

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS



THE GODHEAD

FATHER | SON | HOLY SPIRIT



FATHER

THE SOURCE
OF ALL



SON

THE REDEEMER
OF ALL



HOLY SPIRIT

THE COMFORTER
OF ALL



*Second Half 2026
July to December*

ADVENT PILGRIMS FELLOWSHIP

A TREATISE ON THE GODHEAD

Second Half 2026
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SECTION 1

**THE GOD WE
WORSHIP**

Introduction

THE SUBJECT OF THE GODHEAD has gathered momentum in Adventism by certain parties among the independent movements who claim to uphold the pioneer platform of truth. After the disappointment of 1844, Adventism developed out of the Protestant denominations governed by their discovery of the Biblical description of the sanctuary in heaven which the Hebrew one was a copy of. Spirit of Prophecy inspiration reveals this as the groundswell of a system of truth in the following words:

“The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people.”

“But the people were not yet ready to meet their Lord. There was still a work of preparation to be accomplished for them. Light was to be given, directing their minds to the temple of God in heaven; and as they should by faith follow their High Priest in His ministration there, new duties would be revealed. Another message of warning and instruction was to be given to the church.” (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 423, 424.)

The system of truth was declared by Inspiration to accumulate over a period of fifty years as the movement came out of the errors inherited from their former churches. Many of the doctrines of the Protestant churches still were marred by their previous association with the papal church. As the Advent movement progressed in their discovery of that system of truth, Sunday worship was replaced by the seventh-day Sabbath; the state of the dead and the falsehood of eternal torment in hell was corrected as also many other Biblical truths and practices.

One distinctive papal doctrine, the Trinity, came to the attention of the pioneers which gradually also had to be carefully disentangled and replaced by the Biblical representation of the Godhead. As already mentioned, this among all the other clarifications of doctrine, took a period of fifty years to establish, according to the following:

“What influence is it would lead men at this stage of our history to work in an underhand, powerful way to tear down the foundation of our faith--the foundation that was laid at the beginning of our work by prayerful study of the Word and by revelation? Upon this foundation we have been building for the past fifty years.”

“Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord.” (*Selected Messages Book 1*, pp. 207, 208.)

As they rejected the papal rendition of the Trinitarian doctrine, it can be demonstrated that it took a period of time within those fifty years by prayerful study to seek out point by point the true nature of the Godhead as God signified it through His word and the testimony of His Spirit.

It is the design of this section of the Sabbath school lessons to establish point by point the Biblical truth of the Godhead that was obtained over those fifty years.

May God enlighten us by His Spirit to come into correct harmony with the pioneers of Adventism on this subject.

To Know God

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3

OBJECTIVES

- To ascertain the importance of the knowledge of God.
- To examine the meaning of the knowledge God wants us to have of Him.
- To expand on this knowledge of God.

SAVING KNOWLEDGE

1. How succinctly did Jesus connect our salvation with the knowledge of God? John 17:3

“A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. It is this alone that can make us like God in character.

“This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 409.

“A knowledge of God and of Christ is positively essential to salvation.” —*This Day With God*, p. 135.

2. Does the apostle Peter expand upon the knowledge of God in its relation to our salvation? 2 Pet. 1:2-4

“Wonderful inducements are held out to us to lead us to strive to attain to the glory and virtue manifested in Christ. Every encouragement is offered. Every provision has been made that we may be so conformed to the divine character that Christ can take us to live with Him in heaven. Exceeding great and precious promises have been made to us, but they are fulfilled to us only as we gain a knowledge of God. Divine knowledge is given to those who become partakers of the divine nature. Those who are saved must in this life gain a fitness to dwell with the royal family in the courts of heaven.”

—*Manuscript Releases Vol. 14*, p. 347.

3. In the light of the answers to questions one and two, how significant are the words of Jeremiah 9:23-24?

“Having received the faith of the gospel, . . . the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character. Through the knowledge of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ, are given to the believer "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." No good gift is withheld from him who sincerely desires to obtain the righteousness of God.

“"This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). And the prophet Jeremiah declared: . . . "I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:24). Scarcely can the human mind comprehend the

breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments of him who gains this knowledge.” —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 314.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, ITS MEANING

4. To know the doctrine of God correctly, does Jesus qualify its attainability? John 7:16, 17

“There are glorious truths to come before the people of God. Privileges and duties which they do not even suspect to be in the Bible will be laid open before the followers of Christ. As they follow on in the path of humble obedience, doing God's will, they will know more and more of the oracles of God, and be established in right doctrines.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 114.

