

*Ellen G. White*  
**NOTES**  
for the Sabbath School Lessons



**MANAGING  
FOR THE MASTER**  
Till He Comes

Jan | Feb | Mar 2023

Spirit of Prophecy quotations arranged for  
daily study with the adult Bible study guides

# EGW Notes - Lesson 2

## God's Covenants With Us



### Sabbath Afternoon, January 7

God is always giving; and upon whom are His gifts bestowed? Upon those who are faultless in character? "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." [Matthew 5:45](#). Notwithstanding the sinfulness of humanity, notwithstanding that we so often grieve the heart of Christ and prove ourselves most undeserving, yet when we ask His forgiveness, He does not turn us away. His love is freely extended to us, and He bids us: Love one another as I have loved you. [John 13:34](#).—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 284.

As the multitudes followed Christ through the open fields, He unfolded to them the beauties of the natural world. He sought to open the eyes of their understanding, that they might see how the hand of God upholds the world. In order to call out an appreciation of God's goodness and benevolence, He called the attention of His hearers to the gently falling dew, to the soft showers of rain and the bright sunshine, given alike to good and evil. He desired men to realize more fully the regard that God bestows on the human instrumentalities He has created.—*The Desire of*

*Ages*, p. 524.

It is the keeping of the commandments of God that honors and glorifies Him in His chosen. Wherefore every soul to whom God has given reasoning faculties is under obligation to God to search the Word and ascertain all that is enjoined upon us as God's purchased possession. We should seek to understand all that the Word requires of us. . . . We cannot show greater honor to our God, whose we are by creation and redemption, than to give evidence to the beings of heaven, to the worlds unfallen, and to fallen men, that we diligently hearken unto all His commandments, which are the laws that govern His kingdom.

We need to study diligently that we may gain a knowledge of the laws of God. How can we be obedient subjects if we fail to understand the laws that govern the kingdom of God? Then open your Bibles and search for everything that will enlighten you in regard to the precepts of God; and when you discern a Thus saith the Lord, ask not the opinion of men, but whatever the cost to yourself, obey cheerfully. Then the blessing of God will rest upon you.—Letter 82, 1895.

The question of deepest interest to each one should be, Am I meeting the requirements of the law of God? That law is holy, just, and good, and God would have us daily compare our actions with this, His great standard of righteousness. Only by a close examination of self in the light of God's Word can we discover our deviations from His holy rule of right.

Love is the principle that underlies God's government in heaven and on earth, and this love must be interwoven in the life of the Christian. The love of Christ is not a fitful love; it is deep, and broad, and full. Its possessor will not say, "I will love only those who love me." The heart that is

influenced by this holy principle will be carried above everything of a selfish nature.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 298.

**Sunday, January 8**

## **The Salvation Covenant**

Do not therefore conclude that the upward path is the hard and the downward road the easy way. All along the road that leads to death there are pains and penalties, there are sorrows and disappointments, there are warnings not to go on. God's love has made it hard for the heedless and headstrong to destroy themselves. It is true that Satan's path is made to appear attractive, but it is all a deception. . . .

The [narrow] road may be rough and the ascent steep; there may be pitfalls upon the right hand and upon the left; we may have to endure toil in our journey; when weary, when longing for rest, we may have to toil on; when faint, we may have to fight; when discouraged, we must still hope; but with Christ as our guide we shall not fail of reaching the desired haven at last. Christ Himself has trodden the rough way before us and has smoothed the path for our feet.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 139, 140.

Patient continuance in welldoing will lead you through this world of sorrow and strife to glory and honor and eternal life. Have God within and God overhead and you have nothing to fear. The Bible is a light to those who are in darkness. In the prospect of a blissful immortality held out to those who endure unto the end, you will find an elevating power, a strength which you need to resist evil. Be steadfast in the hour of trial, and you will gain at last a crown which will never fade away.

You need guidance from above. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and He will never betray your trust. If you will ask help of God you need not ask in vain. In order to



encourage us to have confidence and trust He comes near us by His holy Word and Spirit, and seeks in a thousand ways to win our confidence. But in nothing does He take more delight than in receiving the weak who come to Him for strength. If we will find heart and voice to pray, He will be sure to find an ear to hear and an arm to save.—*This Day With God*, p. 194.

“Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” ([2 Peter 1:10, 11](#)).

Here are your life-insurance papers. This is not an insurance policy the value of which someone else will receive after your death; it is a policy that assures you a life measuring with the life of God—even eternal life. O what an assurance! what a hope! Let us ever reveal to the world that we are seeking for a better country, even a heavenly. Heaven has been made for us, and we want a part in it. We cannot afford to allow anything to separate us from God and heaven. In this life we must be partakers of the divine nature. Brethren and sisters, you have only one life to live. O let it be a life of virtue, a life hid with Christ in God!—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 29.

**Monday, January 9**

## **To Hearken Diligently**

The book of Deuteronomy should be carefully studied by those living on the earth today. It contains a record of the instruction given to Moses to give to the children of Israel. In it the law is repeated.

The law of God was often to be repeated to Israel. That its precepts might not be forgotten, it was to be kept before the people, and was ever to be exalted and honored. Parents

were to read the law to their children, teaching it to them line upon line, precept upon precept. And on public occasions the law was to be read in the hearing of all the people.

Upon obedience to this law depended the prosperity of Israel. If they were obedient, it would bring them life; if disobedient, death. . . .

Had Israel obeyed the directions given them by Moses, not one of those who started on the journey from Egypt would in the wilderness have fallen a prey to disease or death. They were under a safe Guide. Christ had pledged Himself to lead them safely to the promised land if they would follow His guidance.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, pp. 1117, 1118.

The faith that is unto salvation is not a casual faith, it is not the mere consent of the intellect, it is belief rooted in the heart, that embraces Christ as a personal Saviour, assured that He can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. To believe that He will save others, but will not save you is not genuine faith; but when the soul lays hold upon Christ as the only hope of salvation, then genuine faith is manifested. This faith leads its possessor to place all the affections of the soul upon Christ; his understanding is under the control of the Holy Spirit, and his character is molded after the divine likeness. His faith is not a dead faith, but a faith that works by love, and leads him to behold the beauty of Christ, and to become assimilated to the divine character. [[Deuteronomy 30:11-14](#) quoted.] “And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live” ([Deuteronomy 30:6](#)).—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 391.

He who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart, will reflect the purity and love which exist in Jehovah, and which Christ represented in our world. He who has the love of God in his heart has no enmity against the law of God, but renders willing obedience to all His commandments, and this constitutes Christianity. He who has supreme love to God will reveal love to his fellow-men, who belong to God both by creation and redemption. Love is the fulfilling of the law; and it is the duty of every child of God to render obedience to His commandments.

The law of God, which is perfect holiness, is the only true standard of character. Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 51.

**Tuesday, January 10**

## **Honor the Lord**

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. [Proverbs 3:9, 10](#).

This scripture teaches that God, as the giver of all our benefits, has a claim upon them all; that His claim should be our first consideration; and that a special blessing will attend all who honor this claim. . . .

All we possess is the Lord's, and we are accountable to Him for the use we make of it. In the use of every penny, it will be seen whether we love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God's children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked.—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 160.

Some give of their abundance, yet feel no lack. They do not practice self-denial for the cause of Christ. They give

liberally and heartily, but they still have all that heart can wish. God regards it. The action and motive are strictly marked by Him, and they will not lose their reward. But those who have less means must not excuse themselves because they cannot do as much as some others. Do what you can. Deny yourself of some article you can do without, and sacrifice for the cause of God. Like the poor widow, cast in your two mites. You will actually give more than all those who give of their abundance; and you will know how sweet it is to deny self, to give to the needy, to sacrifice for the truth, and to lay up treasure in heaven. . . .

Give what you can now, and as you cooperate with Christ, your hand will open to impart still more. And God will refill your hand, that the treasure of truth may be taken to many souls. He will give to you that you may give to others.—*Our High Calling*, p. 199.

Our Saviour refers us to the fowls of the air, which sow not, neither reap, nor gather into barns, yet their heavenly Father feedeth them. Then He says: “Are ye not much better than they? . . . And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” . . . “Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” Can you not trust in your heavenly Father? Can you not rest upon His gracious promise? “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Precious promise! Can we not rely upon it? Can we not have implicit trust, knowing that He is faithful who hath promised? . . . Let your trembling faith again grasp the promises of God. Bear your whole weight upon them with



unwavering faith; for they will not, they cannot, fail.—  
*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 296.

**Wednesday, January 11**

## **The Tithe Contract**

He whose heart is aglow with the love of Christ will regard it as not only a duty, but a pleasure, to aid in the advancement of the highest, holiest work committed to man—the work of presenting to the world the riches of goodness, mercy, and truth.

It is the spirit of covetousness which leads men to keep for gratification of self means that rightfully belong to God, and this spirit is as abhorrent to Him now as when through His prophet He sternly rebuked His people, saying, “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.” [Malachi 3:8, 9](#).

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 338, 339.

The Lord bestows His gifts abundantly upon us. He “so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Every blessing we have comes through Jesus Christ. Then shall we not arouse, and do our duty toward God, upon whom we are dependent for life and health, for His blessing upon our crops and fields, our cattle, our herds, and our vineyards? We are assured if we give to the Lord’s treasury, we shall receive of Him again; but if we withhold of our means, He will withhold His blessing from us, and send a curse upon the unfaithful.

God has said, “Prove Me now herewith, . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

What a wonderful presentation in promised blessings is He giving us! Who can venture to rob God in tithes and offerings with such a promise as this! “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.”—*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, pp. 307, 308.

God’s plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. In it are combined simplicity and utility, and it does not require depth of learning to understand and execute it. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, woman, and youth may become a treasurer for the Lord and may be an agent to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle: “Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.”

Great objects are accomplished by this system. If one and all would accept it, each would be made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God, and there would be no want of means with which to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 388, 389.

**Thursday, January 12**

## **Seek Ye First**

Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. The Lord says, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee:

because he trusteth in Thee.” [Isaiah 26:3](#). Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory—character—of Christ will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331.

The examples in God’s word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin or attempt at self-justification. Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in its darkest hue, not attempting to lessen his guilt. He says, “Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” [Acts 26:10, 11](#). He does not hesitate to declare that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” [1 Timothy 1:15](#).

The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” [1 John 1:9](#).—*Steps to Christ*, p. 41.

For stricken Israel there was but one remedy—a turning away from the sins that had brought upon them the chastening hand of the Almighty, and a turning to the Lord with full purpose of heart. To them had been given the

assurance, “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people; if My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” [2 Chronicles 7:13, 14](#). It was to bring to pass this blessed result that God continued to withhold from them the dew and the rain until a decided reformation should take place.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 128.

Every soul has a heaven to win, and a hell to shun. And the angelic agencies are all ready to come to the help of the tried and tempted soul. He, the Son of the infinite God, endured the test and trial in our behalf. The cross of Calvary stands vividly before every soul. When the cases of all are judged, and they [the lost] are delivered to suffer for their contempt for God and their disregard of His honor in their disobedience, not one will have an excuse, not one will need to have perished. It was left to their own choice who should be their prince, Christ or Satan. All the help Christ received, every man may receive in the great trial. The cross stands as a pledge that not one need be lost, that abundant help is provided for every soul.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 96.

**Friday, January 13**

## **For Further Reading**

*Counsels on Stewardship*, “For Every Dispensation,” p. 67;  
*Counsels on Stewardship*, “Continual Recipients to Give Continually,” p. 18.

# EGW Notes - Lesson 3

## The Tithing Contract

### Sabbath Afternoon, January 14

The Lord has given His people a message for this time. It is presented in the third chapter of Malachi. How could the Lord present His requirements in a clearer or more forcible manner than He has done in this chapter?

All should remember that God's claims upon us underlie every other claim. He gives to us bountifully, and the contract which He has made with man is that a tenth of his possessions shall be returned to God. The Lord graciously entrusts to His stewards His treasures, but of the tenth He says: This is Mine. Just in proportion as God has given His property to man, so man is to return to God a faithful tithe of all his substance. This distinct arrangement was made by Jesus Christ Himself.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 384.

All the good things we have are a loan from our Saviour. He has made us stewards. Our smallest offerings, our humblest services, presented in faith and love, may be consecrated gifts to win souls to the service of the Master and to promote His glory. The interest and prosperity of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration. Those who make their pleasure and selfish interest the chief objects of their lives are not faithful stewards.

Those who deny self to do others good, and who devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain. . . .

Christians forget that they are servants of the Master; that they themselves, their time, and all that they have belong to



Him.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, pp. 397, 398.

While the people are looking for earthly good, Jesus points them to a heavenly reward. But He does not place it all in the future life; it begins here. The Lord appeared of old time to Abraham and said, “I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.” [Genesis 15:1](#). This is the reward of all who follow Christ. Jehovah Immanuel—He “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” in whom dwells “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” ([Colossians 2:3, 9](#))—to be brought into sympathy with Him, to know Him, to possess Him, as the heart opens more and more to receive His attributes; to know His love and power, to possess the unsearchable riches of Christ, to comprehend more and more “what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God” ([Ephesians 3:18, 19](#))—“this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.” [Isaiah 54:17](#).—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 34.

Every soul converted is to have the light in regard to the Lord’s requirement for tithes and offerings. All that men enjoy they receive from the Lord’s great farm, and He is pleased to have His heritage enjoy His goods; but He has made a special contract with all who stand under the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel, that they may show their dependence and accountability to God, by returning to His treasury a certain portion as His own. This is to be invested in supporting the missionary work which must be done to fulfill the commission given to them by the Son of God just before He left His disciples.—*Evangelism*, p. 249.

Sunday, January 15

## Tithe Equals a Tenth

The tithing system did not originate with the Hebrews. From the earliest times the Lord claimed a tithe as His, and this claim was recognized and honored. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. [Genesis 14:20](#). . . . As the Israelites were about to be established as a nation, the law of tithing was reaffirmed as one of the divinely ordained statutes upon obedience to which their prosperity depended.

The system of tithes and offerings was intended to impress the minds of men with a great truth—that God is the source of every blessing to His creatures, and that to Him man’s gratitude is due for the good gifts of His providence.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 525.

Jacob awoke from his sleep in the deep stillness of night. The shining forms of his vision had disappeared. Only the dim outline of the lonely hills, and above them the heavens bright with stars, now met his gaze. But he had a solemn sense that God was with him. . . .

Jacob set up a memorial of God’s mercy, that whenever he should pass that way he might tarry at this sacred spot to worship the Lord. And he called the place Bethel, or the “house of God.” With deep gratitude he repeated the promise that God’s presence would be with him; and then he made the solemn vow, “If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”

Jacob was not here seeking to make terms with God. The Lord had already promised him prosperity, and this vow was the outflow of a heart filled with gratitude for the assurance of God's love and mercy. Jacob felt that God had claims upon him which he must acknowledge, and that the special tokens of divine favor granted him demanded a return."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 187.

It is part of your work to teach those whom you bring into the truth to bring the tithe into the storehouse as an acknowledgment of their dependence on God. They should be fully enlightened as to their duty to return to the Lord His own. The command to pay tithe is so plain that there is no semblance of excuse for disregarding it. If you neglect to give the new converts instruction on this point, you leave undone a most important part of your work.—Letter 51, 1902.

"The tithe . . . is the Lord's." Here the same form of expression is employed as in the law of the Sabbath. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." [Exodus 20:10](#). God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man's time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 525.

**Monday, January 16**

## **Where Is the Storehouse?**

Instruction has been given me that there is a withholding of the tithe that should be faithfully brought into the Lord's treasury for the support of ministers and missionaries who are opening the Scriptures to the people and working from house to house. The work of evangelizing the world has been greatly hindered by personal selfishness. Some, even among professing Christians, are unable to see that the work

of the gospel is to be supported by the means that Christ has given them. Money is needed in order that the work done all over the world may be carried forward. Thousands upon thousands are perishing in sin, and a lack of means is hindering the proclamation of the truth that is to be carried to all nations and kindreds and tongues and people. There are men ready to go forth as the Lord's messengers, but because of a lack of means in the treasury they cannot be sent to the places where the people are begging for someone to come and teach them the truth.

There are many in our world who are longing to hear the word of life. But how can they hear without a preacher? And how can those sent to teach them live without support? God would have the lives of His workers carefully sustained. They are His property, and He is dishonored when they are compelled to labor in a way that injures their health. He is dishonored, also, when for lack of means workers cannot be sent to destitute fields.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 52.

When men disregard the claims of God, plainly set before them, the Lord permits them to follow their own way, and reap the fruit of their doings. Whoever appropriates to his own use the portion that God has reserved, is proving himself an unfaithful steward. He will lose not only that which he has withheld from God, but also that which was committed to him as his own.—“A Test of Gratitude and Loyalty,” *Review and Herald*, February 4, 1902.

This matter of giving is not left to impulse. God has given us definite instruction in regard to it. He has specified tithes and offerings as the measure of our obligation. And He desires us to give regularly and systematically. . . . Let each regularly examine his income, which is all a blessing from

God, and set apart the tithe as a separate fund, to be sacredly the Lord's. This fund should not in any case be devoted to any other use; it is to be devoted solely to support the ministry of the gospel. After the tithe is set apart, let gifts and offerings be apportioned, "as God hath prospered" you. .

..

