

## Sabbath School Lesson #10 – The Way, the Truth, and the Life – 30 Nov-6 Dec 2024

**C**hrist said to His hearers, “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John 1:18). This verse, our Adventist pioneers understood as referring to the ‘beginning’ of the Son of God. Ellen White expressed the ‘beginning’ of Christ as a literal Son to the Father in this way: “The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom Him who was made in the express image of his person, and sent him down to earth to reveal how greatly he loved mankind” {RH July 9, 1895, par. 13}. Waggoner perceived the ‘beginning’ of Christ in this manner: “There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42 and 1:18) but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning” {CH21.2}; “But the point is that Christ is a begotten Son and not a created subject” {CHR 22.1} (1890). James White wrote this seven months before his death: “The Father was greater than the Son in that he was first. The Son was equal with the Father in that he had received all things from the Father” {RH January 4, 1881, page 2}. Smith wrote: “God alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, - a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, - appeared the Word. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1:1. This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us” {LUJ 10.1}; and Smith’s commentary on Revelation 3:14 says: “*The Source of Blessing*. “From Him which is, and which was, and which is to come,” or is to be, - an expression which signifies complete eternity, past and future, and can be applicable to God the Father only. This language, we believe, is never applied to Christ. He is spoken of as another person, in distinction from the being thus described” (Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1882, p 430). Our pioneers believed that the immortality of the Father was conferred upon the Son, with the same eternal life of the Father given the Son “to have life in Himself” (John 5:26). Cottrell wrote: “God “only hath immortality.” He is the one fountain from which all life is derived. But he has given this prerogative to his Son, that he may give life to them that believe. “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.” John v, 26” {ARSH March 15, 1864, page 125.12}. Ellen White wrote: “God has sent his Son to communicate his own life to humanity. Christ declares, “I live by the Father,” my life and his being one. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him,” “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man.” The head of every man is Christ, as the head of Christ is God. “And ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s” {HM June 1, 1897, Art. A, par. 11}. Since the death of our pioneers, the literal Sonship of Christ has been denied. Sadly, the official position of our church today is that the Sonship of Christ is a role or a metaphor: “In order to eradicate sin and rebellion from the universe and to restore harmony and peace, one of the divine Beings accepted, and entered into, the role of the Father, another the role of the Son” (Adventist Review, 31 October 1996); “Christ was the Son of God before He was born of a woman. ... We are dealing with a metaphorical use of the word ‘son.’ The Son is not the natural, literal Son of the Father” (Adventist World, November 2015, page 42).

**Sunday: I Have Given You and Example** – Reading in John 13:1-20, what does the Ordinance of Humility teach you about following in the footsteps of Jesus and how to humbly serve others? There was never on earth a baser deed than that of Judas. He had had evidence of Christ’s Messiahship and of His goodness, that none other of His persecutors had. At the time of the Passover supper Judas was meditating the basest act of treachery ever known on this earth; yet Jesus, against whom it was directed, and who knew all about it, lovingly washed the feet of that, His cruellest enemy. Why? – “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” In that He taught us not only to love the brethren, but also love for our enemies. Since Judas was the basest of all base men, there can be no question but that what Jesus did for him He would as readily have done for any

other man in the world. He would as readily have washed the feet of the chief priests, or of Pilate, as of Judas. Therefore, if we do not have such love in our hearts for all men, even those who may be seeking our life, as would lead us to wash their feet if occasion served, then washing the brethren's feet is but a form, and we are not following the example of Christ. It is a small thing to love the brethren, who loved us; but the example of Jesus teaches more than this. It teaches the tenderest love towards our bitterest, basest enemies.

**Monday: I Will Certainly Come Again** – Read John 14:1–3. In what context did Jesus say these words? Christ spoke these words in His talk to His disciples, in the evening of the day on which He was crucified. He had been with them in constant companionship for over three years, and besides the tie of personal love which bound them to Him they had given Him reverence as “the Christ the Son of the living God,” and had “trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:21). They had looked for deliverance from the Roman yoke, and now consternation and grief had taken hold of their hearts as they listened to His words: “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you” (John 13:33). To believe that Christ is literally the Son of God is essential to your eternal life. And Christ had told the unbelieving Jews, “If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24), that they could not follow Him. That caused His disciples no trouble because they believed on Him, and He surely would take them with Him wherever He went. But no; unto them also He said, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me; and as I said unto the Jews; whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say to you.” What wonder that the disciples were sorely troubled at this announcement. But it is not in the heart of the loving Saviour to cause His children pain. “Though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies” (Lamentations 3:32). So, He said to them, “I will come again”.

**Tuesday: I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life** – The Lesson writer says, “John 1:18 says that the only begotten (better translated here as unique)”. Does “only begotten” mean ‘Unique’? We must note that the fallen angels would obscure the fact that Christ is the Son of God: “Angels were expelled from heaven ... This fact the [fallen] angels would obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God” – Ellen White {TDG 128.2}. The Greek word “monogenēs” appears nine times in the NT, five of which are in relation to Jesus (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9) and four of which are in relation to other people (Luke 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; Hebrews 11:17) – it refers to ‘only born’ in the latter five times, it all refers to literally born child of the person referred to. Even in the case of Abraham offering his “only begotten son” (Hebrews 11:17), Paul explains that Isaac was “born after the Spirit” (Galatians 4:22-23, 29-30) and the “only begotten,” for Ishmael was of the ‘flesh’ and to be cast out. If we refer to Isaac as ‘unique’ child of Abraham, we negate the lesson: “The ram offered in the place of Isaac represented the Son of God, who was to be sacrificed in our stead” {PP 154.1}; “No other test could have caused Abraham such torture of soul as did the offering of his son. God gave His Son to a death of agony and shame” {PP 154.2}. To refer to Christ as ‘unique’ son is to aid Satan to “obscure, that Christ was the only begotten Son of God” {TDG 128.2}. The truth is: “God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God” {8T 268.3}; “A complete offering has been made; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,” – not a son by creation, as were the angels, nor a son by adoption, as is the forgiven sinner, but a Son begotten in the express image of the Father’s person” {ST May 30, 1895, par. 3}.

**Wednesday: I AM the Truth** – What is the Truth? It is Christ. Here, the Lesson writer is correct: “Jesus is not simply the embodiment of the truth; He is the Truth. Truth is not a concept or a construct. It is a Person!” The Bible testifies of Christ. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39).

**Thursday: The Scriptures and the Truth** – What is the relationship between the Bible and the Truth (Christ)? Jesus prayed to His Father, “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth” (John 17:17); and as He is the Divine Word He also said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Ephesians 3:17). It is not per se that the more we read the Bible we become sanctified; No! The Bible is the written word, but it is the author of the Bible, Jesus, through who God sanctifies us. The Jews searched the scripture for sanctification, rejected and killed Christ to retain their written word.