

Knowledge of God Series – 5



THE LOVE OF GOD

Ellen G. White
Spirit of Prophecy

1892-1900

THE LOVE OF GOD

Ellen G. White
Spirit of Prophecy
1892-1900

Steps to Christ, pp. 9-15

God's Love for Man

Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. Our Father in heaven is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures. In the beautiful words of the psalmist,

“The eyes of all wait upon Thee;
And Thou givest them their meat in due season.
Thou openest Thine hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”
Psalm 145:15, 16.

God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's law—the law of love—that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. Genesis 3:17. The thorn and the thistle—the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care—were appointed for his good as a part of the training needful in God's plan for his uplifting from the ruin and degradation that sin has wrought. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

“God is love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their happy songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green — all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy.

The word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, “Show me Thy glory,”

the Lord answered, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." Exodus 33:18, 19. This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses, and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Exodus 34:6, 7. He is "slow to anger, and of great kindness," "because He delighteth in mercy." Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:18.

God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love. Though all these evidences have been given, the enemy of good blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Satan led men to conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice,—one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He pictured the Creator as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. It was to remove this dark shadow, by revealing to the world the infinite love of God, that Jesus came to live among men.

The Son of God came from heaven to make manifest the Father. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John 1:18. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Matthew 11:27. When one of the disciples made the request, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" John 14:8, 9.

In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, The Lord "hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." Luke 4:18. This was His work. He went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were revealed in every act of His life; His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved

to climb upon His knees and gaze into the pensive face, benignant with love.

Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to receive Him, the way, the truth, and the life. They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Such is the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God "manifest in the flesh." 1 Timothy 3:16.

It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. He became "a Man of Sorrows," that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory, to a world marred and blighted with sin, darkened with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5. Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world.

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.

Jesus said, “Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again.” John 10:17. That is, “My Father has so loved you that He even loves Me more for giving My life to redeem you. In becoming your Substitute and Surety, by surrendering My life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to My Father; for by My sacrifice, God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.”

None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father’s love to lost humanity.

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.” He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice. He gave Him to the fallen race. Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who was one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is “not ashamed to call them brethren” (Hebrews 2:11); He is our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father’s throne, and through eternal ages one with the race He has redeemed—the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted conceptions of what we may become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beheld the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father’s love toward the perishing race, he was filled with adoration and reverence; and, failing to find suitable language in which to express the greatness and tenderness of this love, he called upon the world to behold it. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” 1 John 3:1. What a value this places upon man! Through transgression the sons of man become subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name “sons of God.”

Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The matchless

love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child.

(Australasian) Union Conference Record, June 1, 1900

The Love of God—How Manifested

True love is not merely a sentiment or an emotion. It is a living principle, a principle that is manifest in action. True love, wherever it exists, will control the life. Thus it is with the love of God. "God is love;" and in all His works, in all His dealings with mankind, His character is revealed.

God manifested His love in the work of creation. When the earth was created, it was holy and beautiful. God pronounced it "very good." Every flower, every shrub, every tree, answered the purpose of its Creator. Everything upon which the eye rested was lovely, and filled the mind with thoughts of the love of God. Every sound was music, in perfect harmony with the voice of God.

The things of nature, upon which we look today, give us but a faint conception of Eden's beauty and glory; yet the natural world, with unmistakable voice, proclaims the love of God. Even now "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." It still reveals the working of the great Master-Artist. It declares that One omnipotent in power, great in goodness and mercy, has created all things.

The green fields, the lofty trees, the glad sunshine, the clouds, the dew, the solemn silence of the night, the glory of the starry heavens, and the moon in its beauty, all bear witness to His wonder-working power. Not a drop of rain falls, not a ray of light is shed upon our unthankful world, but it testifies to God's long forbearance and His great love.

Through tempting man to sin, Satan hoped to counteract the tide of divine love flowing to the human race; but, instead of this, his work resulted in calling forth new and deeper manifestations of God's mercy and His goodness.

In redemption God has revealed His love in sacrifice, a sacrifice so broad and deep and high that it is immeasurable. "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When Adam's sin plunged the race into hopeless misery, God might have cut Himself loose from fallen beings. He might have treated them as sinners deserve to be treated. He might have commanded the angels of heaven to pour out upon our world the vials of His wrath. He might have removed this dark blot from His universe. But He did not do this. Instead of banishing them from His presence, He came still nearer to the fallen

race. He gave His Son to become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." Christ by His human relationship to men drew them close to God. He clothed His divine nature with the garb of humanity, and demonstrated before the heavenly universe, before the unfallen worlds, how much God loves the children of men.