This message has lost none of its force. It is just as fresh in its importance as God's gifts are fresh and continual. There is no difficulty in understanding our duty in the light of this message, given through God's holy prophet. We are not left to stumble along in darkness and disobedience. The truth is plainly stated, and it can be clearly understood by all who wish to be honest in the sight of God. A tithe of all our income is the Lord's. He lays His hand upon that portion which He has specified that we shall return to Him, and says, I allow you to use My bounties after you have laid aside the tenth, and have come before Me with gifts and offerings.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 80, 82.

**Tuesday, January 17**

## **The Purpose of Tithing**

The payment of the tithe was but a part of God's plan for the support of His service. Numerous gifts and offerings were divinely specified. Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy. For special occasions there were freewill offerings. At the harvest and the vintage, the first fruits of the field—corn, wine, and oil—were consecrated as an offering to the Lord. The gleanings and the corners of the field were reserved for the poor. The first fruits of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, were set apart for God. So also were the first-born of all animals, and a redemption price was paid for the first-born son. The first fruits were to be presented before



the Lord at the sanctuary and were then devoted to the use of the priests.

By this system of benevolence the Lord sought to teach Israel that in everything He must be first. Thus they were reminded that God was the proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds; that it was He who sent them the sunshine and the rain that developed and ripened the harvest. Everything that they possessed was His; they were but the stewards of His goods.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 336, 337.

God has made men His stewards. The property which He has placed in their hands is the means that He has provided for the spread of the gospel. To those who prove themselves faithful stewards He will commit greater trusts. Saith the Lord, “Them that honor Me I will honor.” [1 Samuel 2:30](#). “God loveth a cheerful giver,” and when His people, with grateful hearts, bring their gifts and offerings to Him, “not grudgingly, or of necessity,” His blessing will attend them, as He has promised. [See [Malachi 3:10](#)].—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 529.

In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, covetousness, selfishness, and love of ease will be overcome, and it will be our pleasure to do the will of Christ, whose servants we claim to be. Our happiness will then be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by the love of Christ.

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached His object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but He knew that man could not be

happy without acting a part in the great work in which he would be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as His co-worker. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, He bestows upon man the best means of cultivating benevolence and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor and to advance His cause.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 382.

**Wednesday, January 18**

## **“The Dead Know Nothing”**

Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. . . .

How to exercise faith should be made very plain. To every promise of God there are conditions. If we are willing to do His will, all His strength is ours. Whatever gift He promises, is in the promise itself. “The seed is the word of God.” [Luke 8:11](#). As surely as the oak is in the acorn, so surely is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift.—*Education*, p. 253.

“He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” [Acts 17:25](#). The Lord declares, “Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.” [Psalm 50:10](#). “The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine.” [Haggai 2:8](#). And it is God who gives men power to get wealth. [Deuteronomy 8:18](#). As an acknowledgment that all things came from Him, the Lord directed that a portion of His bounty should be returned to Him in gifts and offerings to sustain His worship.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 525.

In the days of Elijah, Israel had departed from God. They clung to their sins, and rejected the warnings of the Spirit

through the Lord's messengers. Thus they cut themselves off from the channel by which God's blessing could come to them. The Lord passed by the homes of Israel, and found a refuge for His servant in a heathen land, with a woman who did not belong to the chosen people. But this woman was favored because she had followed the light she had received, and her heart was open to the greater light that God sent her through His prophet.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 238.

Wonderful was the hospitality shown to God's prophet by this Phoenician woman, and wonderfully were her faith and generosity rewarded. "She, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Elijah. And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore that there was no breath left in him. . . . And [Elijah] said unto her, Give me thy son. . . . and [he] cried unto the Lord. . . . And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Verses 15-24. . . .

"He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." [Matthew 10:41](#).—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 346.

**Thursday, January 19**

## **An Honest or Faithful Tithe**

It is not God's purpose that Christians, whose privileges far exceed those of the Jewish nation, shall give less freely than they gave. "Unto whomsoever much is given," the

Saviour declared, “of him shall be much required.” [Luke 12:48](#). The liberality required of the Hebrews was largely to benefit their own nation; today the work of God extends over all the earth. In the hands of His followers, Christ has placed the treasures of the gospel, and upon them He has laid the responsibility of giving the glad tidings of salvation to the world. Surely our obligations are much greater than were those of ancient Israel.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 337.

Every blessing bestowed upon us [calls] for a response to the Author of all our mercies. The Christian should often review his past life and recall with gratitude the precious deliverances that God has wrought for him, supporting him in trial, opening ways before him when all seemed dark and forbidding, refreshing him when ready to faint. He should recognize all of them as evidences of the watchcare of heavenly angels. In view of these innumerable blessings he should often ask, with subdued and grateful heart, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?” [Psalm 116:12](#).—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 187.

Let every steward understand that as he strives to advance the glory of God in our world, whether he stands before infidels or princes, he is to make God first and last and best in everything. The true Christian will realize that he has a right to his name only as he uplifts Christ with a steady, persevering, and ever-increasing force.

“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” ([1 Corinthians 4:2](#)). When we are faithful in making God known, our impulses will be under divine supervision, and we shall make steady growth, spiritually and intellectually. But when men enter into a confederacy to exalt men, and have little to say of God, they are weakness itself. God will

leave those who do not recognize Him in every effort made to uplift humanity. It is Christ's power alone that can restore broken-down human machinery. Everywhere and in every place let those around you see that you give God the glory. Let man be put in the shade, let God appear as the only hope of the human race. Every man must rivet his building to the eternal Rock, Christ Jesus; then it will stand amid storm and tempest.—*The Upward Look*, p. 81.

God prepares the mind to recognize Him who alone can help the striving, struggling soul. He will educate all who stand under His banner to be faithful stewards of His grace. Man cannot show greater weakness than by thinking he will find more acceptance in the sight of men if he leaves God out of his assemblies. God must stand the highest. The wisdom of the greatest man is foolishness with Him.

God has given to man immortal principles, to which every human power must one day bow. We have truth that has been given us in trust. The precious beams of this light are not to be hid under a bushel, but are to give light to all that are in the house.—“Give Unto the Lord the Glory Due Unto His Name,” Manuscript 21, March 8, 1899.

**Friday, January 20**

## **For Further Reading**

*Gospel Workers*, “Effect of Receiving the Spirit,” pp. 287, 288;

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, “Faithful Stewardship,” pp. 245–252.



# EGW Notes - Lesson 4

## Offerings for Jesus

### Sabbath Afternoon, January 21

God does not receive the offerings of any because He needs them and cannot have glory and riches without them, but because it is for the interest of His servants to render to God the things which are His. The freewill offerings of the humble, contrite heart He will receive, and will reward the giver with the richest blessings. He receives them as the sacrifice of grateful obedience. He requires and accepts our gold and silver as an evidence that all we have and are belongs to Him. He claims and accepts the improvement of our time and of our talents as the fruit of His love existing in our hearts. To obey is better than sacrifice. Without pure love the most expensive offering is too poor for God to accept.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 652.

Unselfish liberality threw the early church into a transport of joy; for the believers knew that their efforts were helping to send the gospel message to those in darkness. Their benevolence testified that they had not received the grace of God in vain. What could produce such liberality but the sanctification of the Spirit? In the eyes of believers and unbelievers it was a miracle of grace.

Spiritual prosperity is closely bound up with Christian liberality. The followers of Christ should rejoice in the privilege of revealing in their lives the beneficence of their Redeemer. As they give to the Lord they have the assurance that their treasure is going before them to the heavenly courts.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 344.

We are to be Christ's representatives on the earth—pure, kind, just, and merciful, full of compassion, showing unselfishness in word and deed. Avarice and covetousness are vices that God abominates. They are the offspring of selfishness and sin, and they spoil every work with which they are allowed to mingle. Roughness and coarseness of character are imperfections which the Scriptures decidedly condemn as dishonoring to God.

“Let your conversation”—your disposition and habits—“be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” “Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also”—the grace of Christian liberality. “To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 184.

The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. “We love Him, because He first loved us.” In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 551.

Sunday, January 22

## Motivation for Giving

It is for the eternal interest of everyone to search his own heart, and to improve every God-given faculty. Let all remember that there is not a motive in the heart of any man that the Lord does not clearly see. The motives of each one are weighed as carefully as if the destiny of the human agent depended upon this one result. We need a connection with divine power, that we may have an increase of clear light and an understanding of how to reason from cause to effect. We need to have the powers of the understanding cultivated, by our being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Let each one consider carefully the solemn truth, God in heaven is true, and there is not a design, however intricate, nor a motive, however carefully hidden, that He does not clearly understand. He reads the secret devisings of every heart.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1160.

If you have cherished a wrong spirit, let it be banished from the soul. It is your duty to eradicate from your heart everything that is of a defiling nature. Every root of bitterness should be plucked up, lest others be contaminated by its baleful influence. Do not allow one poisonous plant to remain in the soil of your heart. Root it out this very hour, and plant in its stead the plant of love. Let Jesus be enshrined in the soul. Christ is our example. He went about doing good. He lived to bless others. Love beautified and ennobled all His actions, and we are commanded to follow in His steps.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 187.

Christians should not allow themselves to be troubled with anxious care as to the necessities of life. If men love and obey God, and do their part, God will provide for all their wants. Although your living may have to be obtained by the sweat of your brow, you are not to distrust God; for in the great plan of His providence, He will supply your need from day to day. This lesson of Christ's is a rebuke to the anxious thoughts, the perplexities and doubts, of the faithless heart. No man can add one cubit to his stature, no matter how solicitous he may be to do so. It is no less unreasonable to be troubled about the morrow and its needs. Do your duty, and trust in God; for He knows of what things you have need.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 227.

Liberality both in spiritual and in temporal things is taught in the lesson of seed sowing. The Lord says, "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." [Isaiah 32:20](#). "This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." [2 Corinthians 9:6](#). To sow beside all waters means a continual imparting of God's gifts. It means giving wherever the cause of God or the needs of humanity demand our aid. This will not tend to poverty. "He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God's gifts. By imparting they increase their blessings. God has promised them a sufficiency that they may continue to give. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." [Luke 6:38](#).

And more than this is wrapped up in the sowing and the reaping. As we distribute God's temporal blessings, the evidence of our love and sympathy awakens in the receiver gratitude and thanksgiving to God. The soil of the heart is

prepared to receive the seeds of spiritual truth. And He who ministers seed to the sower will cause the seed to germinate and bear fruit unto eternal life.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 85, 86.

**Monday, January 23**

## **What Portion for Offerings**

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee. [Deuteronomy 16:17](#). . . .

In the Bible system of tithes and offerings the amounts paid by different persons will of course vary greatly, since they are proportioned to the income. With the poor man the tithe will be a comparatively small sum, and his gifts will be according to his ability. . . .

The one to whom God has entrusted a large capital will not, if he loves and fears God, find it a burden to meet the demands of an enlightened conscience according to the claims of God. . . .

All who possess the spirit of Christ will with cheerful alacrity press their gifts into the Lord's treasury.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 304.

When Jesus sent forth the Twelve on their first mission of mercy, He commissioned them "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." [Luke 9:2](#). "As ye go," He said, "preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." [Matthew 10:7, 8](#). And as they "went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere" ([Luke 9:6](#)), the blessing of heaven accompanied their labors. The fulfillment of the Saviour's commission by the disciples made their message the power of God unto salvation, and through their efforts many were brought to a knowledge of the Messiah. . . .



The Saviour's commission to the disciples includes all believers to the end of time. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the gospel. All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 465, 466.

It is not for you to expect every blessing of God and return nothing. Through Christ we possess all things; without Christ we should have had nothing but poverty, misery, and despair. Shall we respond to this love which Jesus has bestowed upon us? To be sons of God is to possess all things. What more can you want? If the Christian is not content with such an inheritance, nothing can give him contentment. We are indebted to the Lord for all we possess. Then let us return to the Giver all that He claims as His own. Let us not commit robbery toward God.

He who so loved man that He came from the realms of bliss, from His royal throne, and humiliated Himself to clothe His divinity with humanity, has given us unmistakable tokens of His love and the value He places upon man. He who has made for us this infinite sacrifice summons us to estimate the value of the soul, to strike the balance between earthly gain and heavenly loss, between temporal success and everlasting failure.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 305.

**Tuesday, January 24**

## **Offerings and Worship**

“God loveth a cheerful giver,” and those who love Him will give freely and cheerfully when by so doing they can advance His cause and promote His glory. . . . Let willing obedience and pure love bind upon the altar every offering

that is made to God; for with such sacrifices He is well pleased, while those that are offered grudgingly are an offense to Him. When churches or individuals have no heart in their offerings, but would limit the cost of carrying forward the work of God, and gauge it by their own narrow views, they show decidedly that they have no living connection with God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 269.

To praise God in fullness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show to the world and to all the heavenly intelligences that we appreciate the wonderful love of God for fallen humanity and that we are expecting larger and yet larger blessings from His infinite fullness. . . .

God imparts His gifts to us that we also may give, and thus make known His character to the world. Under the Jewish economy, gifts and offerings formed an essential part of God's worship. The Israelites were taught to devote a tithe of all their income to the service of the sanctuary. Besides this they were to bring sin offerings, free-will gifts, and offerings of gratitude. These were the means for supporting the ministry of the gospel for that time. God expects no less from us than He expected from His people anciently.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 299, 300.

Our house of worship may be very humble, but it is none the less acknowledged by God. If we worship in spirit and in truth and in the beauty of holiness, it will be to us the very gate of heaven. As lessons of the wondrous works of God are repeated, and as the heart's gratitude is expressed in prayer and song, angels from heaven take up the strain and unite in praise and thanksgiving to God. These exercises drive back the power of Satan. They expel murmurings and complainings, and Satan loses ground.

God teaches us that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those who love Him, where, from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, they will assemble in the sanctuary to unite in loftier strains of song, in thanksgiving and praise to Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 288.

The psalmist says: “Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. . . . Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” . . . “Sing unto the Lord, . . . and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.”

In the gracious blessings which our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us, we may discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite, and a tender pity surpassing a mother’s yearning sympathy for her wayward child. . . . In the language of John we exclaim, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 284.

**Wednesday, January 25**

## **God Takes Note of Our Offerings**

The act of the widow who cast two mites—all that she had—into the treasury, is placed on record for the encouragement of those who, struggling with poverty, still desire by their gifts to aid the cause of God. Christ called the attention of the disciples to this woman, who had given “all her living.” [Mark 12:44](#). He esteemed her gift of more value than the large offerings of those whose alms did not call for self-denial. From their abundance they had given a small portion. To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow. Of her the Saviour declared,

“Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.” Verse 43. Thus He taught that the value of the gift is estimated not by the amount, but by the proportion that is given and the motive that actuates the giver.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 342.

Frequently those who receive the truth are among the poor of this world; but they should not make this an excuse for neglecting those duties which devolve upon them in view of the precious light they have received. They should not allow poverty to prevent them from laying up a treasure in heaven. The blessings within reach of the rich are also within their reach. If they are faithful in using what little they do possess, their treasure in heaven will increase according to their fidelity. It is the motive with which they work, not the amount they do, that makes their offering valuable in the sight of Heaven.

All should be taught to do what they can for the Master; to render to Him according as He has prospered them. He claims as His just due a tenth of their income, be it large or small; and those who withhold this, commit robbery toward Him, and cannot expect His prospering hand to be with them. Even if the church is composed mostly of poor brethren, the subject of systematic benevolence should be thoroughly explained, and the plan heartily adopted. God is able to fulfil His promises. His resources are infinite, and He employs them all in accomplishing His will. And when He sees a faithful performance of duty in the payment of the tithe, He often, in His wise providence, opens ways whereby it shall increase. He who follows God’s arrangement in the little that has been given him, will receive the same returns as he who bestows of his abundance.—*Gospel Workers*, p.

Some are not naturally devotional, and therefore should encourage and cultivate a habit of close examination of their own lives and motives, and should especially cherish a love for religious exercises and for secret prayer.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 513.

**Thursday, January 26**

## **Special Projects: “Big Jar” Giving**

In His mercy, Jesus had pardoned her sins, He had called forth her beloved brother from the grave, and Mary’s heart was filled with gratitude. . . . At great personal sacrifice she had purchased an alabaster box of “ointment of spikenard, very costly,” with which to anoint His body. . . . Breaking her box of ointment, she poured its contents upon the head and feet of Jesus; then, as she knelt weeping, moistening them with her tears, she wiped His feet with her long, flowing hair. . . .

Mary heard the words of criticism. Her heart trembled within her. She feared that her sister would reproach her for extravagance. The Master, too, might think her improvident. Without apology or excuse she was about to shrink away, when the voice of her Lord was heard, “Let her alone; why trouble ye her?” He saw that she was embarrassed and distressed. He knew that in this act of service she had expressed her gratitude for the forgiveness of her sins, and He brought relief to her mind. Lifting His voice above the murmur of criticism, He said, “She hath wrought a good work on Me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but Me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 559, 560.

The apostle Paul in his ministry among the churches was untiring in his efforts to inspire in the hearts of the new converts a desire to do large things for the cause of God. Often he exhorted them to the exercise of liberality. In speaking to the elders of Ephesus of his former labors among them, he said, “I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” “He which soweth sparingly,” he wrote to the Corinthians, “shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” [Acts 20:35](#); [2 Corinthians 9:6](#), [7](#).

Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world’s goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches. Writing to the Corinthian believers, the apostle called their attention to “the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. . . .

The willingness to sacrifice on the part of the Macedonian believers came as a result of wholehearted consecration. Moved by the Spirit of God, they “first gave their own selves to the Lord” ([2 Corinthians 8:5](#)), then they were willing to give freely of their means for the support of the gospel.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 342, 343.

**Friday, January 27**

## **For Further Reading**

*Counsels on Stewardship*, “Cheerful Liberality in the Closing Work,” pp. 40, 41;  
*Conflict and Courage*, “The Work Lying Nearest,” p. 220.



# EGW Notes - Lesson 5

## Dealing With Debt

### Sabbath Afternoon, January 28

Some have not come up and united in the plan of systematic benevolence, excusing themselves because they were not free from debt. They plead that they must first “owe no man anything.” But the fact that they are in debt does not excuse them. I saw that they should render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s. Some feel conscientious to “owe no man anything,” and think that God can require nothing of them until their debts are all paid. Here they deceive themselves. They fail to render to God the things that are His. Everyone must bring to the Lord a suitable offering. Those who are in debt should take the amount of their debts from what they possess, and give a proportion of the remainder.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 258.

There is no position in life, no phase of human experience, for which the Bible does not contain valuable instruction. Ruler and subject, master and servant, buyer and seller, borrower and lender, parent and child, teacher and student,—all may here find lessons of priceless worth.

But above all else, the word of God sets forth the plan of salvation: shows how sinful man may be reconciled to God, lays down the great principles of truth and duty which should govern our lives, and promises us divine aid in their observance. It reaches beyond this fleeting life, beyond the brief and troubled history of our race. It opens to our view the long vista of eternal ages,—ages undarkened by sin, undimmed by sorrow. It teaches us how we may share the habitations of the blessed, and bids us anchor our hopes and

fix our affections there.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 542.

The wise man addresses the indolent in the words: “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.” [Proverbs 6:6-8](#). The habitations that the ants build for themselves show skill and perseverance. Only one little grain at a time can they handle, but by diligence and perseverance they accomplish wonders.

Solomon points to the industry of the ant as a reproach to those who waste their hours in idleness or in practices that corrupt soul and body. The ant prepares for future seasons; but many gifted with reasoning powers fail to prepare for the future immortal life.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 190.

**Sunday, January 29**

## **The Debt Problems**

To desire to bear your own weight and not to eat the bread of dependence is right. It is a noble, generous ambition that dictates the wish to be self-supporting. Industrious habits and frugality are necessary.

Many, very many, have not so educated themselves that they can keep their expenditures within the limit of their income. They do not learn to adapt themselves to circumstances, and they borrow and borrow again and again and become overwhelmed in debt, and consequently they become discouraged and disheartened. . . .

All should learn how to keep accounts. Some neglect this work as nonessential, but this is wrong. All expenses should be accurately stated.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 374.

The followers of Christ are not to despise wealth; they are to look upon wealth as the Lord's entrusted talent. By a wise use of His gifts, they may be eternally benefited, but we are to bear the fact in mind that God has not given us riches to use just as we shall fancy, to indulge impulse, to bestow or withhold as we shall please. We are not to use riches in a selfish way, devoting them simply to our own enjoyment. This course would not be doing right toward God or toward our fellow men, and would bring at last only perplexity and trouble. . . .

Both the poor and the rich are deciding their own eternal destiny and proving whether they are fit subjects for the inheritance of the saints in light. Those who put their riches to a selfish use in this world are revealing attributes of character that show what they would do if they had greater advantages, and possessed the imperishable treasures of the kingdom of God. The selfish principles exercised on the earth are not the principles which will prevail in heaven. All men stand on an equality in heaven.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 133.

If you have extravagant habits, cut them away from your life at once. Unless you do this, you will be bankrupt for eternity. Habits of economy, industry, and sobriety are a better portion for your children than a rich dowry.

We are pilgrims and strangers on the earth. Let us not spend our means in gratifying desires that God would have us repress. Let us fitly represent our faith by restricting our wants.—“Carrying Forward the Lord's Work,” *Review and Herald*, December 24, 1903.

How often do we come in contact with people who are never happy. They fail of enjoying the contentment and peace that Jesus can give. They profess to be Christians but

they do not comply with the conditions upon which the promise of God is fulfilled. Jesus has said, “Come unto me. . . . Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” ([Matthew 11:28-30](#)). The reason why many are in a state of unrest is that they are not learning in the school of the Master. The submissive, self-sacrificing child of God understands by experience what it is to have the peace of Christ.

Life’s best things—simplicity, honesty, truthfulness, purity, unsullied integrity—are not to be bought or sold. They are free to the illiterate as to the educated, to the white man as to the black man, to the poor man as to the king upon his throne.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 85.

**Monday, January 30**

## **Following Godly Counsel**

Some have no tact at wise management of worldly matters. They lack the necessary qualifications, and Satan takes advantage of them. When this is the case, such should not remain in ignorance of their task. They should be humble enough to counsel with their brethren, in whose judgment they can have confidence, before they carry out plans. I was directed to this text: “Bear ye one another’s burdens.” Some are not humble enough to let those who have judgment calculate for them until they have followed their own plans, and have involved themselves in difficulties. Then they see the necessity of having the counsel and judgment of their brethren; but how much heavier the burden then than at first. Brethren should not go to law if it can be possibly avoided; for they thus give the enemy great advantage to entangle and perplex them. It would be better to make a settlement at some loss.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 200.

God calls us servants, which implies that we are employed by Him to do a certain work and bear certain responsibilities. He has lent us capital for investment. It is not our property, and we displease God if we hoard up our Lord's goods or spend them as we please. We are responsible for the use or abuse of that which God has thus lent us. If this capital which the Lord has placed in our hands lies dormant, or we bury it in the earth, even if it is only one talent, we shall be called to an account by the Master. He requires, not ours, but His own with usury.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 668.

“No man can serve two masters.”—[Matthew 6:24](#).

Christ does not say that man will not or shall not serve two masters, but that he cannot. The interests of God and the interests of mammon have no union or sympathy. Just where the conscience of the Christian warns him to forbear, to deny himself, to stop, just there the worldling steps over the line, to indulge his selfish propensities. On one side of the line is the self-denying follower of Christ; on the other side is the self-indulgent world lover, pandering to fashion, engaging in frivolity, and pampering himself in forbidden pleasure. On that side of the line the Christian cannot go.

No one can occupy a neutral position; there is no middle class, who neither love God nor serve the enemy of righteousness. Christ is to live in His human agents and work through their faculties and act through their capabilities. Their will must be submitted to His will; they must act with His Spirit. Then it is no more they that live, but Christ that lives in them. He who does not give himself wholly to God is under the control of another power, listening to another voice, whose suggestions are of an entirely different character. Half-and-half service places the human agent on the side of the enemy as a successful ally of

the hosts of darkness.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 93, 94.

**Tuesday, January 31**

## **How to Get Out of Debt**

All must practice economy. No worker should manage his affairs in a way to incur debt. The practice of drawing money from the treasury before it is earned, is a snare. In this way the resources are limited, so that laborers cannot be supported in missionary work. When one voluntarily becomes involved in debt, he is entangling himself in one of Satan's nets which he sets for souls. . . .

The practice of borrowing money to relieve some pressing necessity, and making no calculation for canceling the indebtedness, however common, is demoralizing. The Lord would have all who believe the truth converted from these self-deceiving practices. They should choose rather to suffer want than to commit a dishonest act. If those who see the truth do not change in character corresponding to the sanctifying influence of the truth, they will be a savor of death unto death. They will misrepresent the truth, bring a reproach upon it, and dishonor Christ, who is truth.—*Colporter Ministry*, pp. 93, 96.

Men who might have done well if they had consecrated themselves to God, if they had been willing to work in a humble way, enlarging their business slowly, and refusing to go into debt, have made a failure because they have not worked on right lines. And after getting into difficulty, they have sold out, as men incompetent to manage. They desired relief from financial pressure, and did not stop to think of the after-results.

Those who help such ones out of difficulty are tempted to bind them with such strong cords in the shape of pledges that ever after they feel that they are bondslaves. They

seldom outgrow the reputation of poor management and failure.

To those who thus become involved in debt, I am instructed to say: Do not give up if you are moving in right lines. Work with all your power to relieve the situation yourselves. Do not throw an embarrassed institution upon an association that is already heavily burdened with debt. It is best for every sanitarium to stand in its own responsibility.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 273, 274.

The practice of borrowing money to relieve some pressing necessity, and making no calculation for canceling the indebtedness, however common, is demoralizing. The Lord would have all who believe the truth converted from these self-deceiving practices. They should choose rather to suffer want than to commit a dishonest act. No soul can resort to prevarication or dishonesty in handling the Lord's goods, and stand guiltless before God. All who do this deny Christ in action, while they profess to keep and teach the commandments of God. They do not maintain the principles of God's law. If those who see the truth do not change in character corresponding to the sanctifying influence of the truth, they will be a savor of death unto death. They will misrepresent the truth, bring a reproach upon it, and dishonor Christ, who is truth.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 255.

Make a solemn covenant with God that by His blessing you will pay your debts and then owe no man anything if you live on porridge and bread. It is so easy in preparing your table to throw out of your pocket twenty-five cents for extras. Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves. It is the mites here and the mites there that are spent for this, that, and the other that soon run up



into dollars. Deny self at least while you are walled in with debts. Do not falter, be discouraged, or turn back. Deny your taste, deny the indulgence of appetite, save your pence, and pay your debts. Work them off as fast as possible. When you can stand forth a free man again, owing no man anything, you will have achieved a great victory.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 393.

**Wednesday, February 1**

## **Surety and Get-Rich-Quick Schemes**

The desire of men and women to accumulate property is not sinful if in their efforts to attain their object they do not forget God, and transgress the last six precepts of Jehovah, which dictate the duty of man to his fellow man, and place themselves in a position where it is impossible for them to glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are his. If in their haste to be rich they overtax their energies, and violate the laws of their being, they place themselves in a condition where they cannot render to God perfect service, and are pursuing a course of sin. Property thus obtained is at an immense sacrifice.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 429.

I saw that God was displeased with His people for becoming surety for unbelievers. I was directed to these texts: [Proverbs 22:26](#): “Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.” [Proverbs 11:15](#): “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretyship is sure.” . . . They pledge that which belongs to another,—their heavenly Father,—and Satan stands ready to aid his children to wrench it out of their hands. Sabbathkeepers should not be in partnership with unbelievers. God’s people trust too much to the words of strangers, and ask their advice and counsel when they should not.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 200.

I was shown that it is a dangerous experiment for our people to engage in speculation. They thereby place themselves on the enemy's ground, subject to great temptations, disappointments, trials, and losses. Then comes a feverish unrest, a longing desire to obtain means more rapidly than present circumstances will admit. Their surroundings are accordingly changed in hope of making more money. But frequently their expectations are not realized, and they become discouraged and go backward rather than forward. . . . Had the Lord prospered some of our dear brethren in their speculations, it would have proved their eternal ruin. God loves His people, and He loves those who have been unfortunate. If they will learn the lessons which He intends to teach them, their defeat will in the end prove a precious victory.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 617.

There is a class of poor brethren who are not free from temptation. They are poor managers, they have not wise judgment, they wish to obtain means without waiting the slow process of persevering toil. Some are in such haste to better their condition that they engage in various enterprises without consulting men of good judgment and experience. Their expectations are seldom realized; instead of gaining, they lose, and then come temptation and a disposition to envy the rich. They really want to be benefited by the wealth of their brethren, and feel tried because they are not. But they are not worthy of receiving special help. They have evidence that their efforts have been scattered. They have been changeable in business, and full of anxiety and cares which bring but small returns. Such persons should listen to the counsel of those of experience. But frequently they are the last ones to seek advice. They think they have superior judgment and will not be taught. . . .

They do not take home the instruction of Paul to Timothy: “But godliness with contentment is great gain.” — *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, pp. 480, 481.

**Thursday, February 2**

## **Term Limits and Borrowing Points**

The observance of the sabbatical year was to be a benefit to both the land and the people. The soil, lying untilled for one season, would afterward produce more plentifully. The people were released from the pressing labors of the field; and while there were various branches of work that could be followed during this time, all enjoyed greater leisure, which afforded opportunity for the restoration of their physical powers for the exertions of the following years. They had more time for meditation and prayer, for acquainting themselves with the teachings and requirements of the Lord, and for the instruction of their households. . . .

To the poor, the seventh year was a year of release from debt. The Hebrews were enjoined at all times to assist their needy brethren by lending them money without interest. To take usury from a poor man was expressly forbidden. . . . If the debt remained unpaid until the year of release, the principal itself could not be recovered. The people were expressly warned against withholding from their brethren needed assistance on account of this: “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren, . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. . . . Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.” — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 532.

Mind the little things. It is the little losses that tell heavily in the end. Look after the littles, gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost; for many who look after the larger matters have never learned to guard and save the trifles. Waste not the minutes, for they mar the hours. Persevering diligence, work done in faith, will always be crowned with success. Some men think it beneath their dignity to look after small things. They consider it the evidence of a narrow mind and small spirit to be careful of the littles. Watch the little outgoes; save the little incomes. The smallest leak has sunk many a ship. No derision or jesting should keep us from saving the littles. Nothing that would serve the purpose should be left to go to waste. A lack of economy will bring debt upon our institutions. Much money may be received, but it will be lost in the little wastes of every branch of the work. Economy is not stinginess.—*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 331.

In the prayer which Christ taught His disciples He said, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." [Matthew 6:12](#). By this He did not mean that in order to be forgiven our sins we must not require our just dues from our debtors. If they cannot pay, even though this may be the result of unwise management, they are not to be cast into prison, oppressed, or even treated harshly; but the parable does not teach us to encourage indolence. The word of God declares that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat. ([2 Thessalonians 3:10](#).) The Lord does not require the hardworking man to support others in idleness. With many there is a waste of time, a lack of effort, which brings to poverty and want. If these faults are not corrected by those who indulge them, all that might be done in their behalf would be like putting treasure into a bag with holes. Yet there is an unavoidable poverty, and we are to manifest

tenderness and compassion toward those who are unfortunate. We should treat others just as we ourselves, in like circumstances, would wish to be treated.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 247.

**Friday, February 3**

## **For Further Reading**

*Selected Messages*, “Providing for the Day of Need,” book 2, pp. 329, 330;

*The Ministry of Healing*, “Business Principles,” pp. 187, 188.

# **EGW Notes - Lesson 6**

## **Laying Up Treasure in Heaven**

### **Sabbath Afternoon, February 4**

The work of transferring your possessions to the world above is worthy of all your best energies. It is of the highest importance, and involves your eternal interests. That which you bestow in the cause of God is not lost. All that is given for the salvation of souls and the glory of God is invested in the most successful enterprise in this life and in the life to come. Your talents of gold and silver, if given to the exchangers, are gaining continually in value, which will be registered to your account in the kingdom of heaven. You are to be the recipients of the eternal wealth that has increased in the hands of the exchangers. In giving to the work of God, you are laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven. All that you lay up above is secure from disaster and loss and is increasing to an eternal, and enduring, substance.—“The Treasure and the Heart,” *Review and*

*Herald*, January 24, 1888.

Every Christian is a steward of God, entrusted with His goods. Let all who claim to be Christians deal wisely with the Lord's goods. God is making an inventory of the money lent you and the spiritual advantages given you. Will you as stewards make careful inventory? Will you examine whether you are using economically all that God has placed in your charge, or whether you are wasting the Lord's goods by selfish outlay in order to make a display? Would that all that is spent needlessly were laid up as treasure in heaven! .

..

God will encourage His faithful stewards who are ready to put all their energies and God-given endowments to the very best use. As all learn the lesson of faithfully rendering to God what is His due, He through His providence will enable some to bring princely offerings. He will enable others to make smaller offerings, and the small and the large gifts are acceptable to Him if given with an eye single to His glory.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 220.

What can be compared with the loss of a human soul? It is a question which every soul must determine for himself—whether to gain the treasures of eternal life or to lose all because of his neglect to make God and His righteousness his first and only business. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, . . . looks with grief upon the large number of those who profess to be Christians who are not serving Him but themselves. They scarcely think of eternal realities, notwithstanding He calls their attention to the rich reward awaiting the faithful who will serve Him with their undivided affections. He brings eternal realities within the range of their vision. He bids them to count the cost now of being an obedient and

faithful follower of Christ, and says, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon” ([Matthew 6:24](#)).—Manuscript 45, 1890.

Where their treasure is, there will their heart be also. Those who have the Lord’s talents of means are placed under a heavy responsibility. They are not to invest money merely for the gratification of selfish desires, for whatever is spent in this way is just that much kept from the Lord’s treasury. Through the sovereign goodness of God, the Holy Spirit works through the human agent, and causes him to make smaller or larger investments in the cause of God, to make them redound to the glory of God.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 266.

**Sunday, February 5**

## **Noah Found Grace**

Noah and his family were not alone in fearing and obeying God. But Noah was the most pious and holy of any upon the earth, and was the one whose life God preserved to carry out His will in building the ark and warning the world of its coming doom. Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, lived until the very year of the Flood; and there were others who believed the preaching of Noah, and aided him in building the ark, who died before the flood of waters came upon the earth. Noah, by his preaching and example in building the ark, condemned the world.

