Reconciliation and Hope

Lesson 9, 1st Quarter, February 21–February 27, 2026

Sabbath Afternoon February 21

Memory Text:

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." KJV — 2Corinthians 5:21

"Satan's lying charges against the divine character and government appeared in their true light. He had accused God of seeking merely the exaltation of himself in requiring submission and obedience from his creatures, and had declared that, while the Creator exacted self-denial from all others, he himself practiced no self-denial and made no sacrifice. Now it was seen that for the salvation of a fallen and sinful race, the Ruler of the universe had made the greatest sacrifice which love could make; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. It was seen, also, that while Lucifer had opened the door for the entrance of sin by his desire for honor and supremacy, Christ had, in order to destroy sin, humbled Himself and become obedient unto death." DD 4.1

"Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19." DA 762.1

Sunday February 22

Reconciled From Wicked Works

Read Colossians 1:21, 22. What is Paul alluding to with his reference to alienation and being enemies? And what is the expected end result of Christ's death (see also Eph. 5:27)?

"Cherishing goodness in the heart is a work which many have strangely neglected. Those whose hearts are sanctified and cleansed will follow no sharp practices. God desires a selfish, covetous spirit. Evil passions fill the heart that is actuated by selfishness. Selfishness leads to oppression, and as acts of oppression are repeated, the intellect is corrupted, and fails to make correct decisions. 1SMB 254.2

"In no case will Christ serve with unfaithful dealing. "You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in His sight" (verses 21, 22). God calls for intelligent Christians, for men and women who are filled with the knowledge of His will. We need to feel the converting power of truth. This will remove the arbitrary exactions which have done such harm, casting a cloud over the minds of men. The Lord calls for men and women who by their good works show that the truth has brought about a change in their lives. His workers are now to draw out the threads of selfishness which have marred the pattern. 1SMB 254.3

Our knowledge should give spirituality to the understanding. Our knowledge of the Scriptures should be practical. The Lord is pleased when those who are connected with Him are filled with a knowledge of His will. His servants should daily gain more knowledge of Him. Daily they should grow in grace and in spiritual understanding, strengthened with might according to His glorious power. They are to increase in spiritual efficiency, that they may give strength to the people of God. 1SMB 255.1

God does not ask sinners to enter His service with their natural traits of character, to make a failure before the heavenly universe and before the world. He does not ask a man who is uncovered to attempt to serve Him. Those who have not been brought under the control of the law of justice and mercy might better step down from their position of authority until they learn that the Lord will have mercy and not sacrifice. 1SMB 255.2

Monday February 23

If You Continue in the Faith

Read Colossians 1:23 (NKJV). What do you think Paul means by remaining "grounded and steadfast" in the faith? (see also Col. 2:5 and Eph. 3:17.)

"Conditions to our knowledge of the mystery of God are plainly stated. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." This calls for much searching of the Scriptures. We can not be settled in the faith unless we educate and train every faculty of the mind. To continue in the faith means to have a determined purpose to use every God-given power in becoming an experienced and competent builder with God, building up the souls of those in the faith, and striving to reach those who have not yet come to a knowledge of the truth." RH February 18, 1909, par. 5.

"These words describe the condition of those who through the reception and sanctification of the truth, experience a transformation of character. The reason why many professed Christians have not this experience is because they do not feel the duties that lie directly in their pathway. They profess to believe in Jesus, but they fail to take him as their personal Saviour. YI May 25, 1893, par. 2

"The Lord has made every provision so that we may have a rich, abundant, joyful experience. John writes concerning Christ, saying, 'In him was life; and the life was the light of men.' Life is associated with light, and if we have to walk in the sun from the Sun of righteousness, we can have no life in him. But this light has been provided for every soul, and it is only as we withdraw from the light that darkness comes upon us. Jesus said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." In the world about us there can be no life without light. We have the sun to withdraw his shining, all vegetation, all animal life, would have an end. This illustrates the fact that we cannot have spiritual life unless we place ourselves under the beams of the Sun of righteousness. If we put a flowering plant in a dark room, it will soon wither and die; and so we may have some spiritual life, and yet lose it by dwelling in an atmosphere of doubt and gloom. Jesus says, 'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine; ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.'" YI May 25, 1893, par. 3

Tuesday February 24

God's Eternal Plan

"The apostles counted not their lives dear unto themselves, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Old reprings and complaints then reach the ear of the jailer? Oh, no! From the inner prison, voices were heard in sweet accordance, lifted up in joy and praise to God. These disciples were cheered by a deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which they suffered. 3T 460.3