The gift of God to man is beyond computation. Nothing was withheld. God would not permit it to be said that He could have done more, or revealed to humanity a greater measure of love. In the gift of Christ He gave all heaven.

The Highest, who was with the Father before the world was, submitted to humiliation that He might uplift humanity. Prophecy withdraws the veil, that we may behold the throne of heaven, that we may see upon that throne, high and lifted up, One who in human form came to our world to suffer, to be lacerated with stripes, and bruised for our iniquities. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Before the heavenly universe the Lord of Glory suffered in human form that sin might be pardoned, and sinners redeemed. He died that the love of God, as a mighty helper, might flow to all suffering human beings.

Through yielding to sin, man placed his will under the control of Satan. He became a helpless captive in the tempter's power. God sent His Son into our world to break the power of Satan, and to emancipate the will of man. He sent Him to proclaim liberty to the captives, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free. By pouring the whole treasury of heaven into this world, by giving us in Christ all heaven, God has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every human being. When man places himself under the control of God, the will becomes firm and strong to do right, the heart is cleansed from selfishness and filled with Christ-like love. The mind yields to the authority of the law of love, and every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. The powers, hitherto "members of unrighteousness," and "servants of sin," are consecrated to the service of the God of love.

That this redemption might be ours, God withheld not even the sacrifice of Himself. He gave Himself in His Son. The Father suffered with Christ in all His humiliation and agony. He suffered as He saw the Son of His love despised and rejected by those whom He came to elevate, ennoble, and save. He saw Him hanging upon the cross, mocked and jeered by the passers-by, and He hid as it were His face from Him. He saw Christ bearing the sin of the world, and dying in the sinner's stead. The human heart knows the love of a parent for his child. We know what

a mother's love will do and suffer for her beloved one. But never can the heart of man fathom the depths of God's self-sacrifice.

O, the cross, the cross! It is set up that we may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Only the cross can measure the length and breadth, the depth and height, of infinite love, the greatness of the Father's sacrifice for lost humanity.

And the Lord Jehovah did not deem the plan of salvation complete while invested only with His own love. By His appointment He has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, Christ's office-work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters.

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears His Son.

This is the mystery of godliness. That Christ should take human nature, and by a life of humiliation elevate man in the scale of moral worth with God; that He should carry His adopted nature to the throne of God, and there present His children to the Father, to have conferred upon them an honour exceeding that conferred upon the angels,—this is the marvel of the heavenly universe, the mystery into which angels desire to look. This is love that melts the sinner's heart.

And God has manifested His love in ministry. In Him all unselfish ministry has its origin. Our Father in heaven is constantly engaged in upholding the things which He has created. Every leaf grows, every flower blooms, every fruit develops, by the power of God. In Him "we live, and move, and have our being." Each heart-beat, each breath, is the inspiration of Him who breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life,—the inspiration of the ever-present God, the great I AM. The great and infinite God lives not unto Himself, but for the benefit and blessing of every being and every object of His creation.

Satan's principle is self-serving. This principle he attributed to God, misrepresenting His character to the world. And he led man to accept the principle of selfishness. He caused him to believe that in serving himself he would find happiness. By the Son of God this principle was to be demonstrated as false. By Him the Father was to be rightly represented. The ideal of true ministry God committed to His Son, and bade Him work it out in humanity.

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set an example of true service. His whole life on earth was spent in ministering to others.

In all the afflictions of humanity He was afflicted. He saw the work of Satan revealed in all their woe, and He made every case of need and sorrow His own. With a power that never quailed, He cast out the evil spirits that possessed both mind and body. The power of love was in all His healing, and of the suffering multitudes that were brought to Him, it was said, "He healed them all."

The Saviour saw a still greater need than bodily suffering. He saw symptoms of a deeper illness. The sufferings of the body excited His pity, but He was moved to still greater pity by the need of the soul.

With a love that never faltered, Christ spoke to men the words of eternal life. The word of God, which the teachers of Israel had obscured with their traditions and man-made commandments, Christ opened to the people in its purity and divine beauty. Men marvelled at His teaching, and said, "Never man spake like this man." To the weary and sin-burdened He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He invited them, "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."

Before men and angels, by His life of obedience and ministry, Christ represented the character of God. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

In His work on earth, Christ lifts the veil that conceals the invisible world from our view, and reveals the power that is constantly exercised for our good. The same ministry which He performed on earth was continued after His ascension to heaven. Through His representative, the Holy Spirit, God in Christ still ministers to the children of men.

Before He ascended to heaven, Christ gave His disciples the promise, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him. But ye know Him: for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you."