God gave all who chose an opportunity to repent and turn to Him. But they believed not the preaching of Noah. They mocked at his warnings and ridiculed the building of that immense vessel on dry land. Noah’s efforts to reform his fellow men did not succeed. But for more than one hundred years he persevered in his efforts to turn men to repentance and to God. Every blow struck upon the ark was preaching to the people. Noah directed, he preached, he worked, while the people looked on in amazement and regarded him as a



fanatic.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 63.

Geologists claim to find evidence from the earth itself that it is very much older than the Mosaic record teaches. Bones of men and animals, as well as instruments of warfare, petrified trees, et cetera, much larger than any that now exist, or that have existed for thousands of years, have been discovered, and from this it is inferred that the earth was populated long before the time brought to view in the record of creation, and by a race of beings vastly superior in size to any men now living. Such reasoning has led many professed Bible believers to adopt the position that the days of creation were vast, indefinite periods.

But apart from Bible history, geology can prove nothing. Those who reason so confidently upon its discoveries have no adequate conception of the size of men, animals, and trees before the Flood, or of the great changes which then took place. Relics found in the earth do give evidence of conditions differing in many respects from the present, but the time when these conditions existed can be learned only from the Inspired Record. In the history of the Flood, inspiration has explained that which geology alone could never fathom. In the days of Noah, men, animals, and trees, many times larger than now exist, were buried, and thus preserved as an evidence to later generations that the antediluvians perished by a flood. God designed that the discovery of these things should establish faith in inspired history; but men, with their vain reasoning, fall into the same error as did the people before the Flood—the things which God gave them as a benefit, they turn into a curse by making a wrong use of them.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 112.

The voice of duty is the voice of God—an inborn, heaven-sent guide. Whether it be pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies directly in our pathway. If the Lord would have us bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or Capernaum. God has reasons for sending us to the place to which our feet are directed.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 226.

**Monday, February 6**

## **Abram, the Father of the Faithful**

When called to become a sower of the seed of truth, Abraham was bidden, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” [Genesis 12:1](#). “And he went out, not knowing whither he went.” [Hebrews 11:8](#). So to the apostle Paul, praying in the temple at Jerusalem, came the message from God, “Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” [Acts 22:21](#). So those who are called to unite with Christ must leave all, in order to follow Him. Old associations must be broken up, plans of life relinquished, earthly hopes surrendered. In toil and tears, in solitude, and through sacrifice, must the seed be sown.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 36.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? [James 2:21, 22](#).

There is a belief that is not a saving faith. The Word declares that the devils believe and tremble. The so-called faith that does not work by love and purify the soul will not justify any man. “Ye see,” says the apostle, “how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” Abraham believed God. How do we know that he believed? His works

testified to the character of his faith, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.

We need the faith of Abraham in our day, to lighten the darkness that gathers around us, shutting out the sweet sunlight of God's love, and dwarfing spiritual growth. Our faith should be prolific of good works; for faith without works is dead. Every duty performed, every sacrifice made in the name of Jesus, brings an exceeding great reward. In the very act of duty, God speaks and gives His blessing.—“Faith and Good Works,” *Signs of the Times*, May 19, 1898.

Long have we waited for our Saviour's return. But none the less sure is the promise. Soon we shall be in our promised home. There Jesus will lead us beside the living stream flowing from the throne of God and will explain to us the dark providences through which on this earth He brought us in order to perfect our characters. There we shall behold with undimmed vision the beauties of Eden restored. Casting at the feet of the Redeemer the crowns that He has placed on our heads and touching our golden harps, we shall fill all heaven with praise to Him that sitteth on the throne.

Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and the living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home—that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 544, 545.

**Tuesday, February 7**

## **Lot's Bad Decisions**

Lot chose Sodom for his home because he saw advantages to be gained there from a worldly point of view. But after he had established himself, and grown rich in earthly treasure,

he was convinced that he had made a mistake in not taking into consideration the moral standing of the community in which he was to make his home.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1092.

Lot chose a land which was beautiful in situation, which promised great returns. Lot went in rich, and came forth with nothing as the result of his choice. It makes every difference whether men place themselves in positions where they will have the very best help of correct influences, or whether they choose temporal advantages. There are many ways which lead to Sodom. We all need anointed eyesight, that we may discern the way that leads to God.—Letter 109, 1899.

Abraham had honored God, and the Lord honored him, taking him into His counsels, and revealing to him His purposes. “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” said the Lord.

And the man of faith pleaded for the inhabitants of Sodom. Once he had saved them by his sword, now he endeavored to save them by prayer. With deep reverence and humility he urged his plea. Himself a sinner, he pleaded in the sinner’s behalf. Such a spirit all who approach God should possess. Yet Abraham manifested the confidence of a child pleading with a loved father. He came close to the heavenly Messenger, and fervently urged his petition. . . .

Love for perishing souls inspired Abraham’s prayer. While he loathed the sins of that corrupt city, he desired that the sinners might be saved. His deep interest for Sodom shows the anxiety that we should feel for the impenitent. We should cherish hatred of sin, but pity and love for the sinner.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 51.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows how the two classes represented by these men are estimated in the unseen world. There is no sin in being rich if riches are not acquired by injustice. A rich man is not condemned for having riches, but condemnation rests upon him if the means entrusted to him is spent in selfishness. . . .

Money cannot be carried into the next life; it is not needed there; but the good deeds done in winning souls to Christ are carried to the heavenly courts. But those who selfishly spend the Lord's gifts on themselves, leaving their needy fellow creatures without aid and doing nothing to advance God's work in the world, dishonor their Maker. Robbery of God is written opposite their names in the books of heaven. . .

Christ lifted the curtain and presented this picture before priests and rulers, scribes and Pharisees. Look at it, you who are rich in this world's goods and are not rich toward God. Will you not contemplate this scene? That which is highly esteemed among men is abhorrent in the sight of God. Christ asks, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" [Mark 8:36, 37](#).—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 266, 267.

**Wednesday, February 8**

## **From Deceiver to Prince**

Rebekah repented in bitterness for the wrong counsel which she gave to Jacob, for it was the means of separating him from her forever. He was compelled to flee for his life from the wrath of Esau, and his mother never saw his face again. Isaac lived many years after he gave Jacob the blessing, and was convinced, by the course of Esau and Jacob, that the blessing rightly belonged to Jacob.—*The Story of Redemption*, p. 89.

Jacob's wrong in receiving his brother's blessing by fraud was again brought forcibly before him, and he was afraid that God would permit Esau to take his life. In his distress he prayed to God all night. An angel was represented to me as standing before Jacob, presenting his wrong before him in its true character. . . .

All night Jacob wrestled with the angel, making supplication for a blessing. The angel seemed to be resisting his prayer, by continually calling his sins to his remembrance, at the same time endeavoring to break away from him. Jacob was determined to hold the angel, not by physical strength, but by the power of living faith. In his distress Jacob referred to the repentance of his soul, the deep humility he had felt for his wrongs. . . .

But when [the angel] saw that he prevailed not against Jacob, to convince him of his supernatural power, he touched his thigh, which was immediately out of joint. But Jacob would not give up his earnest efforts for bodily pain. . . . His faith grew more earnest and persevering until the very last, even till the breaking of the day. He would not let go his hold of the angel until he blessed him.—*The Story of Redemption*, pp. 94, 95.

It will require a sacrifice to give yourself to God; but it is a sacrifice of the lower for the higher, the earthly for the spiritual, the perishable for the eternal. God does not design that our will should be destroyed, for it is only through its exercise that we can accomplish what He would have us do. Our will is to be yielded to Him, that we may receive it again, purified and refined, and so linked in sympathy with the Divine that He can pour through us the tides of His love and power. However bitter and painful this surrender may appear to the willful, wayward heart, yet "it is profitable for thee."

Not until he fell crippled and helpless upon the breast of the covenant angel did Jacob know the victory of conquering faith and receive the title of a prince with God. It was when he “halted upon his thigh” ([Genesis 32:31](#)) that the armed bands of Esau were stilled before him, and the Pharaoh, proud heir of a kingly line, stooped to crave his blessing. So the Captain of our salvation was made “perfect through sufferings” ([Hebrews 2:10](#)), and the children of faith “out of weakness were made strong,” and “turned to flight the armies of the aliens” ([Hebrews 11:34](#)). So do “the lame take the prey” ([Isaiah 33:23](#)), and the weak become “as David,” and “the house of David . . . as the angel of the Lord” ([Zechariah 12:8](#)).—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 62.

**Thursday, February 9**

## **Moses in Egypt**

Moses was a man of intelligence. In the providence of God he was given opportunity to gain a fitness for a great work. He was thoroughly educated as a general. When he went out to meet the enemy, he was successful; and on his return from battle, his praises were sung by the whole army. Notwithstanding this, he constantly remembered that through him God purposed to deliver the children of Israel.—*The Youth's Instructor*, January 29, 1903.

The strength of Moses was his connection with the Source of all power, the Lord God of hosts. He rises grandly above every earthly inducement, and trusts himself wholly to God. He considered that he was the Lord's. While he was connected with the official interests of the king of Egypt, he was constantly studying the laws of God's government, and thus his faith grew. That faith was of value to him. It was deeply rooted in the soil of his earliest teachings, and the culture of his life was to prepare him for the great work of



delivering Israel from bondage. He meditated on these things; he was constantly listening to his commission from God. After slaying the Egyptian, he saw that he had not understood God's plan, and he fled from Egypt and became a shepherd. He was no longer planning to do a great work, but he became very humble; the mists that were beclouding his mind were expelled, and he disciplined his mind to seek after God as his refuge.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1098.

The faith of Moses led him to look at the things which are unseen, which are eternal. He left the splendid attractions of court life because sin was there. He gave up present and seeming good that flattered only to ruin and destroy. The real attractions, the eternal, were of value to him. The sacrifices made by Moses were really no sacrifices. With him it was letting go a present, apparent, flattering good for a sure, high, immortal good.

Moses endured the reproach of Christ, considering reproach greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. He believed what God had said and was not influenced to swerve from his integrity by any of the world's reproaches. He walked the earth as God's free man. He had the love of Christ in his soul, which not only made him a man of dignity, but added the luster of the true Christian graces to the dignity of the man. Moses walked a rough and perilous path, but he looked to the things unseen and faltered not. The recompense of reward was attractive to him, and it may be also to us. He was familiar with God.

The work is before you to improve the remnant of your life in reforming and elevating the character. A new life begins in the renewed soul. Christ is the indwelling Saviour. That which may be regarded as hard to give up must be yielded. The overbearing, dictatorial word must be left

unspoken; then a precious victory will be gained. True happiness will be the result of every self-denial, every crucifixion of self. One victory won, the next is more easily gained. Had Moses neglected the opportunities and privileges granted him of God, he would have neglected the light from heaven and would have been a disappointed, miserable man. . . . Man has light and opportunities, and if he will improve them he may overcome. You may show by your life the power of the grace of God in overcoming.—

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 345.

**Friday, February 10**

## **For Further Reading**

*This Day With God*, “Settling Into Salvation,” p. 95;

*The Story of Redemption*, “Prevailing Faith,” pp. 95, 96.

# EGW Notes - Lesson 7

## Unto the Least of These

### **Sabbath Afternoon, February 11**

Methods of helping the needy should be carefully and prayerfully considered. We are to seek God for wisdom, for He knows better than shortsighted mortals how to care for the creatures He has made. . . .

We should help those who with large families to support have constantly to battle with feebleness and poverty. Many a widowed mother with her fatherless children is working far beyond her strength in order to keep her little ones with her, and provide them with food and clothing. Many such mothers have died from overexertion. Every widow needs the comfort of hopeful, encouraging words, and there are very many who should have substantial aid.

Men and women of God, persons of discernment and wisdom, should be appointed to look after the poor and needy, the household of faith first. These should report to the church and counsel as to what should be done.—

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 277, 278.

The Majesty of heaven identifies His interests with that of suffering humanity. Our associates and companions are in need of heartfelt kindness and tender sympathy. It is impossible to grow up into Christ our living head, unless we practice the lesson He has given us of sympathy, compassion, and love. It is impossible to reflect the image of Christ unless this love which is of heavenly birth, is in the soul. No one will pass the portals of the city of God who does not reflect this attribute.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 148.

A religion that leads men to place a low estimate upon human beings, whom Christ has esteemed of such value as to give Himself for them; a religion that would lead us to be careless of human needs, sufferings, or rights, is a spurious religion. In slighting the claims of the poor, the suffering, and the sinful, we are proving ourselves traitors to Christ. It is because men take upon themselves the name of Christ, while in life they deny His character, that Christianity has so little power in the world. The name of the Lord is blasphemed because of these things.

Of the apostolic church, in those bright days when the glory of the risen Christ shone upon them, it is written that no man said “that aught of the things which he possessed was his own.” “Neither was there any among them that lacked.” “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.” “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” [Acts 4:32, 34, 33; 2:46, 47](#).

Search heaven and earth, and there is no truth revealed more power ful than that which is made manifest in works of mercy to those who need our sympathy and aid. This is the truth as it is in Jesus. When those who profess the name of Christ shall practice the principles of the golden rule, the same power will attend the gospel as in apostolic times.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 136, 137.

**Sunday, February 12**

## **The Life and Ministry of Jesus**

Few realize the full meaning of the words that Christ spoke when, in the synagogue at Nazareth, He announced Himself as the Anointed One. He declared His mission to

comfort, bless, and save the sorrowing and the sinful; and then, seeing that pride and unbelief controlled the hearts of His hearers, He reminded them that in time past God had turned away from His chosen people because of their unbelief and rebellion, and had manifested Himself to those in heathen lands who had not rejected the light of heaven. The widow of Sarepta and Naaman the Syrian had lived up to all the light they had; hence they were accounted more righteous than God's chosen people who had backslidden from Him and had sacrificed principle to convenience and worldly honor.

Christ told the Jews at Nazareth a fearful truth when He declared that with backsliding Israel there was no safety for the faithful messenger of God. They would not know his worth or appreciate his labors. While the Jewish leaders professed to have great zeal for the honor of God and the good of Israel, they were enemies of both. By precept and example they were leading the people farther and farther from obedience to God—leading them where He could not be their defense in the day of trouble.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 416, 417.

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. All are brought nigh by His precious blood. ([Galatians 3:28](#); [Ephesians 2:13](#)).

Whatever the difference in religious belief, a call from suffering humanity must be heard and answered. Where bitterness of feeling exists because of difference in religion, much good may be done by personal service. Loving ministry will break down prejudice, and win souls to God.

We should anticipate the sorrows, the difficulties, the troubles of others. We should enter into the joys and cares of both high and low, rich and poor. "Freely ye have received," Christ says, "freely give." [Matthew 10:8](#). All

around us are poor, tried souls that need sympathizing words and helpful deeds. There are widows who need sympathy and assistance. There are orphans whom Christ has bidden His followers receive as a trust from God. Too often these are passed by with neglect. They may be ragged, uncouth, and seemingly in every way unattractive; yet they are God's property. They have been bought with a price, and they are as precious in His sight as we are. They are members of God's great household, and Christians as His stewards are responsible for them. "Their souls," He says, "will I require at thine hand."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 386.

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. . . . When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 25.

**Monday, February 13**

## **God's Provision for the Poor**

Although God had promised greatly to bless His people, it was not His design that poverty should be wholly unknown among them. He declared that the poor should never cease out of the land. There would ever be those among His people who would call into exercise their sympathy, tenderness, and benevolence. . . .

The law of God gave the poor a right to a certain portion of the produce of the soil. When hungry, a man was at liberty to go to his neighbor's field or orchard or vineyard, and eat of the grain or fruit to satisfy his hunger. It was in accordance with this permission that the disciples of Jesus plucked and ate of the standing grain as they passed through a field upon the Sabbath day.

All the gleanings of harvest field, orchard, and vineyard, belonged to the poor. "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field," said Moses, "and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it. . . . When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt." [Deuteronomy 24:19](#); [Leviticus 19:9, 10](#).—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 530, 531.

We should study to copy the Pattern, that the Spirit that dwelt in Christ may dwell in us. The Saviour was not found among the exalted and honorable of the world. He did not spend His time among those who were seeking their ease and pleasure. He went about doing good. His work was to help those who needed help, to save the lost and perishing, to lift up the bowed down, to break the yoke of oppression from those who were in bondage, to heal the afflicted, and to speak words of sympathy and consolation to the distressed and sorrowing. We are required to copy this pattern. Let us

be up and doing, seeking to bless the needy and comfort the distressed. The more we partake of the spirit of Christ, the more we shall see to do for our fellow men. We shall be filled with a love for perishing souls, and shall find our delight in following the footsteps of the Majesty of heaven.—*Our High Calling*, p. 180.

There are many to whom life is a painful struggle; they feel their deficiencies and are miserable and unbelieving; they think they have nothing for which to be grateful. Kind words, looks of sympathy, expressions of appreciation, would be to many a struggling and lonely one as the cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. A word of sympathy, an act of kindness, would lift burdens that rest heavily upon weary shoulders. And every word or deed of unselfish kindness is an expression of the love of Christ for lost humanity. . . .

