

Sabbath School Lesson #6 – More Testimonies About Jesus – 2-8 November 2024

Christ said in their hearing, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me” (John 12:32). It is the Father that draws all men through Christ unto Himself, for Christ said, “No man come to Me, except that Father which hath sent Me draw him” (John 6:44); Paul says, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). When the words of Christ in the Bible are today spoken to the people, in the Spirit of Christ, by one in whom Christ dwells, so that those words come from Him, they will have as much drawing power as when they were first spoken. There are souls now as of old, who are feeling, “Sir, we would see Jesus” (John 12:21); let Christ be lifted in us for them to see Him.

Sunday: Humility of Soul: John the Baptist Testifies Again – Read John 3:25-36. How does John the Baptist compare himself to Jesus? “He must increase, but I must decrease” (verse 30). This was what John the Baptist said of Christ and himself. It is what every person ought to say, for Christ is sure to increase until He fills all things, and all who will not acknowledge Him will at last cease to exist. How much better, then, to humble ourselves, acknowledging ourselves to be nothing, that, being swallowed up in His greatness, we may live for ever in Him. John was a great prophet, and he had preached to many thousands. Now Jesus comes, another great prophet, and He has the ears of the people. The disciples of John could see no difference between John and Jesus—no reason why John should not have the same power and influence as Jesus. Even John, who knew that Christ was preferred before him, had not seen Him except as a man among men. Nevertheless, his word was, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” This marks the true follower of Christ. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory” (Psalm 115:1). “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee,” is more than mere rhyme to the Christian. Self-effacement, that only Christ may be seen, is true Christianity. Christ must be lifted, and self must be abased. Now let us say, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” What does it mean? It means to be “kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another” (Romans 12:10). It means obedience to the exhortation, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Philippians 2:3). It means the regarding of others just as though we could see “the Lord of glory” standing in their place. There is wonderful help for us in putting ourselves actually in John’s place as regards our fellows. When tempted to envy another, to think that another has more honour and attention than we have, and that he even has it at our expense, what a blessed peace and content comes to us when we put Christ in his place, and say from the heart, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Then indeed will Christ be lifted up even in us, and we ourselves shall be made sharers of His exaltation.

Monday: A New Understanding of the Messiah – Read John 1:32–36. What does John the Baptist say here about Jesus that the people were not expecting about the long-awaited Messiah? The important message given by John in these verses is that “he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” (verse 36). If you believe in a metaphorical son, you have a metaphorical life; if you believe in a literal Son of God, you have literal life. If you deny Christ is literal Son of God, saying ‘Father and Son’ are role-play titles (as in *Adventist Review*, 31 Oct 1996), John says to you, “He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22)! The Father has given us eternal life in Christ. “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Many act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, He died; but He rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph’s new tomb. We have a risen Saviour. What does the death of Christ do for us? – Reconciles us to God. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Now mark! It is the death of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there? – It is the life of Christ. We are saved by His life. Now hold these words in your minds: “Being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

Tuesday: Acceptance and Rejection – Read John 6:51-71. What did Jesus say that people had trouble accepting? They had hard time believing that faith in Christ supplies spiritual life just as surely as the eating of nourishing food supplies physical life. The Saviour says to us, “Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise

him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed” (John 6:54-55). We eat His flesh, by feeding upon His word (verse 63), for it is written that man shall live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). This is also shown in chapter of John in which we find the statement made by Christ that the words which he spoke were Spirit and life. In the 35th verse of that chapter, we read, “Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life.” Again, in the fifty-first verse, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” And again, “Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” Then in the 63rd verse he added, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.” Here we find the plainest declaration that the word of God, received in faith, truly conveys Christ to the soul of man.

Wednesday: The Witness of the Father – Read John 1:32-36; Matthew 3:16-17. At the baptism of Jesus, how did the Father witness that Jesus was His literal Son? Before we answer, notice what the Lesson writer: ‘At the baptism of Jesus, the Father and the Spirit joined the Son in marking this important occasion: the commencement of Jesus’ ministry.’ Many not led by the Spirit of Christ imagine that at that baptism, the Father in Heaven, the Son on the earth and a third person Spirit who descended. The picture Ellen White painted in her words helped us see that the dove-like phenomenon was not an entity. Here are few quotations: “After Jesus had been baptized of John in Jordan, he went straightway up out of the water to the bank of the river, and bowed in the attitude of prayer” {YI March 1, 1874, par. 1}; “Never before have the angels listened to such a prayer. They are eager to bear to their loved Commander a message of assurance and comfort. But no; the Father Himself will answer the petition of His Son. Direct from the throne issue the beams of His glory. The heavens are opened, and upon the Saviour’s head descends a dovelike form of purest light,—fit emblem of Him, the meek and lowly One” {DA 112.1}; “Of the vast throng at the Jordan, few except John discerned the heavenly vision. Yet the solemnity of the divine Presence rested upon the assembly. The people stood silently gazing upon Christ. His form was bathed in the light that ever surrounds the throne of God. His upturned face was glorified as they had never before seen the face of man. From the open heavens a voice was heard saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” {DA 112.2}.

Thursday: The Witness of the Crowd – Read John 7:37-53. What did the unbelieving church leaders, the pharisees, say of the common people who believed that Christ was truly the Son of God? “But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.” Were all the church leaders against Christ? No, at least two members of the Sanhedrin council believed that Christ was the Son of God. “Christ was to be tried formally before the Sanhedrin; but before Annas He was subjected to a preliminary trial. Under the Roman rule the Sanhedrin could not execute the sentence of death. They could only examine a prisoner, and pass judgment, to be ratified by the Roman authorities. It was therefore necessary to bring against Christ charges that would be regarded as criminal by the Romans. An accusation must also be found which would condemn Him in the eyes of the Jews. Not a few among the priests and rulers had been convicted by Christ’s teaching, and only fear of excommunication prevented them from confessing Him. The priests well remembered the question of Nicodemus, “Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” John 7:51. This question had for the time broken up the council, and thwarted their plans. Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus were not now to be summoned, but there were others who might dare to speak in favor of justice. The trial must be so conducted as to unite the members of the Sanhedrin against Christ. There were two charges which the priests desired to maintain. If Jesus could be proved a blasphemer, He would be condemned by the Jews. If convicted of sedition, it would secure His condemnation by the Romans. The second charge Annas tried first to establish. He questioned Jesus concerning His disciples and His doctrines, hoping the prisoner would say something that would give him material upon which to work. He thought to draw out some statement to prove that He was seeking to establish a secret society, with the purpose of setting up a new kingdom. Then the priests could deliver Him to the Romans as a disturber of the peace and a creator of insurrection. – {DA 698.3}.