To those who in faith claimed this promise it was speedily fulfilled. After Christ's ascension the disciples were gathered together of one accord in one place. Ten days they spent in heart-searching and self-examination, each taking his own case in hand; for it had to be an individual work. As the disciples made humble supplication to God, their differences were swept away. They became of one mind. Then the way was

prepared for the Holy Spirit to enter the cleansed, consecrated soul-temples. Every heart was filled with the Spirit, whose influence came with copiousness and power, as if it had been held in restraint for ages. What was the result? Thousands were converted in a day. The sword of the Spirit seemed new-edged with power, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow. The idolatry that had been mingled with the worship of the people was overthrown. New territory was added to the church of God. Places that had been barren and desolate sounded forth His praise.

The church became a vitalizing power. Believers, themselves re-converted, were a living power for God and for His kingdom. A new song was put into their mouth, even praise to our God. Every one converted saw in his brethren and sisters the faces of angels. One interest prevailed, one subject of emulation swallowed up all others,—to be like Christ, to do the works of Christ. The earnest zeal felt was expressed in kindly helpfulness, in kindly looks, and brotherly love. All strove to see who could do the most for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom.

This ministry is the great need of the church today. And in Christ's promise we are included. To us is offered the great and measureless gift of the Holy Spirit. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If all were willing to receive, all would become filled with the Spirit. When God's people will believe, when they will turn their attention to that which is true, and living, and real, the Holy Spirit, in strong, heavenly currents, will be poured upon the church.

All the principalities and powers of the heavenly world are enlisted in the work of ministering for fallen man. Angels are actively engaged in executing God's plans to bring man back from rebellion to reconciliation with God. With intense earnestness they are co-operating with God to bring to man moral efficiency, that in Christ he may be more than conqueror.

Invisible armies of light and power attend the meek and lowly ones who believe and claim the promises of God. Cherubim and seraphim, and angels that excel in strength,—“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,”—stand at His right hand, “all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.”

God has manifested His love to men by making them partners with Himself in the work of salvation. All to whom the heavenly inspiration has come are put in trust with the Gospel. “We are labourers together with God,” called to represent Him as ambassadors of love. We are to co-operate with the work of the delegates of heaven. And to us is com-

mitted a work which even the angels cannot do. Man must be the channel to communicate with man.

Through the ministration of angels God sends light to His people, and through His people the light is to be given to the world. Man is to be connected with his fellow-men, and as God's instrumentality work in their behalf.

To us, in a sense that angels cannot know, it is given to unite with God in His travail for the salvation of humanity. To us it is given to swell the tide of His joy, and to bring honour and praise to His exalted name.

In creation and in redemption, by gift and sacrifice and service, God has manifested His love to us. And He invites us to show our love for Him.

He says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me." He desires us to appreciate the great plan of redemption, to realize our high privilege as the people of God, and to walk before Him in obedience, with grateful thanksgiving. He desires us to serve Him in newness of life, with gladness every day. He longs to see gratitude welling up in our hearts because we have access to the mercy-seat, the throne of grace, because our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, because we may cast all our care on Him who cares for us. He bids us rejoice because we are the heritage of the Lord, because the righteousness of Christ is the white robe of His saints, because we have the blessed hope of the soon-coming of our Saviour.

To praise God in fulness and sincerity of heart is as much a duty as is prayer. We are to show 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 fulness. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience. After a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, our joy in the Lord and our efficiency in His service will be greatly increased by recounting His goodness and His wonderful works in behalf of His children.

Such a testimony will have an influence upon others. No more effective means can we employ for winning souls to Christ.

And our love is to be shown, not only in words, but in deeds, in personal ministry and sacrifice. Christ says, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." In His prayer to His father He said of His disciples, "As thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." In the commission which He gave to His disciples He included all who should believe in Him to the end of time. "Go ye into all the world," He said, "and preach the Gospel

to every creature.” “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

And by the Holy Spirit, through the apostle Peter, we are admonished, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Thus it is that God desires to fulfil for us His purpose of grace. By the power of His love, through obedience, fallen man, a worm of the dust, is to be transformed, fitted to be a member of the heavenly family, a companion, through eternal ages, of God and Christ and the holy angels. Heaven will triumph; for the vacancies made by the fall of Satan and his host will be filled by the redeemed of the Lord.

Manuscript 41, 1892

God's Love For Man

Many conceive of God as a being whose chief attribute is stern justice, one who is a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. The Creator has been pictured as a being who is watching with jealous eye to discern the errors and mistakes of men, that He may visit judgments upon them. In the minds of thousands, love and sympathy and tenderness are associated with the character of Christ, while God is regarded as the law-giver, inflexible, arbitrary, devoid of sympathy for the beings He has made.

