings of heathen philosophers. But the source whence they expected to receive light and goodness was itself darkness and corruption, what but wickedness could result. Human religion says, “Look within;” the Gospel of God says, “Looking unto Jesus” (Hebrews 12:2). “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). There is something in the heart of the natural man which, whenever he is called upon to see spiritual things, entirely obstructs his view, so that he cannot discern anything; and no matter how plainly a thing may stand revealed before him, he cannot see it. No matter how hard he tries to see it, he will not be able to do so. It is a simple impossibility. And this something in the natural heart is very liable to exist where its presence is least suspected, or to creep back into the heart after it has once been driven out. It is this something which makes the heart, as the prophet Jeremiah says, “deceitful above all things” (Jeremiah 12:9), more deceitful even than Satan himself. “Keep the heart with all diligence,” is the wise man’s admonition, “for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23). Only by the greatest diligence can it be kept in a state which will leave the spiritual vision clear, un-perverted. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matthew 12:34). “Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, ... for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:18-19). Now if Christ live in the heart, and a man be willing to be a witness to that fact, it is evident that the fountain will send forth pure waters. The issues of the life will be the issues of Christ’s life. “We shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:10). “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10).

**Sunday: Human Traditions Versus God’s Commands** – Might we have “traditions” that perhaps conflict with the principles of God’s law? If so, what might they be? One of the tradition of the Jews is stated: “For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye” (Mark 7:10-13). “And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death” (Exodus 21:17). “Corban” is a Hebrew word meaning an offering, an oblation; Rabbis taught that if a man took the money that should have been used for the support of his parents, and devoted it to the temple service, it was a pious act, and he was free from any responsibility for them. But Christ did not so regard it. The commandment says, “Honour thy father and thy mother,” and through His prophet the Lord has said, “To obey is better than sacrifice” (1 Samuel 15:22). But sacrifice in unrighteousness is an abomination; no amount of “work for the Lord” is a substitute for doing simple duties of life.

**Monday: Clean Hands or Clean Heart?** – You might have the right theology, but who fully and ultimately has your heart? What is your motivation for serving Christ? Why do you keep the Sabbath, why do you return tithe? Self-preservation: so that you get saved and not get lost. That is a good idea, but if it never goes beyond that, it is the root of legalism. All self-centred motivation is “under the law,” old covenant, and it will surely fail in the final crisis. Much of our public evangelism is based on this egocentric appeal, which is good for a childish understanding. The Bible speaks often of a process of growing up. It says in

Ephesians 4 that we must "henceforth be no more children, ... but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things." In fact, we are to come "unto a [mature person], unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (verses 14, 15, 13). When we grow up in Christ, we acquire a new self-forgetful motivation: a concern for Jesus, that we honour Him, that the burden of sorrow He feels for the world may be lifted, that "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). All egocentric motivation based on fear of hell or hope of reward is Old Covenant in nature. A higher motivation is shown by the Bride making herself "ready" for the "marriage of the Lamb." We need to come to "the knowledge of the Son of God ... unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ ... grow up into Him in all things" (Ephesians 4:13-15), that only "the love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Corinthians 5:14), and that "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). "Then Jesus looked upon His redeemed saints; their countenances were radiant with glory; and as He fixed His loving eyes upon them, He said, with His rich, musical voice, "I behold the travail of My soul, and am satisfied. This rich glory is yours to enjoy eternally. Your sorrows are ended. There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." I saw the redeemed host bow and cast their glittering crowns at the feet of Jesus, and then, as His lovely hand raised them up, they touched their golden harps and filled all heaven with their rich music and songs to the Lamb" {EW 288.1}.

**Tuesday: Crumbs for the Dogs** – Why is prejudice against other races and nationalities contrary to the teachings of Jesus? How can we seek to be purged of this evil? In Mark 7:28 we see that this woman had faith. The tradition was to regard her as an outcast, but Jesus came to save all humans. She came out pleading with Jesus, and "besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter." The disciples said, "Send her away; for she crieth after us;" but Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Finally, she came and fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. But Jesus said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. If she could not get a loaf, she would take a slice; and if she could not get a slice, she would pick up the crumbs that fell from the master's table. Praise the Lord! Beloved, if the Lord would enable us by grace divine to pick up the crumbs of his grace and love, it would lead us up to a slice, and then a loaf of bread, and then into the fullness of God's love and grace.

**Wednesday: Tongue-tied** – What do you do with the gifts you have been given regarding hearing and speaking (for they are gifts)? How are you using them? Read Mark 7:31-37). Christ loosened the man's tongue and he spoke. "This was Christ's work. But the churches have not filled their place in cooperating with God in this work. Every position in life is permitted in the providence of God. Each sphere of action requires most thorough consecration to God. Those who are hid with Christ in God will become instruments in God's hands for the development of Christian virtue. All classes have a part to act. God's people are to be labourers together with God. The Lord has given each one a work to do. No one will He excuse who cherishes the inclination to fold his hands and make self a centre. Truth is to be proclaimed, it is to go forth as a lamp that burneth. Not a thread of selfishness is to be woven into the work. We must see light in God's light" {PrT May 25, 1899, par. 21}.

**Thursday: Watch Out for Bad Bread** – How can we learn to keep our hearts and minds open to the reality of God and to His love? Dwell on all the evidence that we have been given for God and for His love. At times, though, why does it seem so easy to doubt? In John 6, the Jews had eaten bread in the desert the day before for physical life and were to eat Christ the living bread for their spiritual life for ever. But this was too much for them to believe. "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh?" The same question is asked at this day. How is it possible that we can get righteousness and life, even the righteousness of God, and eternal life, just by believing on Christ? Jesus said that it is by eating Him. But that only makes it seem more absurd to unbelief. If the Jews had not been so blinded by unbelief, they would have thought how they had eaten bread from Christ the day before, and that would have answered their questions. And to-day He who doubts that one may eat of Jesus, and thereby get His life of everlasting righteousness, shows that he does not believe the record of the feeding of the five thousand.