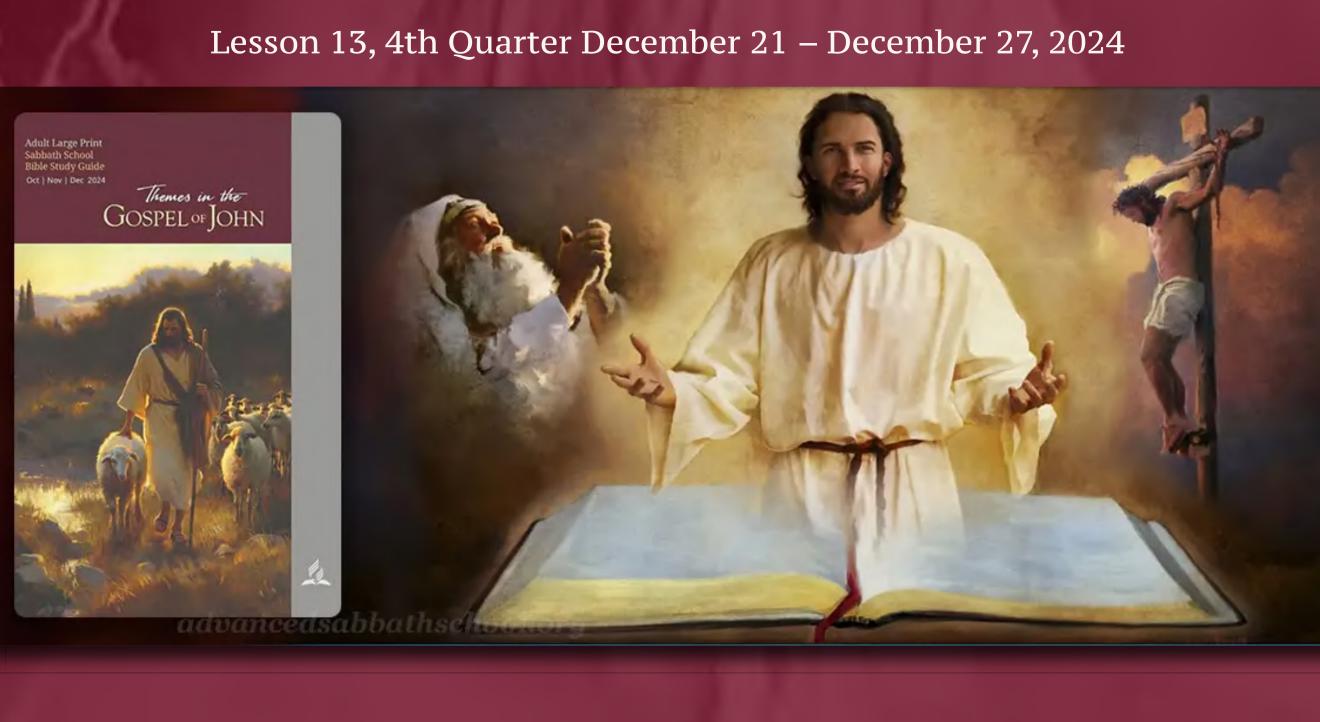
Epilogue: Knowing Jesus and His Word



Memory Text:

Sabbath Afternoon, December 21

"A clear conception of what God is and what He requires us to be will lead to wholesome humility. He who studies aright the

Sacred Word will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent. He will learn that without the help which none but God can

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. KJV — John 5:39

give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance. CT 53.2 He who is following the divine guidance has found the only true source of saving grace and real happiness, and has gained the power of imparting happiness to all around him. No man can really enjoy life without religion. Love to God purifies and ennobles every taste and desire, intensifies every affection, and brightens every worthy pleasure. It enables men to

appreciate and enjoy all that is true, and good, and beautiful. CT 53.3 "But that which above all other considerations should lead us to prize the Bible is that in it is revealed to men the will of God. Here we learn the object of our creation and the means by which that object may be attained. We learn how to improve wisely the present life and how to secure the future life. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind or the

cravings of the heart. By obtaining a knowledge of God's word and giving heed thereto, men may rise from the lowest depths of degradation to become the sons of God, the associates of sinless angels." CT 53.4

Sunday, December 22

Read John 21:1–19. What crucial truths are revealed here, especially about God's grace—and human humility?