Never was there a greater error. Nature and revelation alike testify of God's love. It is from Him that we receive every good gift. He is the source of life, of wisdom, and of joy. Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of men, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refresh the earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who brings the bud to bloom, the flower to fruit. It is He who supplies the daily needs of all His people. In the beautiful words of the Psalmist:

“The eyes of all wait upon thee,
and thou givest them their meat in due season.
Thou openest thine Hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”

God made man perfectly holy and happy; and the fair earth, as it came from the Creator's hand, bore no blight of decay or shadow of the curse. It is transgression of God's [law] that has brought woe and death. Yet even amid the suffering that results from sin, God's love is revealed. It is written that God cursed the ground for man's sake. The thorn and the thistle, the difficulties and trials that make his life one of toil and care, were appointed for his good as a part of the training needful in God's plan for His uplifting from the ruin and degradation of sin. The world, though fallen, is not all sorrow and misery. In nature itself are messages of hope and comfort. There are flowers upon the thistles, and the thorns are covered with roses.

“God is love” is written upon every opening bud, upon every spire of springing grass. The lovely birds making the air vocal with their hap-

py songs, the delicately tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air, the lofty trees of the forest with their rich foliage of living green, all testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God, and to His desire to make His children happy.

The Word of God reveals His character. He Himself has declared His infinite love and pity. When Moses prayed, "Show me thy glory," the Lord answered, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee!" [Exodus 33:18, 19.] This is His glory. The Lord passed before Moses and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." [Exodus 34:6, 7.] He is "slow to anger, and of great kindness," "because He delighteth in mercy." [Joel 2:13; Micah 7:18.]

He has bound Himself to our hearts by unnumbered tokens, in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, God has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet even these but imperfectly represent His love. When all these evidences had been given, the enemy of good still blinded the minds of men, so that they looked upon God with fear; they thought of Him as severe and unforgiving. Then Jesus came to live among them, that through Him the infinite love of God might be revealed.

Christ came from heaven to give to the world a correct representation of the Father. He says, "neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." [Matthew 11:27.] And [when] one of the disciples made the request, "Show us the Father," Jesus answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" [John 14:8, 9.]

In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." [Luke 4:18.] This was His work. He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for He had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of His life. His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man's nature, that He might reach man's wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees and gaze into that pensive face, benignant with love.

Jesus never suppressed one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes. He wept over Jerusalem, the city He loved, which refused to accept Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

They had rejected Him, the Saviour, but He regarded them with pitying tenderness, and sorrow so deep that it broke His heart. His life was one of self-denial and thoughtful care for others. He never made truth cruel, but manifested a wonderful tenderness for humanity. Every soul was precious in His eyes. While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest compassion and regard to every member of the family of God. In all, He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Such was the character of Christ as revealed in His life. This is the character of God. It is from the Father's heart that the streams of divine compassion, manifest in Christ, flow out to the children of men. Jesus, the tender, pitying Saviour, was God "manifest in the flesh." [1 Timothy 3:16.]

But we have, as it were, taken only a surface view of the life of Christ. It was to redeem us that He lived and suffered and died. He became "a man of sorrows," that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. [Isaiah 53:3.] God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory to a world marred and blighted with sin, shadowed with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred and death.

And Jesus bore all this untold sorrow that we might be changed to His divine image, and become the sons of God. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." [Verse 5.] Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and men. This forced from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" [Matthew 27:46.] It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God.

It was only by the death of Christ that the human race could be redeemed. Man had broken the law of God, and Christ alone could atone for the transgression. But this great sacrifice was not made in order

to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no. "God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son." [John 3:16.] God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." [2 Corinthians 5:19.] "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." [John 3:16.] He gave Him not only to live among men, to bear their sins, and die their sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race.

Christ was to identify Himself with the interests and needs of humanity. He who is one with God has linked Himself with the children of men by ties that are never to be broken. Jesus is "not ashamed to call them brethren" [Hebrews 2:11]; [He is] our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Brother, bearing our human form before the Father's throne, and through eternal ages one with the race He has redeemed—the Son of man. And all this that man might be uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin that he might reflect the love of God and share the joy of holiness.

The price paid for our redemption, the infinite sacrifice of our heavenly Father in giving His Son to die for us, should give us exalted views of what we might become through Christ. As the inspired apostle John beholds the height, the depth, the breadth of the Father's love toward the perishing race, He is filled with adoration and reverence; and failing to find suitable language in which to express this love, He calls upon the church and the world to behold it. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." [1 John 3:1.] What a value this places upon man!