There is sweet peace for the compassionate spirit, a blessed satisfaction in the life of self-forgetful service for the good of others. The Holy Spirit that abides in the soul and is manifest in the life will soften hard hearts and awaken sympathy and tenderness. You will reap that which you sow. “Blessed is he that considereth the poor. . . . The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.” [Psalm 41:1-3](#).—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 23.

**Tuesday, February 14**

## **The Rich Young Ruler**

Don't you know that when the young man came to Christ and asked Him what he should do that he might have life, Christ told him to keep the commandments. Said he, “I have done it.” Now the Lord wanted to bring this lesson right



home. "What lack I yet? I am perfectly whole" ([Matthew 19:20](#)). He did not see that there was a thing the matter with him or why he should not have eternal life. "I have done it," he said. Now Christ touches the plague spot of his heart. He says, "Come, follow Me, and ye shall have life."

What did he do? He turned away very sorrowful, for he had great possessions.—*Faith and Works*, p. 70.

The rich man who had so many privileges is represented to us as one who should have cultivated his gifts, so that his works should reach to the great beyond, carrying with them improved spiritual advantages. It is the purpose of redemption, not only to blot out sin, but to give back to man those spiritual gifts lost because of sin's dwarfing power. Money cannot be carried into the next life; it is not needed there; but the good deeds done in winning souls to Christ are carried to the heavenly courts. But those who selfishly spend the Lord's gifts on themselves, leaving their needy fellow creatures without aid and doing nothing to advance God's work in the world, dishonor their Maker. Robbery of God is written opposite their names in the books of heaven.

The rich man had all that money could procure, but he did not possess the riches that would have kept his account right with God. He had lived as if all that he possessed were his own. He had neglected the call of God and the claims of the suffering poor. But at length there comes a call which he cannot neglect. By a power which he cannot question or resist he is commanded to quit the premises of which he is no longer steward. The once-rich man is reduced to hopeless poverty. The robe of Christ's righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, can never cover him. He who once wore the richest purple, the finest linen, is reduced to nakedness. His probation is ended. He brought nothing into the world, and he can take nothing out of it.—*Christ's Object*

*Lessons*, p. 267.

There are many professedly Christian men who will make any sacrifice in order to gain riches, and the more successful they are in obtaining the object of their desires, the less they care for the precious truth and its advancement in the world. They lose their love for God, and act like men who are insane. The more they are prospered in material wealth, the less they invest in the cause of God.

The works of those who have an insane love for riches, make it evident that it is impossible to serve two masters, God and mammon. They show to the world that money is their god. They yield their homage to its power, and to all intents and purposes they serve the world. The love of money becomes a ruling power, and for its sake they violate the law of God.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 213, 214.

**Wednesday, February 15**

## **Zacchaeus**

Zacchaeus had been overwhelmed, amazed, and silenced at the love and condescension of Christ in stooping to him, so unworthy. Now love and loyalty to his new-found Master unseal his lips. He will make public his confession and his repentance.

In the presence of the multitude, “Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. . . .

When the rich young ruler had turned away from Jesus, the disciples had marveled at their Master’s saying, “How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!” They had exclaimed one to another, “Who then can be saved?” Now they had a demonstration of the truth of Christ’s words, “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” [Mark 10:24, 26](#); [Luke](#)

[18:27](#). They saw how, through the grace of God, a rich man could enter into the kingdom.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 554, 555.

Lead the people to look to Jesus as their only hope and helper; leave the Lord room to work upon the mind, to speak to the soul, and to impress the understanding. It is not essential for you to know and tell others all the whys and wherefores as to what constitutes the new heart, or as to the position they can and must reach so as never to sin. You have no such work to do.

All are not constituted alike. Conversions are not all alike. Jesus impresses the heart, and the sinner is born again to new life. Often souls have been drawn to Christ when there was no violent conviction, no soul rending, no remorseful terrors. They looked upon an uplifted Saviour, they lived. They saw the soul's need, they saw the Saviour's sufficiency, and His claims, they heard His voice saying, "Follow Me," and they rose up and followed Him. This conversion was genuine, and the religious life was just as decided as was that of others who suffered all the agony of a violent process.—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 177.

The foundation of our hope in Christ is the fact that we recognize ourselves as sinners in need of restoration and redemption. It is because we are sinners that we have courage to claim Him as our Saviour. Then let us take heed lest we deal with the erring in a way that would say to others that we have no need of redemption. Let us not denounce, condemn, and destroy as though we were faultless. It is the work of Christ to mend, to heal, to restore. God is love. He gives Satan no occasion for triumphing by making the worst appear or by exposing our weaknesses to our enemies.

Christ came to bring salvation within the reach of all. The most erring, the most sinful, were not passed by; His labors were especially for those who most needed the salvation He came to bring.—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 291.

**Thursday, February 16**

## **Consider the Man Job**

In every church there should be established a treasury for the poor. Then let each member present a thank offering to God once a week or once a month, as is most convenient. This offering will express our gratitude for the gifts of health, of food, and of comfortable clothing. And according as God has blessed us with these comforts will we lay by for the poor, the suffering, and the distressed. I would call the attention of our brethren especially to this point. Remember the poor. Forego some of your luxuries, yea, even comforts, and help those who can obtain only the most meager food and clothing. In doing for them you are doing for Jesus in the person of His saints. He identifies Himself with suffering humanity. Do not wait until your imaginary wants are all satisfied. Do not trust to your feelings and give when you feel like it and withhold when you do not feel like it. Give regularly, either ten, twenty, or fifty cents a week, as you would like to see upon the heavenly record in the day of God.

Your good wishes we will thank you for, but the poor cannot keep comfortable on good wishes alone. They must have tangible proofs of your kindness in food and clothing. God does not mean that any of His followers should beg for bread. He has given you an abundance that you may supply those of their necessities which by industry and economy they are not able to supply. Do not wait for them to call your attention to their needs. Act as did Job. The thing that he knew not he searched out. Go on an inspecting tour and learn what is needed and how it can be best supplied.—

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 150, 151.

Lay hold of every opportunity within your reach of doing good. Idle hands will reap a small harvest. For what do older persons live but to care for the young and help the helpless? God has committed them to us who are older and have experience, and He will call us to account if our duties in this direction are neglected. . . .

But few have a true sense of what is comprised in the word Christian. It is to be Christlike, to do others good, to be divested of all selfishness, and to have our lives marked with acts of disinterested benevolence. . . .

Notice the rich reward promised to those who do this. “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily.” Here is an abundantly precious promise for all who will interest themselves in the cases of those who need help. How can God come in and bless and prosper those who have no special care for anyone except themselves, and who do not use that which He has entrusted to them, to glorify His name on the earth?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 330, 331.

**Friday, February 17**

## **For Further Reading**

*Sons and Daughters of God*, “In Love for Others,” p. 147;  
*The Upward Look*, “Witnessing to Others,” p. 264.

## **EGW Notes - Lesson 8**

# **Planning for Success**

### **Sabbath Afternoon, February 18**

It is a very poor policy for men to seek to improve on God's plan and invent a makeshift, averaging up their good impulses in this and that instance and offsetting them against all that is required by God. We are to strike true and faithful figures in tithing, and then say to the Lord, I have done as Thou hast commanded me. If Thou wilt honor me by trusting me with Thy goods to trade upon, I will, by Thy grace, be a faithful steward, doing all in my power to bring meat to Thy house.

Men who have large responsibilities are to be sure that they are not robbing God in any jots or tittles, when so much is involved, as is so plainly stated in Malachi. Here we are told that a blessing is given for a faithful disposition of the tithes, and a curse for the covetous retention of the money which should flow into the treasury. Then ought we not to be sure to work on the safe side, so dealing with God in

handling the property lent us on trust that no shadow of reproach shall fall upon us? I need not ask, Will not God bless those who are faithful? We have His pledged word.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 221.

Christ, in His mediatorial capacity, gives to His servants the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is the efficiency of the Spirit that enables human agencies to be representatives of the Redeemer in the work of soul saving. That we may unite with Christ in this work we should place ourselves under the molding influence of His Spirit. Through the power thus imparted we may co-operate with the Lord in the bonds of unity as laborers together with Him in the salvation of souls. To everyone who offers himself to the Lord for service, withholding nothing, is given power for the attainment of measureless results.

The Lord God is bound by an eternal pledge to supply power and grace to everyone who is sanctified through obedience to the truth. Christ, to whom is given all power in heaven and on earth, co-operates in sympathy with His instrumentalities—the earnest souls who day by day partake of the living bread, “which cometh down from heaven.” [John 6:50](#). The church on earth, united with the church in heaven, can accomplish all things.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, pp. 30, 31.

Our business or calling is a part of God’s great plan, and, so long as it is conducted in accordance with His will, He Himself is responsible for the results. “Laborers together with God” ([1 Corinthians 3:9](#)), our part is faithful compliance with His directions. Thus there is no place for anxious care. Diligence, fidelity, caretaking, thrift, and discretion are called for. Every faculty is to be exercised to its highest capacity. But the dependence will be, not on the

successful outcome of our efforts, but on the promise of God. The word that fed Israel in the desert, and sustained Elijah through the time of famine, has the same power today. “Be not therefore anxious (R.V.), saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? . . . Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” [Matthew 6:31-33](#).—*Education*, p. 138.

**Sunday, February 19**

## **First Things First**

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” Jesus desires the service of [the youth.] He wants them to be heirs of immortality. They may grow up into noble manhood and womanhood, notwithstanding the moral pollution that abounds, that corrupts so many of the youth at an early age. They may be free in Christ; the children of light, not of darkness.

God calls upon every young man and young woman to renounce every evil habit, to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. . . . that . . . by the power of His Spirit, [He] will give them strength to overcome.

Individual, constant, united efforts will be rewarded by success. Those who desire to do a great deal of good in our world must be willing to do it in God’s way, by doing little things. . . .

Steady progress in a good work, the frequent repetition of one kind of faithful service, is of more value in God’s sight than the doing of one great work, and wins for the youth a good report, giving character to their efforts.—*Messages to Young People*, p. 369.

He who gives men power to get wealth has with the gift bound up an obligation. Of all that we acquire He claims a specified portion. The tithe is the Lord’s. “All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the



tree,” “the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, . . . shall be holy unto the Lord.” [Leviticus 27:30, 32](#). The pledge made by Jacob at Bethel shows the extent of the obligation. “Of all that Thou shalt give me,” he said, “I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.” [Genesis 28:22](#).

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse” ([Malachi 3:10](#)), is God’s command. No appeal is made to gratitude or to generosity. This is a matter of simple honesty. The tithe is the Lord’s; and He bids us return to Him that which is His own.

“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” [1 Corinthians 4:2](#). If honesty is an essential principle of business life, must we not recognize our obligation to God—the obligation that underlies every other?—*Education*, pp. 138, 139.

God made from the man a woman, to be a companion and helpmeet for him, to be one with him, to cheer, encourage, and bless him, he in his turn to be her strong helper. All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman’s heart, the wife to soften and improve her husband’s character and give it completeness—fulfill God’s purpose for them.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 99.

In the marriage relation there is a very important step taken—the blending of two lives into one. It is in accord with the will of God that man and wife should be linked together in His work, to carry it forward in a wholeness and a holiness. They can do this.

The blessing of God in the home where this union shall exist is as the sunshine of heaven, because it is the Lord’s ordained will that man and wife should be linked together in

holy bonds of union, under Jesus Christ, with Him to control, and His spirit to guide.—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 101, 102.

**Monday, February 20**

## **The Blessing of Work (Ideally)**

He who taught Adam and Eve in Eden how to tend the garden, desires to instruct men today. There is wisdom for him who drives the plow and sows the seed. Before those who trust and obey Him, God will open ways of advance. Let them move forward courageously, trusting in Him to supply their needs according to the riches of His goodness.

He who fed the multitude with five loaves and two small fishes is able today to give us the fruit of our labor. He who said to the fishers of Galilee, “Let down your nets for a draft,” and who, as they obeyed, filled their nets till they broke, desires His people to see in this an evidence of what He will do for them today. The God who in the wilderness gave the children of Israel manna from heaven still lives and reigns. He will guide His people and give skill and understanding in the work they are called to do. He will give wisdom to those who strive to do their duty conscientiously and intelligently. He who owns the world is rich in resources, and will bless everyone who is seeking to bless others.

We need to look heavenward in faith. We are not to be discouraged because of apparent failure, nor should we be disheartened by delay. We should work cheerfully, hopefully, gratefully, believing that the earth holds in her bosom rich treasures for the faithful worker to garner, stores richer than gold or silver. The mountains and hills are changing; the earth is waxing old like a garment; but the blessing of God, which spreads for His people a table in the wilderness, will never cease.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 200.

In the beginning the Lord enjoined upon man the cultivation of the earth. This work was made much harder because of the transgression of the law of God. By transgressing, man worked against his own present and eternal good. The earth was cursed because through disobedience man gave Satan opportunity to sow in the human heart the seeds of evil. The ground that in the beginning produced only good began to produce tares, and their growth called for continual warfare.—*This Day With God*, p. 12.

The name “servant” applies to every man; for we are all servants, and it will be well for us to see what mold we are taking on. Is it the mold of unfaithfulness, or of fidelity?

Is it the disposition generally among servants to do as much as possible? Is it not rather the prevalent fashion to slide through the work as quickly, as easily, as possible, and obtain the wages at as little cost to themselves as they can? The object is not to be as thorough as possible but to get the remuneration. Those who profess to be the servants of Christ should not forget the injunction of the apostle Paul, “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 229.

**Tuesday, February 21**

## **The Earning Years**

How many a man might have escaped financial failure and ruin by heeding the warnings, so often repeated and emphasized in the Scriptures:

“Wealth gotten in haste shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labor shall have increase.” [Proverbs 13:11](#), R.V.

...

These are principles with which are bound up the well-being of society, of both secular and religious associations. It is these principles that give security to property and life. For all that makes confidence and cooperation possible, the world is indebted to the law of God, as given in His word, and as still traced, in lines often obscure and well-nigh obliterated, in the hearts of men.

The psalmist's words, “The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver” ([Psalm 119:72](#)), state that which is true from other than a religious point of view. They state an absolute truth and one that is recognized in the business world. Even in this age of passion for money getting, when competition is so sharp and methods are so unscrupulous, it is still widely acknowledged that, for a young man starting in life, integrity, diligence, temperance, purity, and thrift constitute a better capital than any amount of mere money.—  
*Education*, pp. 136, 137.

By His own example [Jesus] taught that it is our duty to be industrious, that our work should be performed with exactness and thoroughness, and that such labor is honorable. The exercise that teaches the hands to be useful and trains the young to bear their share of life's burdens gives physical strength, and develops every faculty. All should find something to do that will be beneficial to themselves and helpful to others. God appointed work as a blessing, and only the diligent worker finds the true glory and joy of life. The approval of God rests with loving assurance upon children and youth who cheerfully take their part in the duties of the household, sharing the

burdens of father and mother. Such children will go out from the home to be useful members of society.

Throughout His life on earth, Jesus was an earnest and constant worker. He expected much; therefore He attempted much. . . . Jesus did not shirk care and responsibility. . . . The positiveness and energy, the solidity and strength of character, manifested in Christ are to be developed in us, through the same discipline that He endured. And the grace that He received is for us.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 72, 73.

There is science in the humblest kind of work, and if all would thus regard it, they would see nobility in labor. Heart and soul are to be put into work of any kind; then there is cheerfulness and efficiency. In agricultural or mechanical occupations, men may give evidence to God that they appreciate His gift in the physical powers, and the mental faculties as well. Let the educated ability be employed devising improved methods of work. This is just what the Lord wants. There is honor in any class of work that is essential to be done. Let the law of God be made the standard of action and it ennobles and sanctifies all labor. Faithfulness in the discharge of every duty makes the work noble, and reveals a character that God can approve.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1112.

**Wednesday, February 22**

## **Working With Integrity**

That which lies at the foundation of business integrity and of true success is the recognition of God's ownership. The Creator of all things, He is the original proprietor. We are His stewards. All that we have is a trust from Him, to be used according to His direction.

This is an obligation that rests upon every human being. It has to do with the whole sphere of human activity. Whether we recognize it or not, we are stewards, supplied from God with talents and facilities, and placed in the world to do a work appointed by Him.

To every man is given “his work” ([Mark 13:34](#)), the work for which his capabilities adapt him, the work which will result in greatest good to himself and to his fellow men, and in greatest honor to God.—*Education*, pp. 137, 138.

Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by the power of the feelings that he subdues, not by the power of the feelings that subdue him. The strongest man is he, who, while sensitive to abuse, will yet restrain passion and forgive his enemies. Such men are true heroes. . . .

God has given us our intellectual and moral powers, but to a great extent every person is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure is going up. The word of God warns us to take heed how we build, to see that our building is founded upon the eternal Rock. The time is coming when our work will stand revealed just as it is. Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers which God has given them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 656.

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” Here is a principle which lies at the foundation of every act, thought, and motive; the consecration of the entire being, both physical and mental,

to the control of the Spirit of God. The unsanctified will and passions must be crucified. This may be regarded as a close and severe work. Yet it must be done, or you will hear the terrible sentence from the mouth of Jesus: “Depart.” You can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth you. . . .