As the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also will count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work. Come, O my soul, to Calvary. Mark the humble life of the Son of God. He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Behold His Gethsemane, His agony in Gethsemane, and learn what self-denial is. Are we suffering want? so was Christ, the Majesty of heaven. But His poverty was for our sakes. Are we ranked among the rich? so was He. But He consented for our sakes to become poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. In Christ we have self-denial exemplified. His sacrifice consisted not merely in leaving the royal courts of heaven, in being tried by wicked men as a criminal and pronounced guilty, and in being delivered up to die as a malefactor, but in bearing the weight of the sins of the world. The life of Christ rebukes our indifference and coldness. We are near the close of time, when Satan has come down, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short. He is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. The warfare has been left in our hands by our great Leader for us to carry forward with vigor. We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake. The work is retarded by love of ease and a lack of the self-denying spirit of which our Saviour has given us an example in His life. Co-workers with Christ, men who feel the need of extended effort, are wanted. The work of our presses should not be lessened, but doubled. Schools should be established in different places to educate our youth preparatory to their laboring to advance the truth. 3T 406.4

Wednesday February 25

The Mystery of God revealed

Read Colossians 1:26, 27. Paul twice talks about "the mystery." What mystery?

"The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations" (Colossians 1:26). It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Christ took upon Himself human nature, a nature inferior to His heavenly nature. Nothing so shows the wonderful condescension of God as this. He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). John presents this wonderful subject with such simplicity that all may grasp the ideas set forth, and be enlightened. 1SM 246.3

How do the following references to the mystery of God illuminate various aspects of the plan of salvation?1. Eph. 1:7–10, 2. Eph. 3:3–6

"Thus the Lord had given Paul his commission to enter the broad missionary field of the Gentile world. To prepare him for this extensive and difficult work, God had brought him into close connection with himself and had opened before his enraptured vision views of the beauty and glory of heaven. To him had been given the ministry of making known "the mystery" which had been "kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25,—"the mystery of His will" (Ephesians 1:9)." AA 159.2

"**The Mystery of Godliness**—The standard by which to measure character is the royal law. The law is the sin detector. By the law is the knowledge of sin. But the sinner is constantly being drawn to Jesus by the wonderful manifestation of His love in that he humbled himself to die a shameful death upon the cross. What a study is this! Angels have striven, earnestly longed, to look into the wonderful mystery. It is a study that can tax the highest human intelligence, that man, fallen, deceived by Satan, taking Satan's side of the question, can be conformed to the image of the Son of the infinite God. That man shall be like Him, that, because of the righteousness of Christ given to man, God will love man—fallen but redeemed—even as he loved His Son. Read it right out of the living oracles." 3SM 169.1

Thursday February 26

Power of the Gospel

Read Colossians 1:28, 29. What is Paul's focus? Why do you think "everyone" (ESV) is repeated three times?

What a responsibility is this! A work is here brought to view that is more laborious than merely preaching the word. It is to represent Christ in our character, to be living epistles, known and read of all men." GW92 422.3

"These words present before the worker for Christ a high attainment, yet this attainment all can reach who, putting themselves under the control of the Great Teacher, learn daily in the school of Christ. The power at God's command is limitless, and the minister who in his great need shuts himself in with God may be assured that he will receive that which will be to his hearers a savor of life unto life." AA 368.3

"It is the work of God, the grace from God, realized and felt, grasping the life and actions, which is to make a sensible impression upon those that hear. 2T 609.4

"But it is not this only. There are other things to be considered, in which some have been negligent, but which are of consequence, in the light in which they have been presented before me. Impressions are made upon the people by the deportment of the speaker in the desk, by his attitude, and by his manner of speaking. If these things are as God would have them, the impression they make will be in favor of the truth; especially will that class be favorably impressed who have been listening to fables. It is important that the minister's manner be modest and dignified, in keeping with the holy, elevating truth he teaches, that a favorable impression may be made upon those who are not naturally inclined to religion." 2T 609.5

Friday February 27

Further Thought

"The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot make claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Romans 3:26. DA 762.2

"God's love has been expressed in His justice no less than in His mercy. Justice is the foundation of His throne, and the fruit of His love. It had been Satan's purpose to divorce mercy from truth and justice. He sought to prove that the righteousness of God's law is an enemy to peace. But Christ shows that in God's plan they are indissolubly joined together; the one cannot exist without the other. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Psalm 85:10. DA 763.1

"By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed. Satan's charges were refuted. God had given man unmistakable evidence of His love." DA 762.4

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