Through transgression, the sons of men became subjects of Satan. Through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, the sons of Adam may become the sons of God. By assuming human nature, Christ elevates humanity. Fallen men are granted another trial and are placed where, through connection with Christ, they may indeed become worthy of the name, "sons of God."

Such love is without a parallel. Children of the heavenly King! Precious promise! Theme for the most profound meditation! The amazing love of God for a world that did not love Him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul, and brings the mind into captivity to the will of God. The more we study the divine character in the light of the cross, the more we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice, and the more clearly we discern innumerable evidences of a love that is infinite, and a tender pity surpassing a mother's yearning sympathy for her wayward child.

“Every human tie may perish,
Friend to friend unfaithful prove,
Mothers cease their own to cherish,
Heaven and earth at last remove;
But no change
Can attend Jehovah’s love.”

But to make known to man the love of God and to bring them to share His grace—even this was not the only purpose of the Saviour’s life of suffering and death of shame. Results of yet deeper significance, of infinitely greater extent, flow from the sacrifice of the Son of God. By the death of Christ, not only is man set free from Satan’s power and uplifted from the pit of ruin, but the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law, are vindicated before the universe.

The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission and unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience. “Come now and let us reason together,” is the Creator’s invitation to the beings He has made. Isaiah 1:18. God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. He desires that all the inhabitants of the universe shall be convinced of His justice in the final overthrow of rebellion and the eradication of sin. He purposes that the real nature and direful effects of sin shall be clearly manifested, to the end that all may be assured of the wisdom and justice of the divine government.

When man, beguiled by Satan, disobeyed the divine law, God could not, even to save a lost race, change that law. God is love; His law is an expression of His character. To change His law would be to deny Himself; it would overthrow those principles with which are bound up the well-being of the entire universe. But in order to save the sinner, the Creator sacrificed Himself. The Father suffered in His Son. The measure of God’s love is Christ. The Saviour’s sacrifice was not to create in God a love that had not before existed; it was but the expression of a love which had not been appreciated or understood.

The Son of God, in becoming man’s substitute, and bearing the curse which should fall upon man, pledged Himself, in behalf of the race, to maintain the honor of the law of God. The Father has given the world into the hands of Christ, that through His mediatorial work He may save the sinner, and completely vindicate the claims of the [law]. His mission was to convince men of sin, which is the transgression of the law, and through the merits of His blood, and by His mediation, He was to bring them back to obedience. Through the sacrifice of Christ the law could be maintained, and the sinner could be pardoned, not only freed

from the power of sin, but “renewed after the image of him that created him.” Colossians 3:10.

The love and justice of God, and also the immutability of His law, are made manifest by the Saviour’s life, no less than by His death. He assumed human nature, with its infirmities, its liabilities, its temptations. “Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.” Matthew 8:17. “In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.” Hebrews 2:17. He was “in all points tempted like as we are.” Hebrews 2:16. He exercised in His own behalf no power which man cannot exercise. As man He met temptation and overcame in the strength given Him of God. He gives us an example of perfect obedience. He has provided that we may become partakers of the divine nature, and assures us that we may overcome as He overcame. His life testified that by the aid of the same divine power which Christ received, it is possible for man to obey God’s law.

In Christ were united the divine and the human. The Creator and the creature, the nature of God, whose law had been transgressed, the nature of Adam, the transgressor, meet in Jesus—the Son of God, and the Son of man. And having with His own blood paid the price of redemption, having passed through man’s experience, having in man’s behalf met and conquered temptation, having, though Himself sinless, borne the shame and guilt and burden of sin, He becomes man’s Advocate and Intercessor. What an assurance here to the tempted and struggling soul, what an assurance to the witnessing universe, that Christ will be, “A merciful and faithful high priest.” Hebrews 2:17.

What an assurance also that He will be a righteous, a just, and compassionate judge. He who has measure the power of every subtle temptation of man’s cruel foe, who has borne every weakness to which man is subject, He who is a brother in our infirmities—will He not deal justly and tenderly with the soul that His own blood has been poured out to save? And such is the teaching of His own words when He said that the Father had “given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” John 5:27.

The working out of the great plan of redemption, as manifest in the history of this world, is not only to men but to angels, a revelation of the Father. Here is seen the work of Satan in the degradation and ruin of the race by sin, and, on the other hand, the work of God in man’s recovery and uplifting through the grace of Christ. Every soul that develops a righteous character and withstands the power of the wicked one is a testimony to the falsehood of Satan’s charges against the divine government.

Through the eternal ages the exaltation of the redeemed will be a testimony to God’s love and mercy. This is set forth in the touching and

beautiful words of the apostle Paul. He says that “we are a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men.” 1 Corinthians 4:9. “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,... that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 2:4-7.