Meeting in Galilee

"Vividly they recalled the scene beside the sea when Jesus had bidden them follow Him. They remembered how, at His

and how to cast the net, there would have been a multitude of "fish" - converts - and never a lack of "meat" - means.

net, even to breaking. Then Jesus had called them to leave their fishing boats, and had promised to make them fishers of men. It was to bring this scene to their minds, and to deepen its impression, that He had again performed the miracle. His act was a renewal of the commission to the disciples. It showed them that the death of their Master had not lessened their

command, they had launched out into the deep, and had let down their net, and the catch had been so abundant as to fill the

obligation to do the work He had assigned them. Though they were to be deprived of His personal companionship, and of the

Success never fails when the command of the Master is obeyed. If the ministry had been constantly inquiring of Jesus where

means of support by their former employment, the risen Saviour would still have a care for them. While they were doing His work, He would provide for their needs. And Jesus had a purpose in bidding them cast their net on the right side of the ship. On that side He stood upon the shore. That was the side of faith. If they labored in connection with Him,—His divine power combining with their human effort,—they could not fail of success. DA 810.5 "Another lesson Christ had to give, relating especially to Peter. Peter's denial of his Lord had been in shameful contrast to his former professions of loyalty. He had dishonored Christ, and had incurred the distrust of his brethren. They thought he would not be allowed to take his former position among them, and he himself felt that he had forfeited his trust. Before being called to take up again his apostolic work, he must before them all give evidence of his repentance. Without this, his sin, though repented of, might have destroyed his influence as a minister of Christ. The Saviour gave him opportunity to regain the confidence of his brethren, and, so far as possible, to remove the reproach he had brought upon the gospel. DA 811.1

"Here is given a lesson for all Christ's followers. The gospel makes no compromise with evil. It cannot excuse sin. Secret sins

are to be confessed in secret to God; but, for open sin, open confession is required. The reproach of the disciple's sin is cast

upon Christ. It causes Satan to triumph, and wavering souls to stumble. By giving proof of repentance, the disciple, so far as

"Three times Peter had openly denied his Lord, and three times Jesus drew from him the assurance of his love and loyalty, pressing home that pointed question, like a barbed arrow to his wounded heart. Before the assembled disciples Jesus revealed the depth of Peter's repentance, and showed how thoroughly humbled was the once boasting disciple." DA 812.2

Read John 21:20–22. What question led Peter down a wrong path? How did Jesus straighten the path?

Monday, December 23

"As Peter walked beside Jesus, he saw that John was following. A desire came over him to know his future, and he "saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." Peter should have considered that his Lord would reveal to him all that it was best for him to know. It is the duty of

Keeping Your Eyes on Jesus

lies in his power, is to remove this reproach." DA 811.2

supreme power, and that even if He should will this to be so, it would in no way affect Peter's work. The future of both John and Peter was in the hands of their Lord. Obedience in following Him was the duty required of each. DA 816.2

"How many today are like Peter! They are interested in the affairs of others, and anxious to know their duty, while they are in danger of neglecting their own. It is our work to look to Christ and follow Him. We shall see mistakes in the lives of others, and defects in their character. Humanity is encompassed with infirmity. But in Christ we shall find perfection. Beholding Him, we shall become transformed. DA 816.3 Read John 21:23–25. How was Jesus' statement misunderstood? How did the apostle John correct that misunderstanding?

everyone to follow Christ, without undue anxiety as to the work assigned to others. In saying of John, "If I will that he tarry till I

come," Jesus gave no assurance that this disciple should live until the Lord's second coming. He merely asserted His own

In saying of John, "If I will that he tarry till I come," Jesus gave no assurance that this disciple should live until the Lord's second coming. He merely asserted His own supreme power, and that even if He should will this to be so, it would in no way affect Peter's work. The future of both John and Peter was in the hands of their Lord. Obedience in following Him was the duty required of each. DA 816.2

"John lived to be very aged. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem, and the ruin of the stately temple,—a symbol of the final ruin of the world. To his latest days John closely followed his Lord. The burden of his testimony to the churches was, "Beloved, let us love one another;" "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:7, 16. DA 816.4 "Peter had been restored to his apostleship, but the honor and authority he received from Christ had not given him supremacy over his brethren. This Christ had made plain when in answer to Peter's question, "What shall this man do?" He

had said, "What is that to thee? follow thou Me." Peter was not honored as the head of the church. The favor which Christ had

shown him in forgiving his apostasy, and entrusting him with the feeding of the flock, and Peter's own faithfulness in

Christ had taught him by the Sea of Galilee Peter carried with him throughout his life..." DA 817.1

following Christ, won for him the confidence of his brethren. He had much influence in the church. But the lesson which

Read John 1:4–10; John 3:19–21; John 5:35; John 8:12; John 9:5; John 11:9, 10; and John 12:35. What great contrast is

"These words were in harmony with the words of Jesus Himself, who, when He arrested Saul on the journey to Damascus,

hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles,

A black, dirty object never reflects, it consumes all the light to itself. The moon shines because its surface is of white

declared: 'I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou

substance. If it were made of black substance it could not reflect any light whatever. The same is true with spiritual light: If we

are eager to shine, we must now arise and clean up, put away our black, filthy garments – take an active part in this revival

and reformation under the supervision of the Holy Spirit. Stupidity, fanaticism, and indifference must be abandoned and

present here, and why is this contrast so foundational to understanding truth?

unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Acts 26:16-18. AA 126.3

Divine thinking put in action, so commands the Lord:

truth. They did not desire it, even though it was truth." DA 467.3

hear the voice of God speaking to them in His Son. DA 198.2

Tuesday, December 24

Light and Darkness

Read John 8:42–44. How does Jesus describe the false foundation on which the religious leaders of Israel had based their faith?