You need to cry earnestly: “O Lord, my inmost soul convert.” You can have an influence for good over other young people. May the God of peace sanctify you wholly, soul, body, and spirit.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 262.

Joseph walked with God. He would not be persuaded to deviate from the path of righteousness, and transgress God’s law, by any inducements or threats. And when he was imprisoned, and suffered because of his innocence, he meekly bore it without murmuring. His self-control, and patience in adversity, and his unwavering fidelity are left on record of the benefit of all who should afterward live on the earth. When Joseph’s brethren acknowledged their sin before him, he freely forgave them, and showed by his acts of benevolence and love that he harbored no resentful feelings for their former cruel conduct toward him.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 176.

**Thursday, February 23**

## **Seeking Godly Counsel**

As the Lord sees fit, He imparts to those who keep His way, power that enables them to exert a strong influence for good. On God they are dependent, and to Him they must give an account of the way in which they use the talents He has entrusted to them. They are to realize that they are God’s stewards and are to seek to magnify His name.

Those whose affections are set on God will succeed. They will lose sight of self in Christ, and worldly attractions will have no power to allure them from their allegiance. They will realize that outward display does not give strength. It is

not ostentation, outward show, that gives a correct representation of the work that we, as God's chosen people, are to do. Those who are connected with our sanitarium work should be adorned with the grace of Christ. This will give them the greatest influence for good.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 90.

The wisest of men may learn useful lessons from the ways and habits of the little creatures of the earth. The industrious bee gives to men of intelligence an example that they would do well to imitate. These insects observe perfect order, and no idler is allowed in the hive. They execute their appointed work with an intelligence and activity that are beyond our comprehension. The ants, which we consider as only pests to be crushed under our feet, are in many respects superior to man; for he does not as wisely improve the gifts of God. The wise man calls our attention to the small things of the earth: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." "The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." We may learn from these little teachers a lesson of faithfulness. Should we improve with the same diligence the faculties which an all-wise Creator has bestowed upon us, how greatly would our capacities for usefulness be increased. God's eye is upon the smallest of His creatures; does He not, then, regard man formed in His image and require of him corresponding returns for all the advantages He has given him?—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 455.

Jesus has been delivering His goods to His servants age after age. One generation after another has been gathering up the hereditary trust; the talents have increased largely by



use, and have descended to us. We are as His hired servants. He has brought us, paid the ransom money in His own blood to secure our willing service. . . .

All He asks . . . is just to use the talents entrusted. If you think that God has given you five talents, then be consoled that He does not require of you the improvement of ten. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, I bid you look up! The rainbow of promise is encircling the throne.—*The Upward Look*, p. 343.

**Friday, February 24**

## **For Further Reading**

*In Heavenly Places*, “The Gold of Christian Character,” p. 173;

*My Life Today*, “He Multiplies My Talents,” p. 113.

# **EGW Notes - Lesson 9**

## **Beware of Covetousness**

### **Sabbath Afternoon, February 25**

The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness. By nature we are alienated from God. The Holy Spirit describes our condition in such words as these: “Dead in trespasses and sins;” “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint;” “no soundness in it.” We are held fast in the snare of Satan, “taken captive by him at his will.” [Ephesians 2:1](#); [Isaiah 1:5, 6](#); 2 Timothy 2:26. God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him.

The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will

of God, requires a struggle; but the soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in holiness. . . .

[God] sets before us the height of blessing to which He desires to bring us through His grace. He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work His will in us. It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.—*Steps to Christ*, p. 43.

Make God your entire dependence. When you do otherwise, then it is time for a halt to be called. Stop right where you are, and change the order of things. In sincerity, in soul-hunger, cry after God. Wrestle with the heavenly agencies until you have the victory. Put your whole being into the Lord's hands soul, body, and spirit, and resolve to be His loving, consecrated agency, moved by His will, controlled by His mind, infused by His Spirit . . . then you will see heavenly things clearly.

If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 105.

Constant, self-denying benevolence is God's remedy for the cankering sins of selfishness and covetousness. God has arranged systematic benevolence to sustain His cause and relieve the necessities of the suffering and needy. He has ordained that giving should become a habit, that it may counteract the dangerous and deceitful sin of covetousness. Continual giving starves covetousness to death. Systematic benevolence is designed in the order of God to tear away

treasures from the covetous as fast as they are gained and to consecrate them to the Lord, to whom they belong. . . .

The constant practice of God's plan of systematic benevolence weakens covetousness and strengthens benevolence. If riches increase, men, even those professing godliness, set their hearts upon them; and the more they have, the less they give to the treasury of the Lord. Thus riches make men selfish, and hoarding feeds covetousness; and these evils strengthen by active exercise. God knows our danger and has hedged us about with means to prevent our own ruin.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 548.

**Sunday, February 26**

## **The Ultimate Original Sin?**

So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies. But a change came over this happy state. . . .

Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation. The Scripture says, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." [Ezekiel 28:17](#). "Thou hast said in thine heart, . . . I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. . . I will be like the Most High." [Isaiah 14:13, 14](#). Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself. Not content with his position, though honored above the heavenly host, he ventured to covet homage due alone to the Creator. Instead of seeking to make God supreme in the affections and allegiance of all created beings, it was his endeavor to secure their service and loyalty to himself. And coveting the glory with which the

infinite Father had invested His Son, this prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

Many who claim to believe in God deny Him by their works. Their worship of money, houses, and lands marks them as idolaters and apostates. All selfishness is covetousness, and is, therefore, idolatry. Many who have placed their names on the church roll, as believers in God and the Bible, are worshiping the goods the Lord has entrusted to them that they may be His almoners. They may not literally bow down before their earthly treasure, but nevertheless it is their god. They are worshipers of mammon. To the things of this world they offer the homage which belongs to the Creator. He who sees and knows all things records the falsity of their profession.

From the soul temple of a worldly Christian, God is excluded, in order that worldly policy may have abundant room. Money is his god. It belongs to Jehovah, but he to whom it is entrusted refuses to let it flow forth in deeds of benevolence. Did he appropriate it in accordance with God's design, the incense of his good works would ascend to heaven, and from thousands of converted souls would be heard songs of praise and thanksgiving.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 223.

Pure religion brings peace, happiness, contentment; godliness is profitable to this life and the life to come.

That unrest and discontent which ends in fretting and complaining is sinful; but the discontent with one's self which urges on to more earnest effort for greater improvement of the mind for a broader field of usefulness is praiseworthy. This discontent does not end in disappointment but in gathering force for a higher and more

extended field of usefulness. Only be ever balanced by firm religious principle and a sensitive conscience, having ever the fear of God before you, and you will certainly prosper in becoming fitted for a life of usefulness.—*Our High Calling*, p. 242.

**Monday, February 27**

## **An Accursed Thing in the Camp**

To establish his guilt beyond all question, leaving no ground for the charge that he had been unjustly condemned, Joshua solemnly adjured Achan to acknowledge the truth.

The wretched man made full confession of his crime:

“Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel. . . .

When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekel’s weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent.” . . .

Of the millions of Israel there was but one man who, in that solemn hour of triumph and of judgment, had dared to transgress the command of God. Achan’s covetousness was excited by the sight of that costly robe of Shinar; even when it had brought him face to face with death he called it “a goodly Babylonish garment.” One sin had led to another, and he appropriated the gold and silver devoted to the treasury of the Lord—he robbed God of the first fruits of the land of Canaan.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 495, 496.

He who looks at earthly things as the chief good, he who spends his life in an effort to gain worldly riches, is indeed making a poor investment. Too late he will see that in which he has trusted crumbling into dust. It is only through self-denial, through the sacrifice of earthly riches, that the eternal riches can be obtained. It is through much tribulation that the Christian enters the kingdom of heaven.

Constantly he is to war the good warfare, not laying down his weapons until Christ bids him rest. Only by giving all to Christ can he secure the inheritance that will endure through all eternity.—*This Day With God*, p. 152.

Thousands are making the same mistake as did the Pharisees whom Christ reproved at Matthew's feast. Rather than give up some cherished idea, or discard some idol of opinion, many refuse the truth which comes down from the Father of light. They trust in self, and depend upon their own wisdom, and do not realize their spiritual poverty. They insist on being saved in some way by which they may perform some important work. When they see that there is no way of weaving self into the work, they reject the salvation provided.

A legal religion can never lead souls to Christ; for it is a loveless, Christless religion. Fasting or prayer that is actuated by a self-justifying spirit is an abomination in the sight of God. The solemn assembly for worship, the round of religious ceremonies, the external humiliation, the imposing sacrifice, proclaim that the doer of these things regards himself as righteous, and as entitled to heaven; but it is all a deception. Our own works can never purchase salvation. . . .

Man must be emptied of self before he can be, in the fullest sense, a believer in Jesus. When self is renounced, then the Lord can make man a new creature. New bottles can contain the new wine. The love of Christ will animate the believer with new life. In him who looks unto the Author and Finisher of our faith the character of Christ will be manifest.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 280.

**Tuesday, February 28**

## **The Heart of Judas**

Judas had valuable qualities, but there were some traits in his character that would have to be cut away before he could

be saved. He must be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. His great hereditary and cultivated tendency to evil was covetousness. And by practice this became a habit which he carried into all his trading. . . .

He was given every opportunity to receive Christ as his personal Saviour, but he refused this gift. He would not yield his way and will to Christ. He did not practice that which was contrary to his own inclinations; therefore his strong avaricious spirit was not corrected. While he continued a disciple in outward form, and while in the very presence of Christ, he appropriated to himself means that belonged to the Lord's treasury.

Judas might have been benefited by these lessons, had he possessed a desire to be right at heart; but his acquisitiveness overcame him, and the love of money became a ruling power. Through indulgence, he permitted this trait in his character to grow and take so deep a root that it crowded out the good seed of truth sown in his heart.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 219, 220.

Money was to Judas a continual temptation, and from time to time, when he did a little service for Christ, or devoted a little time to religious purposes, he paid himself out of the meager fund collected to advance the light of the gospel. He finally became so penurious that he made bitter complaint because the ointment poured upon the head of Jesus was expensive. He turned it over and over in his mind, and counted the money that might have been placed in his hands to expend if that ointment had been sold. His selfishness grew stronger until he felt that the treasury had really met with a great loss in not receiving the value of the ointment in money. He finally made open complaint of the extravagance of this expensive offering to Christ. Our Saviour rebuked him for this covetousness. This rankled in the heart of Judas,

until, for a small sum of money, he consented to betray his Lord. There will be those among Sabbathkeepers who are no truer at heart than was Judas.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 42.

If we draw nigh to God, we shall draw nigh to one another. We cannot draw nigh to the same cross without coming into unity of spirit. Christ prayed that His disciples should be one as He and the Father are one. We should seek to be one in spirit and in understanding. We should seek to be one that God may be glorified in us as He was glorified in the Son, and God will love us as He loves His Son.

God loves you. He does not wish to draw you nigh to Him to hurt you, oh, no; but to comfort you, to pour in the oil of rejoicing, to heal the wounds that sin has made, to bind up where Satan has bruised. He wants to give you the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 246.

**Wednesday, March 1**

## **Ananias and Sapphira**

God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit, and their sin was visited with swift and terrible judgment. When Ananias came with his offering, Peter said: "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

"Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things." . . .



Infinite Wisdom saw that this signal manifestation of the wrath of God was necessary to guard the young church from becoming demoralized. Their numbers were rapidly increasing. The church would have been endangered if, in the rapid increase of converts, men and women had been added who, while professing to serve God, were worshiping mammon. This judgment testified that men cannot deceive God, that He detects the hidden sin of the heart, and that He will not be mocked. It was designed as a warning to the church, to lead them to avoid pretense and hypocrisy, and to beware of robbing God.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 72, 73.

There are those who are guilty of the same sin as Ananias and Sapphira, thinking that if they withhold a portion of what God claims in the tithing system the brethren will never know it. Thus thought the guilty couple whose example is given us as a warning. God in this case proves that He searches the heart. The motives and purposes of man cannot be hidden from Him. He has left a perpetual warning to Christians of all ages to beware of the sin to which the hearts of men are continually inclined.

Although no visible marks of God's displeasure follow the repetition of the sin of Ananias and Sapphira now, yet the sin is just as heinous in the sight of God and will as surely be visited upon the transgressor in the day of judgment, and many will feel the curse of God even in this life. When a pledge is made to the cause, it is a vow made to God and should be sacredly kept. In the sight of God it is no better than sacrilege to appropriate to our own use that which has been once pledged to advance His sacred work.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 469.

Self-sacrifice is the keynote of Christ's teachings. Often this is enjoined upon believers in language that seems

authoritative, because there is no other way to save men than to cut them away from their life of selfishness. Christ gave, in His life on earth, a true representation of the power of the gospel. . . . To every soul who will suffer with Him in resistance of sin, in labor for His cause, in self-denial for the good of others, He promises a part in the eternal reward of the righteous. Through the exercise of the spirit that characterized His lifework, we are to become partakers of His nature. Partaking in this life of sacrifice for the sake of others, we shall share with Him in the life to come the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”—“A Work of Preparation,” *Review and Herald*, September 28, 1911.

**Thursday, March 2**

## **Overcoming Covetousness**

The deadly sin that led to Achan’s ruin had its root in covetousness, of all sins one of the most common and the most lightly regarded. While other offenses meet with detection and punishment, how rarely does the violation of the tenth commandment so much as call forth censure. The enormity of this sin, and its terrible results, are the lessons of Achan’s history.

Covetousness is an evil of gradual development. Achan had cherished greed of gain until it became a habit, binding him in fetters well-nigh impossible to break. While fostering this evil, he would have been filled with horror at the thought of bringing disaster upon Israel; but his perceptions were deadened by sin, and when temptation came, he fell an easy prey.

Are not similar sins still committed, in the face of warnings as solemn and explicit? We are as directly forbidden to indulge covetousness as was Achan to appropriate the spoils of Jericho. God has declared it to be idolatry. We are warned, . . . “Take heed, and beware of covetousness.” [Luke 12:15](#). . . . We have before us the fearful

doom of Achan, of Judas, of Ananias and Sapphira. Back of all these we have that of Lucifer, the “son of the morning,” who, coveting a higher state, forfeited forever the brightness and bliss of heaven. And yet, notwithstanding all these warnings, covetousness abounds.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 496.

God has provided that we shall not be tempted above what we are able to bear, but that with every temptation He will make a way of escape. If we live wholly for God, we shall not allow the mind to indulge in selfish imaginings.

If there is any way by which Satan can gain access to the mind, he will sow his tares and cause them to grow until they will yield an abundant harvest. In no case can Satan obtain dominion over the thoughts, words, and actions, unless we voluntarily open the door and invite him to enter. He will then come in and, by catching away the good seed sown in the heart, make of none effect the truth.

All who name the name of Christ need to watch and pray and guard the avenues of the soul, for Satan is at work to corrupt and destroy if the least advantage is given him.—*The Adventist Home*, p. 402.

([1 Corinthians 10:12, 13](#)). These words are given for the people while they are in connection with the world, subject to temptations and influences which are deceiving and deluding. While they stay their mind upon Him who is their sun and their shield, the blackness and darkness that surround them will not leave one spot or stain upon their garments. They will walk with Christ. They will pray and believe and work to save the souls that are ready to perish. These are trying to break the bands that Satan has fastened upon them, and they will not be put to shame if by faith they will make Christ their companion. Temptations and deceptions will be constantly brought up by the great

deceiver to spoil the work of the human agent, but if he trusts in God, if he is humble and meek and lowly of heart, keeping the way of the Lord, heaven will rejoice, for he will gain the victory.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 960.

**Friday, March 3**

## **For Further Reading**

*Our High Calling*, “Let Jesus Lead,” p. 38;

*Reflecting Christ*, “Christ a Perfect Example for All,” p. 37.

# **EGW Notes - Lesson 10**

## **Giving Back**

**Sabbath Afternoon, March 4**

David was distressed as he saw those who once seemed to have the fear of God before them, now in old age seemingly forsaken of God and exposed to ridicule by the enemies of the Lord. . . .

David was strongly moved. He was distressed. He looked forward to the time when he should be aged, and feared that God would leave him and he would be as unhappy as other aged persons whose course he had noticed, and that he should be left to the reproach of the enemies of the Lord. With this burden upon him he earnestly prays [[Psalm 71:9, 17, 19](#) quoted]. David felt the necessity of guarding against the evils which attend old age. . . .

If such would take the position God would have them, their last days might be their best, their happiest. Those who have children in whose honesty and management they have reason to confide, should allow them to manage for them and provide for their happiness. Unless they do this, Satan

will take advantage of their lack of mental strength, and will manage for them. They should lay aside anxiety and burdens, and occupy their time as happily as they can, in ripening up for heaven.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, p. 1148.

There are living upon our earth men who have passed the age of fourscore and ten. The natural results of old age are seen in their feebleness. But they believe God, and God loves them. The seal of God is upon them, and they will be among the number of whom the Lord has said, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.” With Paul they can say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished by course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love his appearing.” There are many whose grey hairs God honors because they have fought a good fight and kept the faith.—Letter 207, 1899.

What a glorious morning will the resurrection morning be! What a wonderful scene will open when Christ shall come to be admired of them that believe! All who were partakers with Christ in His humiliation and sufferings will be partakers with Him in His glory. By the resurrection of Christ from the dead every believing saint who falls asleep in Jesus will come forth from his prison house in triumph. The resurrected saint will proclaim, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55).