And the apostle desires “to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery,... to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.” Ephesians 3:[9], 10. R. V.

Through the eternal ages the offensive character of sin will be seen in what it cost the Father and the Son in the humiliation, suffering, and death of Christ. All the worlds will behold in Him a living testimony to the malignity of sin, for in His divine form He bears the marks of the curse. He is in the midst of the throne as the Lamb that had been slain.

Not only men but angels will ascribe honor and glory to the Redeemer, for even they are secure only through the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the inhabitants of unfallen worlds have been guarded from apostasy. It is this that has effectually unveiled the deceptions of Satan and refuted His claims. Not only those that are washed by the blood of Christ, but also the holy angels, are drawn to Him by His crowning act of giving His life for the sins of the world. God’s dealing with the rebellion of Satan is justified before the universe. The justice and mercy of God are fully vindicated, so that to all eternity, rebellion will never again arise.

Such is the import of His own words when, for the last time teaching in the temple, He said, looking forward to His approaching sacrifice, “now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me.” [John 12:31, 32.] “Will draw all unto me”—not only earth, but heaven, for of Him “The whole family in heaven and earth is named.” Ephesians 3:15.

Thus God has “made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to the good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that... he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.” Ephesians 1:9, 10.

Signs of the Times, February 22, 1899

The Measure of God's Love

“Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for My Father is greater than I.” “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.... He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.... If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.”

This is an expression of God's love for fallen man. By these words our Saviour places in our hands a line enabling us to sound something of the depths of His infinite love, and prove the sincerity of our love for Him. The finite mind can not comprehend this love in all its depth and magnitude. As we study the sufferings of Christ, the results of sin are so distressing to us that we cry out to the Lord to take away our sins. As we continue to look, we become more capable of enduring the sight of what Christ suffered, and we realize more and more clearly His love for us. The cross of Christ is invested with a wonderful attraction and unlimited power; for in the suffering connected with the crucifixion scene, God's love becomes to us more and more impressive.

Through disobedience to God's command Adam fell from his loyalty. Thus he opened the flood-gates of woe upon our world. His posterity perpetuated his sin, while they found fault with their first parents. The depth to which men fell justified the employment of great means to procure a ransom. God saw that man could never rescue and restore himself. Therefore He exercised His divine benevolence to the fullest extent to redeem those who had lost their connection with Him. He “so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God's love exceeds the love of an earthly father. It can be measured only by the power and strength of His character. Proportionate to His power was His infinite compassion for fallen men, and His desire to restore in them His image. The high and holy One, who inhabiteth eternity, travailed in the greatness of His power and in His immeasurable love to rescue fallen man.

Only by the gift of God's Son could the ransom of the human race be obtained. Without this sacrifice, all that remained for man was

death in his sins. But by giving His life for the life of the world, Christ bridged the gulf that sin had made, joining this sin-cursed earth to the universe of heaven as a province. God chose this world to be the theater of His mighty work of grace. While the sentence of condemnation was suspended over it because of the rebellion of its inhabitants, while the clouds of wrath were accumulating because of transgression of God's law, a strange and mysterious voice was heard in heaven: "Lo, I come... to do Thy will, O God." "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me."

"The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old," Christ says. "When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." But the only-begotten Son of God humbled Himself to come to this earth. He took the sinner's place; the guiltless suffered for the guilty. This was the hiding of His glory. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death."

God accepted the death of His Son to save a rebellious race. But in this was there no sacrifice made by the Father? The Creator Himself, the Omnipotent God, suffered with His Son. Abraham was permitted to know something of the meaning of this great sacrifice. He is called the father of the faithful, because he carried out in heart purpose the fearful test, as fully as if he had by his own hand taken the life of his son.

Our Substitute and Surety came from heaven, declaring that He had brought with Him the vast and inestimable donation of eternal life. Pardon is offered to all who will return to their allegiance to the law of God. But Satan has called this world his territory. Here his seat is, and he holds in allegiance to himself all who refuse to keep God's commandments, who reject a plain. "Thus saith the Lord." There are but two parties in this world. All rank either under the banner of the obedient or the banner of the disobedient. Those who have given their allegiance to Satan make rigorous human enactments, in opposition to God's commands, and by precept and example strive to lead their fellow-beings into sin. They exalt the laws of men above the divine law. Over them the condemnation of God is suspended. The clouds of His justice are gathering. The material of destruction has been piling up for ages; and apostasy, rebellion, and disloyalty are continually increasing. The remnant people of God will understand the word spoken by Daniel, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

The Lord made the richest gift He could make in giving His only-begotten Son to the world. Why then are not more grace and power given to the church? Man by his own choice has severed himself from God. His mind and soul are so bound up in Satan's plans that he is palsied. He is incapable of appreciating, appropriating, or imparting the elements of divine life. A connection with the deceiver, who was so long in the heavenly courts, makes him ingenious to pervert the blessings given him, and to employ them as weapons against God. Therefore the Lord can not venture to bestow upon man the blessings that He otherwise would.