“The knowledge of God comes from the doing of the things required in God's law.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 12*, p. 215.

5. Does the Spirit of Prophecy clarify the meaning behind the knowledge of God which Jesus qualified? Ps. 111:10

“In His prayer to the Father, Christ gave to the world a lesson which should be graven on mind and soul. "This is life eternal," He said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 114.

A LIVING KNOWLEDGE

6. What in living terms shall we do to experience the knowledge of God? Prov. 2:3-5

“This is the knowledge which is obtained by searching the word of God. And this treasure may be found by every soul who will give all to obtain it.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 114.

7. If the knowledge of God must be obtained by an experimental relationship with Him, is there something about God that can be experienced? 1 John 4:7, 8, 16

“What we need is to know God and the power of His love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. We must search the Scriptures diligently, prayerfully; our understanding must be quickened by the Holy Spirit, and our hearts must be uplifted to God in faith and hope and continual praise.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 743.

MEDITATION

“O what an assurance is this, that the love of God may abide in the hearts of all who believe in Him! O what salvation is provided; for He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. In wonder we exclaim, How can these things be? But Jesus will be satisfied with nothing less than this. Those who are partakers of His sufferings here, of His humiliation, enduring for His name's sake, are to have the love of God bestowed upon them as it was upon the Son. One who knows, has said, "The Father himself loveth you." One who has had an experimental knowledge of the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of that love, has declared unto us this amazing fact. This love is ours through faith in

the Son of God, therefore a connection with Christ means everything to us. We are to be one with Him as He is one with the Father, and then we are beloved by the infinite God as members of the body of Christ, as branches of the living Vine. We are to be attached to the parent stock, and to receive nourishment from the Vine. Christ is our glorified Head, and the divine love flowing from the heart of God, rests in Christ, and is communicated to those who have been united to Him. This divine love entering the soul inspires it with gratitude, frees it from its spiritual feebleness, from pride, vanity, and selfishness, and from all that would deform the Christian character.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 178.

Importance of True Worship

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4:24

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the meaning of worship.
- To let Scripture stipulate the true worship of God.
- To show the attributes of God worthy to worship.

THE MEANING OF WORSHIP

1. With which words does Inspiration define the activity of worship? Acts 17:23; 2 Thess. 1:10

“There are in our time continual repetitions of Belshazzar's feast and Belshazzar's worship; and Belshazzar's sin is repeated when the heart, which God requires to be given to Him in pure and holy devotion, is turned away from Him to worship a human being, and the lips are made to utter words of praise and adoration which belong alone to the Lord God of heaven. When the affections God claims to cluster about Him are made to center upon earthly objects,—a woman, a man, or any earthly things,—God is superseded by the object which enchains the senses and affections, and the powers which were solemnly dedicated to God are bestowed upon a human being who is defiled with sin.” —*Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 435.

2. What other word is associated with worship? Ps. 97:7

“The religion that comes from God is the only religion that can lead to God. In order to serve Him aright, we must be born of the Divine Spirit. This will lead to watchfulness. It will purify the heart and renew the mind, and give us a new capacity for knowing and loving God. It will give us willing obedience to all His requirements. This is true worship.” —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 37.

TRUE WORSHIP OF GOD

3. How specifically does Scripture identify who alone is to be worshipped? Ex. 34:14; 20:3

“In the last days of this earth's history the voice that spoke from Sinai is still declaring, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Man has set his will against the will of God, but he cannot silence the word of command. The human mind cannot evade its obligation to a higher power. Theories and speculations may abound; men may try to set science in opposition to revelation, and thus do away with God's law; but stronger and still stronger comes the command, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matthew 4:10).” —*Lift Him Up*, p. 165.

4. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, did He refer to this Bible stipulation? Matt. 4:8-10

“We have a work to do, to go to the people who have souls to lose or souls to save. What are the terms of salvation? "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." This we will keep ever before us.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 5*, p. 42.

ATTRIBUTES TO WORSHIP

5. Why is the God of the Bible the only one to receive worship? Ps. 100:2, 3; 86:8-10

“The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God”—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.”—J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 437.