Jesus Christ has triumphed over death and rent the fetters of the tomb, and all who sleep in the tomb will share the victory; they will come forth from their graves as did the Conqueror.—*Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 271, 272.

**Sunday, March 5**

# The Rich Fool

The solemn warning that was given to the foolish rich man should be a sufficient warning for all men to the close of time. Lesson upon lesson was given by our Lord to take everyone away from selfishness, and to establish close bonds of fellowship and brotherhood between man and man. He desired that the hearts of believers should be closely knit together in strong bonds of sympathy, so that there might be unity in Himself. They are together to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, looking for eternal life through the virtue of Jesus Christ. If Christ is abiding in the heart, His love will diffuse itself to others through its possessor, and will bind heart to heart. . . .

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit in large measure for great emergencies, to help our infirmities, to give us strong consolation, to illuminate our minds, and purify and ennoble our hearts. Christ becomes unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 103.

[The foolish rich] man's aims were no higher than those of the beasts that perish. He lived as if there were no God, no heaven, no future life; as if everything he possessed were his own, and he owed nothing to God or man. The psalmist described this rich man when he wrote, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." [Psalm 14:1](#).

This man has lived and planned for self. He sees that the future is abundantly provided for; there is nothing for him now but to treasure and enjoy the fruits of his labors. He regards himself as favored above other men, and takes credit to himself for his wise management. . . .

But "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." 1 Co rinthians 3:19. While the rich man is looking forward to years of enjoyment, the Lord is making far different plans. . .

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The only thing that would be of value to him now he has not secured. In living for self he has rejected that divine love which would have flowed out in mercy to his fellow men. Thus he has rejected life. For God is love, and love is life. This man has chosen the earthly rather than the spiritual, and with the earthly he must pass away.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 257, 258.

If men would do their duty as faithful stewards of their Lord's goods, there would be no cry for bread, none suffering in destitution, none naked and in want. It is the unfaithfulness of men that brings about the state of suffering in which humanity is plunged. If those whom God has made stewards would but appropriate their Lord's goods to the object for which He gave to them, this state of suffering would not exist. The Lord tests men by giving them an abundance of good things, just as He tested the rich man of the parable. If we prove ourselves unfaithful in the righteous mammon, who shall entrust us the true riches? It will be those who have stood the test on the earth, who have been found faithful, who have obeyed the words of the Lord in being merciful, in using their means for the advancement of His kingdom, that will hear from the lips of the Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." — "Parable of the Rich Man," *Review and Herald*, June 26, 1894.

**Monday, March 6**

## **You Can't Take It With You**

The book of Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon in his old age, after he had fully proved that all the pleasures earth is able to give are empty and unsatisfying. He there shows how impossible it is for the vanities of the world to meet the longings of the soul. His conclusion is that it is wisdom to

enjoy with gratitude the good gifts of God, and to do right; for all our works will be brought into judgment.

Solomon's autobiography is a mournful one. He gives us the history of his search for happiness. He engaged in intellectual pursuits; he gratified his love for pleasure; he carried out his schemes of commercial enterprise. He was surrounded by the fascinating splendor of court life. All that the carnal heart could desire was at his command; yet he sums up his experience in this sad record: [[Ecclesiastes 1:14-2:11](#) quoted].

Solomon had great learning; but his wisdom was foolishness; for he did not know how to stand in moral independence, free from sin, in the strength of a character molded after the divine similitude. Solomon has told us the result of his research, his painstaking efforts, his persevering inquiry. He pronounces his wisdom altogether vanity.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 3, pp. 1164, 1165.

Every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the allpervading care of Him in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” [Acts 17:28](#). It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth produces her bounties and continues her motion around the sun. The hand of God guides the planets and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. He “bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth.” [Isaiah 40:26](#). It is through His power that vegetation flourishes, that the leaves appear and the flowers bloom. He “maketh grass to grow upon the mountains” ([Psalm 147:8](#)), and by Him the valleys are made fruitful. “All the beasts of the forest . . . seek their meat from God,” and



every living creature, from the smallest insect up to man, is daily dependent upon His providential care.

In the beautiful words of the psalmist, “These wait all upon Thee. . . . That Thou givest them they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good.” [Psalm 104:20, 21, 27, 28](#). His word controls the elements; He covers the heavens with clouds and prepares rain for the earth. “He giveth snow like wool: He scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes.” [Psalm 147:16](#). “When He uttereth His voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and He causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; He maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His treasures.” [Jeremiah 10:13](#).—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 115.

All who would have their names retained in the book of life, should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin, and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged in by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 355.

**Tuesday, March 7**

## **Begin With Personal Needs**

Life is too solemn to be absorbed in temporal and earthly matters, in a treadmill of care and anxiety for the things that are but an atom in comparison with the things of eternal interest. Yet God has called us to serve Him in the temporal affairs of life. Diligence in this work is as much a part of true religion as is devotion. The Bible gives no indorsement to idleness. It is the greatest curse that afflicts our world. Every

man and woman who is truly converted will be a diligent worker. . . .

It is the duty of every Christian to acquire habits of order, thoroughness, and dispatch. There is no excuse for slow bungling at work of any character. When one is always at work and the work is never done, it is because mind and heart are not put into the labor. The one who is slow and who works at a disadvantage should realize that these are faults to be corrected. He needs to exercise his mind in planning how to use the time so as to secure the best results. By tact and method, some will accomplish as much in five hours as others do in ten.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 343, 344.

Love to Jesus will be seen, will be felt. It cannot be hidden. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, and rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It makes the desponding hopeful, the gloomy joyous. Love to Christ will lead its possessor to accept responsibilities for His sake, and to bear them in His strength. Love to Christ will not be dismayed by tribulation, nor turned aside from duty by reproaches. . . .

God considers more with how much love we work, than the amount we do. Love is a heavenly attribute. The natural heart cannot originate it. This heavenly plant only flourishes where Christ reigns supreme. Where love exists, there is power and truth in the life. Love does good and nothing but good. Those who have love bear fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 167.

David's public labor was about to close. He knew that he should soon die, and he does not leave his business matters in confusion, to vex the soul of his son; but while he has

sufficient physical and mental strength, he arranges the affairs of his kingdom, even to the minutest matters, not forgetting to warn Solomon in regard to the case of Shimei. He knew that the latter would cause trouble in the kingdom. He was a dangerous man, of violent temper, and was kept in control only through fear. Whenever he dared, he would cause rebellion, or, if he had a favorable opportunity, would not hesitate to take the life of Solomon.

David, in arranging his business, sets a good example to all who are advanced in years, to settle their matters while they are capable of doing so, that when they shall be drawing near to death, and their mental faculties are dimmed, they shall have nothing of a worldly nature to divert their minds from God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, pp. 1024, 1025.

**Wednesday, March 8**

## **Deathbed Charity**

Trust . . . in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. 1 Timothy 6:17.

We should be much happier and more useful, if our homelife and social intercourse were governed by the principles of the Christian religion, and illustrated the meekness and simplicity of Christ. Let visitors see that we try to make all around us happy by our cheerfulness, sympathy, and love. . . .

Then let us set our hearts and homes in order; let us teach our children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and let us, by a cheerful, happy, well-ordered life, express our gratitude and love to Him “who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” But above all things, let us fix our thoughts and the affections of our hearts on the dear Saviour who suffered for guilty man, and thus opened heaven for us.—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 183.

Much is said concerning our duty to the neglected poor; should not some attention be given to the neglected rich? Many look upon this class as hopeless, and they do little to open the eyes of those, who, blinded and dazed by the glitter of earthly glory, have lost eternity out of their reckoning. Thousands of wealthy men have gone to their graves unwarned. But indifferent as they may appear, many among the rich are soul-burdened. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." He that says to fine gold, "Thou art my confidence," has "denied the God that is above." . .

. [Ecclesiastes 5:10](#); [Job 31:24, 28](#).

Riches and worldly honor cannot satisfy the soul. Many among the rich are longing for some divine assurance, some spiritual hope. Many long for something that will bring to an end the monotony of their aimless lives. Many in official life feel their need of something which they have not. Few among them go to church; for they feel that they receive little benefit. The teaching they hear does not touch the heart. Shall we make no personal appeal to them?—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 210.

I saw that many withhold from the cause while they live, quieting their consciences that they will be charitable at death; they hardly dare exercise faith and trust in God to give anything while living. But this deathbed charity is not what Christ requires of His followers; it cannot excuse the selfishness of the living. Those who hold fast their property till the last moment, surrender it to death rather than to the cause. Losses are occurring continually. Banks fail, and property is consumed in very many ways. Many purpose to do something, but they delay the matter, and Satan works to prevent the means from coming into the treasury at all. It is

lost before it is returned to God, and Satan exults that it is so.

If you would do good with your means, do it at once lest Satan get it in his hands and thus hinder the work of God. Many times, when the Lord has opened the way for brethren to handle their means to advance His cause, the agents of Satan have presented some enterprise by which they were positive the brethren could double their means. They take the bait; their money is invested, and the cause, and frequently themselves, never receive a dollar.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 154.

**Thursday, March 9**

## **Spiritual Legacy**

It will not do for you to depend on making your charity gifts in testamentary bequests at death. You cannot calculate with the least degree of surety that the cause will ever be benefited by them. Satan works with acute skill to stir up the relatives, and every false position is taken to gain to the world that which was solemnly dedicated to the cause of God. Much less than the sum willed is always received. Satan even puts it into the hearts of men and women to protest against their relatives' doing what they wish in the bestowment of their property. They seem to regard everything given to the Lord as robbing the relatives of the deceased.

If you want your means to go to the cause, appropriate it, or all that you do not really need for a support, while you live. A few of the brethren are doing this and enjoying the pleasure of being their own executors. Will the covetousness of men make it necessary that they shall be deprived of life in order that the property which God has lent them shall not be useless forever? Let none of you draw upon yourselves the doom of the unprofitable servant who hid his Lord's money in the earth.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p.

The first Christian church had not the privileges and opportunities we have. They were a poor people, but they felt the power of the truth. The object before them was sufficient to lead them to invest all. They felt that the salvation or the loss of a world depended upon their instrumentality. They cast in their all and held themselves in readiness to go or come at the Lord's bidding.

We profess to be governed by the same principles, to be influenced by the same spirit. But instead of giving all for Christ many have taken the golden wedge and a goodly Babylonish garment and hid them in the camp. If the presence of one Achan was sufficient to weaken the whole camp of Israel, can we be surprised at the little success which attends our efforts when every church and almost every family has its Achan? Let us individually go to work to stimulate others by our example of disinterested benevolence. The work might have gone forward with far greater power had all done what they could to supply the treasury with means.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 156, 157.

Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children, relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the

life to come. The very best legacy which parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence. By such a life they show the true value of money, that it is only to be appreciated for the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants and the necessities of others, and in advancing the cause of God.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 399.

**Friday, March 10**

## **For Further Reading**

*Our High Calling*, “A Bank That Never Fails,” p. 195;  
*The Upward Look*, “Worship Nature’s God,” p. 327.

# EGW Notes - Lesson 11

## Managing in Tough Times

### Sabbath Afternoon, March 11

It is not the will of God that His people should be weighed down with care. But our Lord does not deceive us. He does not say to us, “Do not fear; there are no dangers in your path.” He knows there are trials and dangers, and He deals with us plainly. He does not propose to take His people out of a world of sin and evil, but He points them to a never-failing refuge.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 225.

God knows our wants, and has provided for them. The Lord has a treasure house of supplies for His children, and can give them what they need under all circumstances. Then why do we not trust Him? He has made precious promises to His children on condition of faithful obedience to His precepts. There is not a burden but He can remove, no darkness but He can dispel, no weakness but He can change to power, no fears but He can calm, no worthy aspiration but He can guide and justify.—*That I May Know Him*, p. 224.

Often when placed in a trying situation we doubt that the Spirit of God has been leading us. But it was the Spirit’s leading that brought Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. When God brings us into trial, He has a purpose to accomplish for our good. Jesus did not presume on God’s promises by going unbidden into temptation, neither did He give up to despondency when temptation came upon Him. Nor should we. “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” He says, “Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows



unto the Most High: and call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.” [1 Corinthians 10:13](#); [Psalm 50:14, 15](#).—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 126.

When trials arise that seem unexplainable, we should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit. There is by our side a witness, a heavenly messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.

While the world is progressing in wickedness, none of us need flatter ourselves that we shall have no difficulties. But it is these very difficulties that bring us into the audience chamber of the Most High. We may seek counsel of One who is infinite in wisdom.

The Lord says, “Call upon Me in the day of trouble.” [Psalm 50:15](#). He invites us to present to Him our perplexities and necessities, and our need of divine help. He bids us be instant in prayer. As soon as difficulties arise, we are to offer to Him our sincere, earnest petitions. By our importunate prayers we give evidence of our strong confidence in God. The sense of our need leads us to pray earnestly, and our heavenly Father is moved by our supplications.—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 171, 172.

**Sunday, March 12**

## **Putting God First**

Jehoshaphat was a man of courage and valor. For years he had been strengthening his armies and his fortified cities. He was well prepared to meet almost any foe; yet in this crisis he put not his trust in the arm of flesh. Not by disciplined armies and fenced cities, but by a living faith in the God of

Israel, could he hope to gain the victory over these heathen who boasted of their power to humble Judah in the eyes of the nations. . . .

With confidence Jehoshaphat could say to the Lord, “Our eyes are upon Thee.” For years he had taught the people to trust in the One who in past ages had so often interposed to save His chosen ones from utter destruction; and now, when the kingdom was in peril, Jehoshaphat did not stand alone; “all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.” Unitedly they fasted and prayed; unitedly they besought the Lord to put their enemies to confusion, that the name of Jehovah might be glorified.

God was the strength of Judah in this crisis, and He is the strength of His people today. We are not to trust in princes, or to set men in the place of God. We are to remember that human beings are fallible and erring, and that He who has all power is our strong tower of defense. In every emergency we are to feel that the battle is His. His resources are limitless, and apparent impossibilities will make the victory all the greater.—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 217.

[When] we fasten our minds upon the misrepresentations of Satan [we] dishonor God by mistrusting Him and by murmuring against Him. When we act like culprits under sentence of death we bear false witness against God. The Father gave His only begotten and well-beloved Son to die for us, and in so doing He placed great honor upon humanity, for in Christ the link that was broken through sin was reunited and man again connected with Heaven.

You who doubt the mercy of God, look at the Lamb of God, look at the Man of sorrows, who bore your grief and suffered for your sin. He is your friend. He died on the cross because He loved you. He is touched with the feeling of your infirmities and bears you up before the throne. In view of

His unspeakable love should not hope, love, and gratitude be cherished in your heart? Should not gladness fill your service to God?—*That I May Know Him*, p. 224.

The promise itself is of no value unless I fully believe that He that has made the promise is abundantly able to fulfill, and infinite in power to do all that He has said. . . .

We cannot dishonor God more than in distrusting His Word. Feeling is not at all reliable. A religion fed and kept alive by emotions is valueless. God's Word is the foundation upon which our hopes may safely rest, and in the confidence we have in the Word of God we are established, strengthened, settled, riveted to the Eternal Rock.—*This Day With God*, p. 156.

**Monday, March 13**

## **Trust God, Not Your Own Resources**

David, in his prosperity, did not preserve that humility of character and trust in God which characterized the earlier part of his life. He looked upon the accessions to the kingdom with pride, and contrasted their then prosperous condition with their few numbers and little strength when he ascended the throne, taking glory to himself. He gratified his ambitious feelings in yielding to the temptations of the Devil to number Israel, that he might compare their former weakness to their then prosperous state under his rule. This was displeasing to God, and contrary to his express command. It would lead Israel to rely upon their strength of numbers, instead of the living God.

The work of numbering Israel is not fully completed before David feels convicted that he has committed a great sin against God. He sees his error, and humbles himself before God, confessing his great sin in foolishly numbering the people. But his repentance came too late. The word had already gone forth from the Lord to his faithful prophet, to

carry a message to David, and offer him his choice of punishments for his transgression. David still shows that he has confidence in God. He chooses to fall into the hands of a merciful God, rather than be left to the cruel mercies of wicked men.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 4a, p. 92.

By His own example the Saviour has shown that His followers can be in the world and yet not of the world. He came not to partake of its delusive pleasures, to be swayed by its customs, and to follow its practices, but to do His Father's will, to seek and save the lost. With this object before him the Christian may stand uncontaminated in any surroundings. Whatever his station or circumstances, exalted or humble, he will manifest the power of true religion in the faithful performance of duty.

Not in freedom from trial, but in the midst of it, is Christian character developed. Exposure to rebuffs and opposition leads the follower of Christ to greater watchfulness and more earnest prayer to the mighty Helper. Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude, and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its followers to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live; to bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 467.

If you go to God for help and wisdom, He will never disappoint your faith. . . .

It may be argued that the Lord gives special wisdom to those entrusted with important responsibilities. True, if they walk humbly with Him, He will give them help for their work; and He will give you help for yours, if you seek it in the same spirit. If the Lord in His providence has placed

important responsibilities upon you, He will fit you to bear these burdens, if you go to Him in faith for strength to do this. When you put your trust in Him, and depend upon His counsel, He will not leave you to your own finite judgment, to make imperfect plans and decided failures.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 417, 418.