Jesus is now sending His message to a fallen world. He delights to take apparently hopeless material, those through whom Satan has worked, and make them the subjects of His grace. He rejoices to deliver them from the wrath that is to fall upon the disobedient. He has committed Himself to the work of our redemption. He resolved that He would spare nothing, however costly, withhold nothing, however dear, which would restore the moral image of God in man. And He holds in store gift upon gift, waiting for the proper channels through which He can communicate the treasures of eternal life.

Signs of the Times, December 23, 1897

The Love of God

But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things; his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

The great plan of redemption was laid before the foundation of the world. And Christ, our Substitute and Surety, did not stand alone in the wondrous undertaking of the ransom of man. In the plan to save a lost world, the counsel was between them both; the covenant of peace was between the Father and the Son. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, would become a servant. The only-begotten Son, in whom the Father delighted, was given for the ransom of a fallen race.

Those who represent God the Father as unloving, ready to break forth on his sinful creatures in vindictive wrath, do not speak the truth. In his prayer to his Father, Christ said, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee." The world has measured God by their own finite measurement. They have misjudged and misinterpreted his truth and righteousness. But Christ could say, "I have known thee, for I have been in the secret chambers of the Most High." If the world had been admitted into the counsels of God, they would have one and only one testimony to bear, and that is, "God is love."

The Father gave himself to the world in the gift of his Son. It was the love of the Father for fallen man that devised in union with the Son the plan of redemption. And in this great gift the character of God is exemplified to all who shall receive the world's Redeemer by faith, as a God of holiness and a God of love. In the crucifixion of his dear Son upon the cross of Calvary, he gives to all the sons and daughters of Adam an expression of his justice and his love. This offering made manifest the immutability of the holiness of his law. In the cross of Calvary justice and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

The Lord God omnipotent is the God of his people. He is also a tender, loving Father, ready to hear their prayers; for God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto

them. God sent forth his Son to be the propitiation for them through faith in his atoning blood.

The Cause of Christ's Suffering

What was the cause of the suffering of God's dear Son in the garden of Gethsemane—suffering so intense that it forced from his lips words that revealed the greatest mental distress: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?" Christ had often sought the Father in his trouble and anguish of Spirit, as he beheld with keen distress the situation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Often in the lonely mountains he had prayed most earnestly, with strong crying and tears, because of all the people on the face of the earth, none were so filled with bitterness and hatred against him as were those who had been favored with every temporal and spiritual advantage. This was the people for whom the Son of God had done so much, in order that they might become a treasure-house of rich truth, to impart the same to the world. And this people, who claimed to know God, were opening their hearts to the attributes of Satan.

To Christ these things were a terrible trial. He had suffered insult from the hands of the men whom he came to bless and save, he had been charged with being linked with Beelzebub, that his miracles of healing were wrought through Satanic agencies, but these things did not cause him the intense agony of soul that he was now suffering. He was bearing the penalty of transgression for a guilty world. This proceeded not from Satan nor from man. It is best described in the words of the prophet, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

The spirit that the Pharisees manifested toward Christ has been manifested through all ages by those who claim to believe present truth. They have watched for some word or action which they could use to the disadvantage of the messengers whom God has sent to reprove, rebuke, and reform them from their evil works. And when sin has been reproved, their hatred has become as deeply rooted as it was in the hearts of the Pharisees.

"And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered

and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”

This demonstration on this occasion was answering to the prophetic past: “O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!” The priests and elders would fain have robbed Jesus of this adoration, but prophecy must be fulfilled. If the voice of his people were silent, Christ declared God would put a voice in the stones, and the proclamation would be made in his behalf, “Behold your God.”

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” At the time when the enthusiastic multitude were gazing upon Jerusalem, the metropolis of the world, the temple with its towers rising toward heaven, gilded with the rays of the fast westering sun, a strange note was brought in amid the general rejoicing, a cry of human agony, followed by the irrevocable sentence upon Jerusalem. Jerusalem’s day will soon be ended.