"Jesus denied that the Jews were children of Abraham. He said, "Ye do the deeds of your father." In mockery they answered,

"We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." These words, in allusion to the circumstances of His birth,

were intended as a thrust against Christ in the presence of those who were beginning to believe on Him. Jesus gave no heed to the base insinuation, but said, "If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God." DA 467.2 "Their works testified of their relationship to him who was a liar and a murderer. "Ye are of your father the devil," said Jesus, "and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.... Because I say the truth, ye believe Me not." John 8:44, 45, R. V. The fact that Jesus spoke the truth, and that with certainty, was why He was not received by the Jewish leaders. It was the truth that offended these self-righteous

men. The truth exposed the fallacy of error; it condemned their teaching and practice, and it was unwelcome. They would

rather close their eyes to the truth than humble themselves to confess that they had been in error. They did not love the

Wednesday, December 25 Theology From "Above" or From "Below" Read John 4:46–54. What problem brought the official to Jesus, and what was the real underlying issue here?

"Notwithstanding all the evidence that Jesus was the Christ, the petitioner had determined to make his belief in Him

conditional on the granting of his own request. The Saviour contrasted this questioning unbelief with the simple faith of the

Samaritans, who asked for no miracle or sign. His word, the ever-present evidence of His divinity, had a convincing power that

reached their hearts. Christ was pained that His own people, to whom the Sacred Oracles had been committed, should fail to

"Yet the nobleman had a degree of faith; for he had come to ask what seemed to him the most precious of all blessings. Jesus

had a greater gift to bestow. He desired, not only to heal the child, but to make the officer and his household sharers in the

nobleman must realize his need before he would desire the grace of Christ. This courtier represented many of his nation.

They were interested in Jesus from selfish motives. They hoped to receive some special benefit through His power, and they

"Like a flash of light, the Saviour's words to the nobleman laid bare his heart. He saw that his motives in seeking Jesus were

an agony of supplication he cried, "Sir, come down ere my child die." His faith took hold upon Christ as did Jacob, when,

wrestling with the Angel, he cried, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Genesis 32:26." DA 198.4

selfish. His vacillating faith appeared to him in its true character. In deep distress he realized that his doubt might cost the life

of his son. He knew that he was in the presence of One who could read the thoughts, and to whom all things were possible. In

staked their faith on the granting of this temporal favor; but they were ignorant as to their spiritual disease, and saw not their

blessings of salvation, and to kindle a light in Capernaum, which was so soon to be the field of His own labors. But the

Thursday, December 26

Abiding in Jesus

need of divine grace. DA 198.3

Read John 12:32. In what ways does this striking statement describe the authority of Jesus Christ?

This He said, signifying what death He should die." This is the crisis of the world. If I become the propitiation for the sins of

restored in humanity, and a family of believing saints will finally inherit the heavenly home. This is the result of Christ's death.

The Saviour is lost in contemplation of the scene of triumph called up before Him. He sees the cross, the cruel, ignominious

men, the world will be lighted up. Satan's hold upon the souls of men will be broken. The defaced image of God will be

"But the work of human redemption is not all that is accomplished by the cross. The love of God is manifested to the universe. The prince of this world is cast out. The accusations which Satan has brought against God are refuted. The reproach which he has cast upon heaven is forever removed. Angels as well as men are drawn to the Redeemer. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth," He said, 'will draw all unto Me." DA 626.1

"Herein is My Father glorified," said Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit." God desires to manifest through you the holiness, the

benevolence, the compassion, of His own character. Yet the Saviour does not bid the disciples labor to bear fruit. He tells

them to abide in Him. "If ye abide in Me," He says, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done

unto you." It is through the word that Christ abides in His followers. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating

live "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4. The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits

as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the

His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You

similitude of Christ." DA 677.1

Read John 15:1–11. What is the secret of spiritual growth and health?

cross, with all its attending horrors, blazing with glory. DA 625.4

Friday, December 27 **Further Thought**

"The root sends its nourishment through the branch to the outermost twig. So Christ communicates the current of spiritual

strength to every believer. So long as the soul is united to Christ, there is no danger that it will wither or decay. DA 676.3

"The life of the vine will be manifest in fragrant fruit on the branches. "He that abideth in Me," said Jesus, "and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." When we live by faith on the Son of God, the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in our lives; not one will be missing. DA 676.4

■ Jump To

"My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away.' While the graft is outwardly united with the vine, there may be no vital connection. Then there will be no growth or fruitfulness. So there may be an apparent

connection with Christ without a real union with Him by faith. A profession of religion places men in the church, but the character and conduct show whether they are in connection with Christ. If they bear no fruit, they are false branches. Their separation from Christ involves a ruin as complete as that represented by the dead branch. "If a man abide not in Me," said

Christ, 'he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." DA 676.5

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