**Tuesday, March 14**

## **Time to Simplify?**

Men are putting afar off the coming of the Lord. They laugh at warnings. The proud boast is made, “All things continue as they were from the beginning.” . . . [2 Peter 3:4](#). . .

Everything in the world is in agitation. The signs of the times are ominous. Coming events cast their shadows before. The Spirit of God is withdrawing from the earth, and calamity follows calamity by sea and by land. There are tempests, earthquakes, fires, floods, murders of every grade. Who can read the future? Where is security? . . .

Solemnly there come to us down through the centuries the warning words of our Lord from the Mount of Olives: “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.” “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 635, 636.

The obligations resting upon us are not small. Our sense of dependence will drive us closer to God, and our sense of duty to be performed will summon us to effort, combined with our earnest prayers—works, faith, and continual prayer. Power! Power! Our great cry is for power without measure! It awaits us. We have only to draw; to take God at

His word; to act faith; to stand firmly upon the promises; to wrestle for the endowment of the grace of God. Learning is not essential; genius is not necessary; eloquence may be lacking; but the prayer of the lowly and contrite heart God hears, and when He hears no obstacles on earth can hinder. The power of God will make us effectual.—*This Day With God*, p. 187.

Do we believe with all the heart that Christ is soon coming and that we are now having the last message of mercy that is ever to be given to a guilty world? Is our example what it should be? Do we, by our lives and holy conversation, show to those around us that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body? I fear that we do not believe and realize these things as we should. . . .

Angels are watching over and guarding us; we often grieve these angels by indulging in trifling conversation, jesting, and joking, and also by sinking down into a careless, stupid state. Although we may now and then make an effort for the victory and obtain it, yet if we do not keep it, but sink down into the same careless, indifferent state, unable to endure temptations and resist the enemy, we do not endure the trial of our faith that is more precious than gold. We are not suffering for Christ's sake, and glorying in tribulation.

There is a great lack of Christian fortitude and serving God from principle. We should [seek] . . . to honor and glorify God, and in all we do and say to have an eye single to His glory.—*Early Writings*, p. 111.

**Wednesday, March 15**

## **Priorities**

Christ's call to sacrifice and unreserved surrender means crucifixion of self. In order to obey this call, we must have

unquestioning faith in Him as the perfect Example, and we must have a clear realization that we are to represent Him to the world. Those who work for Christ are to work in His lines. They are to live His life. His call to unreserved surrender is to be to them supreme. They are to allow no earthly tie or interest to prevent them from giving Him the homage of their hearts and the service of their lives. Earnestly and untiringly they are to labor with God to save perishing souls from the power of the tempter.

Those who are thus connected with Christ learn constantly of Him, passing through the successive stages of progress in Christian experience. Difficulty and perplexity come to them, that they may learn more perfectly the will and way of Christ. But they pray and believe, and by exercise their faith increases.—*The Upward Look*, p. 235.

The life of the Christian is not all smooth. He has stern conflicts to meet. Severe temptations assail him. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” The nearer we come to the close of this earth’s history, the more delusive and ensnaring will be the attacks of the enemy. His attacks will grow fiercer and more frequent. Those who resist light and truth will become more hardened and unimpressible, and more bitter against those who love God and keep His commandments.

The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as in another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1111.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. [Colossians 3:2-4](#).

We need to have a broader view of the Saviour as “Lord and Christ.” “All power” is given to Him to give to those who claim to believe in His name. We do not half acknowledge His right to our homage and obedience, and to our increasing faith in Him. . . .

Put yourself under discipline to Christ. Be led by His word. Heed His instruction, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” ([Matthew 11:29](#)).

I beseech the churches in every place to make thorough work for eternity by confession and putting away of sins. “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” ([2 Peter 1:3](#)). By what means? . . . “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18).—*This Day With God*, p. 290.

**Thursday, March 16**

## **When No One Can Buy or Sell**

The point is fast being reached when the iniquity of transgressors will be to the full. God gives nations a certain time of probation. He sends light and evidence, that, if received, will save them, but if refused as the Jews refused light, indignation and punishment will fall upon them. If men refuse to be benefited, and choose darkness rather than light, they will reap the results of their choice. “Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.”



The professed Christian world is advancing, as did the Jewish nation, from one degree of sinfulness to a greater degree, refusing warning after warning, and rejecting a Thus saith the Lord, while crediting the fables of men. The Lord God will soon arise in His wrath, and pour out His judgments upon those who are repeating the sins of the inhabitants of the Noachic world. . . . The fact that God had long forbearance, patience and mercy, the fact that His judgments have been long delayed, will not make the punishment any less severe when it does come.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 1143.

Often the follower of Christ is brought where he cannot serve God and carry forward his worldly enterprises. Perhaps it appears that obedience to some plain requirement of God will cut off his means of support. . . . When we learn the power of His word, we shall not follow the suggestions of Satan in order to obtain food or to save our lives. Our only questions will be, What is God's command? and what His promise? Knowing these, we shall obey the one, and trust the other.

In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death.

See [Revelation 13:11-17](#). But to the obedient is given the promise, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." [Isaiah 33:16](#). By this promise the children of God will live.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 121.

Courage, fortitude, faith, and implicit trust in God's power to save do not come in a moment. These heavenly graces are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of God were sealing their destiny. Beset with temptations without number, they knew they must resist firmly or be conquered. They felt that they had a great work to do, and at any hour they might be called to lay off their armor; and should they come to the close of life with their work undone, it would be an eternal loss. They eagerly accepted the light from heaven, as did the first disciples from the lips of Jesus.

When those early Christians were exiled to mountains and deserts, when left in dungeons to die with hunger, cold, and torture, when martyrdom seemed the only way out of their distress, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ, who was crucified for them. Their worthy example will be a comfort and encouragement to the people of God who will be brought into the time of trouble such as never was.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 213.

**Friday, March 17**

## **For Further Reading**

*Lift Him Up*, "The Atonement—Our Foundation of Peace," p. 332;

*This Day With God*, "Separating From Sin," p. 94.

## **EGW Notes - Lesson 12**

# **Rewards of Faithfulness**

**Sabbath Afternoon, March 18**

Do all church members realize that all they have is given them to be used and improved to God's glory? God keeps a faithful account with every human being in our world. And

when the day of reckoning comes, the faithful steward takes no credit to himself. He does not say, “My pound;” but, “Thy pound hath gained” other pounds. He knows that without the entrusted gift no increase could have been made. He feels that in faithfully discharging his stewardship he has but done his duty. The capital was the Lord’s, and by His power he was enabled to trade upon it successfully. His name only should be glorified. Without the entrusted capital he knows that he would have been bankrupt for eternity.

The approval of the Lord is received almost with surprise, it is so unexpected. But Christ says to him, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 111, 112.

Fellow pilgrim, we are still amid the shadows and turmoil of earthly activities; but soon our Saviour is to appear to bring deliverance and rest. Let us by faith behold the blessed hereafter as pictured by the hand of God. He who died for the sins of the world is opening wide the gates of Paradise to all who believe on Him. Soon the battle will have been fought, the victory won. Soon we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence the trials and sufferings of this life will seem as nothingness.

The former things “shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” “Israel shall be saved . . . with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.” [Isaiah 65:17](#); [Hebrews](#)

[10:35-37](#); [Isaiah 45:17](#).—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 731.

Your faith in Jesus will give strength to every purpose, consistency to the character. All your happiness, peace, joy, and success in this life are dependent upon genuine, trusting faith in God. This faith will prompt true obedience to the commandments of God. Your knowledge and faith in God is the strongest restraint from every evil practice, and the motive to all good. Believe in Jesus as one who pardons your sins, one who wants you to be happy in the mansions He has gone to prepare for you. He wants you to live in His presence; to have eternal life and a crown of glory.

In keeping God's commandments there is great reward, even in this life. Our conscience does not condemn us. Our hearts are not at enmity with God, but at peace with Him.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 45.

**Sunday, March 19**

## **Reward for Faithfulness**

There is no encouragement given for unbelief. The Lord manifests His grace and His power over and over again, and this should teach us that it is always profitable under all circumstances to cherish faith, to talk faith, to act faith. We are not to have our hearts and hands weakened by allowing the suggestions of suspicious minds to plant in our hearts the seeds of doubt and distrust.

The Lord works in cooperation with the will and action of the human agent. It is the privilege and duty of every man to take God at His word, to believe in Jesus as his personal Saviour, and to respond eagerly, immediately, to the gracious propositions which He makes. He is to study to believe and obey the divine instruction in the Scriptures. He is to base his faith not on feeling but upon the evidence and the Word of God.—Ellen G. White Comments, in *The SDA*

Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” [James 5:7, 8](#).

The nations of the saved will know no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming. “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 732.

Jesus is soon coming, and our position should be that of waiting and watching for His appearing. We should not allow anything to come in between us and Jesus. We must learn here to sing the song of heaven, so that when our warfare is over we can join in the song of the heavenly angels in the city of God. What is that song? It is praise, and honor, and glory unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. We shall meet opposition; we shall be hated of all men for Christ’s sake, and by Satan, because he knows that there is with the followers of Christ a divine power, which will undermine his influence. We cannot escape reproach.

We should not allow our time to be so occupied with things of a temporal nature, or even with matters pertaining to the cause of God, that we shall pass on day after day

without pressing close to the bleeding side of Jesus. We want to commune with Him daily. We are exhorted to fight the good fight of faith. It will be a hard battle to maintain a life of earnest faith; but if we cast ourselves wholly upon Christ, with a settled determination to cleave only to Him, we shall be able to repulse the enemy, and gain a glorious victory.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 372.

**Monday, March 20**

## **Everlasting Life**

Let nothing lessen the force of the truth for this time. The present truth is to be our burden. The third angel's message must do its work of separating from the churches a people who will take their stand on the platform of eternal truth.

Our message is a life-and-death message, and we must let it appear as it is, the great power of God. We are to present it in all its telling force. Then the Lord will make it effectual. It is our privilege to expect large things, even the demonstration of the Spirit of God. This is the power that will convict and convert the soul.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 61.

As Christ's earthly ministry drew to a close, and He realized that He must soon leave His disciples to carry on the work without His personal supervision, He sought to encourage them and to prepare them for the future. He did not deceive them with false hopes. As an open book He read what was to be. He knew He was about to be separated from them, to leave them as sheep among wolves. He knew that they would suffer persecution, that they would be cast out of the synagogues, and would be thrown into prison. He knew that for witnessing to Him as the Messiah, some of them would suffer death. And something of this He told them. In speaking of their future, He was plain and definite, that in

their coming trial they might remember His words and be strengthened to believe in Him as the Redeemer.

He spoke to them also words of hope and courage. "Let not your heart be troubled," He said; "ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." [John 14:1-4](#). For your sake I came into the world; for you I have been working. When I go away I shall still work earnestly for you. I came to the world to reveal Myself to you, that you might believe. I go to My Father and yours to co-operate with Him in your behalf.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 21.

The leaders in Israel professed to understand the prophecies, but they had received false ideas in regard to the manner of Christ's coming. Satan had deceived them; and all the glories of Christ's second advent they applied to His first appearing. All the wonderful events clustering around His second coming, they looked for at His first. Therefore, when He came, they were not prepared to receive Him.

Between the first and the second advent of Christ a wonderful contrast will be seen. No human language can portray the scenes of the second coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. He is to come with His own glory, and with the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. He will come clad in the robe of light, which He has worn from the days of eternity.—*Lift Him Up*, p. 373.

**Tuesday, March 21**

## **The New Jerusalem**



And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [Revelation 21:2](#).

There is the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth, “a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” “Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” . . . “The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” ([Isaiah 62:3](#); [Revelation 21:3](#)). . . .

“And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light” ([Revelation 22:5](#)). The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 369.

To His faithful followers Christ has been a daily companion, a familiar friend. They have lived in close, constant communion with God. Upon them the glory of the Lord has risen. In them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ has been reflected. Now they rejoice in the undimmed rays of the brightness and glory of the King in His majesty. They are prepared for the communion of heaven; for they have heaven in their hearts. . . .

A little longer, and we shall see the King in His beauty. A little longer, and He will wipe all tears from our eyes. Then by innumerable voices will be sung the song, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with



them, and be their God” ([Revelation 21:3](#)).—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 358.

While life is the inheritance of the righteous, death is the portion of the wicked. Moses declared to Israel: “I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” [Deuteronomy 30:15](#). The death referred to in these scriptures is not that pronounced upon Adam, for all mankind suffer the penalty of his transgression. It is “the second death” that is placed in contrast with everlasting life.

In consequence of Adam’s sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave. And through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. “There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust;” “for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” [Acts 24:15](#); [1 Corinthians 15:22](#). But a distinction is made between the two classes that are brought forth. “All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” [John 5:28, 29](#). They who have been “accounted worthy” of the resurrection of life are “blessed and holy.” “On such the second death hath no power.” [Revelation 20:6](#).—*The Great Controversy*, p. 544.

**Wednesday, March 22**

## **The Settling of Accounts**

We claim to be Christians, waiting for the second appearing of our Lord in the clouds of heaven. Then what shall we do with our time, our understanding, our possessions, which are not ours, but are entrusted to us to test our honesty? Let us bring them to Jesus. Let us use our treasures for the advancement of His cause. Thus we shall obey the injunction, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures

upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

It has come to be understood that talents are given only to a certain favored class, to the exclusion of others who, of course, are not called upon to share in the toils or rewards. But it is not so represented in the parable. When the Master of the house called His servants, He gave to every man his work. The whole family of God are included in the responsibility of using their Lord’s goods.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 116, 117.

All, both high and low, rich and poor, have been trusted by the Master with talents; some more, and some less, according to their several ability. The blessing of God will rest upon the earnest, loving, diligent workers. Their investment will be successful, and will secure souls to the kingdom of God, and for themselves an immortal treasure. All are moral agents, and are entrusted with goods of heaven. The amount of talents is proportioned according to the capabilities possessed by each.

God gives to every man his work, and He expects corresponding returns, according to their various trusts. He does not require the increase from ten talents of the man to whom He has given only one talent. He does not expect the man of poverty to give alms as the man who has riches. He does not expect of the feeble and suffering, the activity and strength which the healthy man has. The one talent, used to the best account, God will accept “according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”—“What Shall We Answer?,” *Review and Herald*, February 23, 1886.

[God] has lent us capital for investment. It is not our property; and we displease God if we hoard up, or spend as we choose, our Lord's goods. We are responsible for the use or abuse of that which God has thus lent us. If this capital which the Lord has placed in our hands lies dormant, or we bury it in the earth, be it only one talent, we shall be called to an account by the Master. He requires, not ours, but His own, with usury.

Every talent which returns to the Master, will be scrutinized. The doings and trusts of God's servants will not be considered an unimportant matter. Every individual will be dealt with personally, and will be required to give an account of the talents entrusted to him, whether he has improved or abused them. The reward bestowed will be proportionate to the talents improved. The punishment awarded will be according as the talents have been abused.—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 119.

**Thursday, March 23**

## **Eyes on the Prize**

The Son of God was the heir of all things, and the dominion and glory of the kingdoms of this world were promised to Him. Yet when He appeared in this world, it was without riches or splendor. The world understood not His union with the Father; the excellency and glory of His divine character were hid from them. He was therefore "despised and rejected of men," and "we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

Even as Christ was in the world, so are His followers. They are the sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and the kingdom and dominion belong to them. The world understand not their character and holy calling; they perceive not their adoption into the family of God. Their union and fellowship with the Father and Son is not manifest, and while the world behold their humiliation and

reproach, it does not appear what they are, or what they shall be. They are strangers. The world know them not, and appreciate not the motives which actuate them.—

*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 286.

He who has given his life to God in ministry to His children is linked with Him who has all the resources of the universe at His command. His life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises with the life of God. The Lord will not fail him in the hour of suffering and need. “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” [Philippians 4:19](#). And in the hour of final need the merciful shall find refuge in the mercy of the compassionate Saviour and shall be received into everlasting habitations.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 24.

Ransomed by the sacrifice of Christ, washed from sin in His blood, and clothed in His righteousness, Paul has the witness in himself that his soul is precious in the sight of his Redeemer. His life is hid with Christ in God, and he is persuaded that He who has conquered death is able to keep that which is committed to His trust. His mind grasps the Saviour’s promise, “I will raise him up at the last day.” [John 6:40](#). His thoughts and hopes are centered on the second coming of his Lord. And as the sword of the executioner descends and the shadows of death gather about the martyr, his latest thought springs forward, as will his earliest in the great awakening, to meet the Life-giver, who shall welcome him to the joy of the blest.

Well-nigh a score of centuries have passed since Paul the aged poured out his blood as a witness for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. No faithful hand recorded for the generations to come the last scenes in the life of this

holy man, but Inspiration has preserved for us his dying testimony. Like a trumpet peal his voice has rung out through all the ages since, nerving with his own courage thousands of witnesses for Christ and wakening in thousands of sorrow-stricken hearts the echo of his own triumphant joy: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Timothy 4:6-8.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 512, 513.

**Friday, March 24**

## **For Further Reading**

*God's Amazing Grace*, "For Each Day's Need," p. 177;  
*That I May Know Him*, "God's Treasure House of Supplies," p. 224.