God’s Message Now

Who now will hold their peace when the very work which God has foretold should be done is being accomplished? “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

The truth of the third angel’s message has been proclaimed by some as a dry theory. But we must all place in that message Christ, as the first and the last, the I AM, the bright and morning Star. The message must be given, “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” The second coming of Christ is near, even at the door. Who are prepared to look upon the bright and Morning-star? Who are ready to glorify God? Who will bring the bright and morning-star of hope, of mercy, of forgiveness, and of peace into their own hearts, and proclaim the last message of mercy to be given to the world? “O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!”

God’s people must give to the world a representation of the character of God in Jesus Christ. The Christian churches are fast losing their

knowledge of God. His character has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. But a message has come from God which must be proclaimed. The trumpet must give a certain sound. "I Jesus have sent mine angel to proclaim these things to the churches." The truth, the revelation which Jesus gave to John, must be sounded forth everywhere. "Lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you that these things shall come unto this generation. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Our work is now to rouse the people. Satan with all his angels has come down with great power, to work with every conceivable deception to counterwork the work of God. The Lord has a message for his people. This message will be borne, whether men will accept or reject it. As in the days of Christ, there will be the deep plottings of the powers of darkness, but the message must not be muffled with smooth words or fair speeches, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace, to those who are turning away from God. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."

A Warning Example

This whole chapter is applicable to those who are living in this period of the earth's history. Consider this chapter attentively; for it will be fulfilled. At this time the message is to come to the people to warn them against being one of the number represented by Jesus Christ as fulfilling the prophecy: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." "Watch

therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The life of Christ, in its self-denial and self-sacrifice, is to be made manifest at this time. This is the time when there should be decided testimonies borne by all of God's commandment-keeping people. "Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." This is our message to every family who claims to know the truth, "Be ye also ready." Self must die. The appetites and passions must be brought into strict conformity to the Word of God. Selfish indulgence is weakening physical, mental, and moral power, so that there is no distinction between the sacred and the common. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

The Bible Echo, November 25, 1895

The Love of God

How is it possible to set forth the love of God in giving His only begotten Son to die for sinners? The imagination cannot comprehend it. Men of the brightest intellects cannot, by mere speculative knowledge, form any conception of this love. Without a personal knowledge of God, men of the most brilliant intellects are unable to set forth divine things. They do not look through nature up to nature's God, and see the expression of His love to man in the flowers of the field, which adorn the world with speaking beauty and loveliness. They know little of the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the love of God as revealed in giving His Son to our world, and they trace the expression of His love in nature with sleepy, benumbed senses. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has not yet shined into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

God has declared His love; Jesus Christ is the expression of that love. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." O what love, what infinite love! "While we were yet sinners," the Father pitied and loved us. And yet when we are pressed with trials, how weak is our faith.

The soul that keeps far off does not have communion with Heaven, though the Holy Spirit is promised to all who ask it. Jesus has brought this precious lesson within the comprehension of all: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

The love of God is so deep, so full, that it could only be expressed in giving for our sakes His own beloved Son to poverty, to shame, to humiliation, to mockery, and to death. He was the most costly and precious offering that could be given to the world, and in Him all heaven was given. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Through Christ the way was made safe for God and man. God's justice and honour are maintained, every divine attribute is exalted and most clearly defined, while salvation and righteousness are brought to light for every creature.

Herein is the mystery of redemption, that the innocent, pure, and holy Son of the infinite God was permitted to bear the punishment of a thankless race of rebels against the divine government; that through the manifestation of His matchless love, these rebels might be inspired with faith in, and love for God, and might stand before Him repentant, forgiven, guiltless, as if they had never sinned. Angels in heaven marvelled that the wrath of God should be laid on His well-beloved Son; that a life of infinite value in the heavenly courts should be given for the worthless life of a race degraded by sin.

The heir of God came to our world in the garb of humanity, as one of humble origin, as one who serves. When the time was drawing near that He should pour out His life on the cross, His love was revealed in the words, "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth." Not only was He to die, but he knew precisely the shame, the humiliation, He would have to suffer, the cruel treatment He should receive. There was no compulsion in bringing Him to the ignominious death on the cross; yet He made His soul an offering for sin. The mind of God to save the world was the mind of Christ. His own love was one with that of the Father, and that love constrained Him.

Herein is the love of God manifested, inexpressible, immeasurable, and passing knowledge. The human mind cannot grasp it in its fulness; but we should put forth the most earnest efforts of which we are capable, that we may communicate redeeming love to others. Eternity, all eternity, will unfold that love, and then we shall know what here we cannot comprehend.

Prophecy Waymarks Publications
Biblical Publications by Seventh-day Adventists

2076 Heritage Way, Addy, WA 99101

Website: prophecywaymarks.com

E-mail: prophecywaymarks@gmail.com

Phone: 406.594.1710