6. If only God is to receive worship, who does that include, and why? Heb. 1:1-6

“Lift up Jesus. In him is everything noble. Contemplate God in Christ. He is surrounded with angels, cherubim and seraphim continually behold him. Angelic voices day and night cry before him: “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.... Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” “Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not

fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee." But although God only is holy and worthy to be praised, human tongues are perverted to praise and glorify man rather than God." —*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 30, 1889.

**7. What attributes are shared equally by Jesus and the Father that make Him worthy of the worship attributable to God alone?
John 14:8-11; 20:28**

“Christ will be acknowledged as the Creator and Redeemer. Those who are laborers together with God will be recognized and appreciated. The recognition of the faithful servants of God detracts not one iota from the gratitude and praise we offer to God and to the Lamb.” —*Medical Ministry*, p. 129.

“Christ has purchased the affections; will you trifle with them, will you pervert them? Will you place them upon unworthy objects, center them upon human beings and make the creature instead of the Creator your god to worship? Or shall your affections be purified, ennobled, refined, and made to twine about your Creator and Redeemer?” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 63.

MEDITATION

“The Lord would have us individually search the Scriptures that we may become acquainted with the great plan of redemption and take in the grand subject as far as it is possible for the human mind, enlightened by the Spirit of God, to understand the purpose of God. He would have us comprehend something of His love in giving His Son to die that He might counteract evil, remove the defiling stains of sin from the workmanship of God, and reinstate the lost, elevating and ennobling the soul to its original purity through Christ's imputed righteousness. The only way in which the fallen race could be restored was through the gift of His Son, equal with Himself, possessing the attributes of God. . . .

“God has endowed humanity with attributes whereby we may appreciate God, and though man has revolted from God and has endeavored to supply

the place of God with other objects of worship, the true God alone can fill the wants of the soul.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 206.

“The wants of the soul, only the love of Christ can satisfy.” —*Be Like Jesus*, p. 261.

Our Human Incapacity

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:8, 9

OBJECTIVES

- To come to acknowledge the difficulty in coming to know God.
- To let God's word expand upon the distance of God from sinful minds.
- To discover God's efforts to reach our minds.

HUMAN SHORTFALL

- 1. Although God has called us to come to a knowledge of Him, does He however make us aware of our inability to achieve this unaided? Isa. 55:8-11**

“As the disciples searched the prophecies that testified of Christ, they were brought into fellowship with the Deity, and learned of Him who had ascended to heaven to complete the work He had begun on earth. They recognized the fact that in Him dwelt knowledge which no human being, unaided by divine agency, could comprehend. They needed the help of Him whom kings, prophets, and righteous men had foretold.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 507.

- 2. Did the apostle Paul express this human inability to reach this knowledge? Rom. 11:33-36**

““The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. If He reveals Himself at all to men, it is by veiling Himself in mystery. His ways are past finding out. Men must be ever searching, ever learning; and yet there is an infinity beyond. Could they fully understand the purposes, wisdom, love, and character of God, they would not believe in Him as an infinite being, and trust Him with the interests of their souls. If they could fathom Him, He would no longer stand supreme.” —*Selected Messages Book 3*, p. 306.

AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE KNOWLEDGE

3. Was there a truth expressed to Job which afterwards God enlarged to him? Job 11:7-9; 38:1-7

“No finite mind can fully comprehend the existence, the power, the wisdom, or the works of the Infinite One. Says the sacred writer: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." [Job 11:7-9.] The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. Men may be ever searching, ever learning, and still there is an infinity beyond.” —*Christian Education*, p. 196.

4. In God’s challenges to Job in chapters 38 to 41, what will we with Job be provoked to acknowledge? Job 42:1-6

“God takes the case of Job in hand Himself. His patience has been severely taxed; but when God speaks, all his pettish feelings are changed. The self-justification which he felt was necessary to withstand the condemnation of his friends is not necessary toward God. He never misjudges; He never errs. Says the Lord to Job, "Gird up now thy loins like a man;" and Job no sooner hears the divine voice than his soul is bowed down with a sense of his sinfulness, and he says before God, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 3, p. 509.*

**5. What is it that disables us to comprehend the knowledge of God?
Isa. 59:2**

“The transgression of man had separated earth from heaven, and finite man from the infinite God. As an island is separated from a continent, so earth was cut off from heaven, and a wide channel intervened between man and God.” —*That I May Know Him, p. 82.*

GOD’S INTERVENTION

6. Has God provided a way by which this gulf or barrier can be bridged? Matt. 4:16; John 1:51

“God's love for the world was not manifest because He sent His Son, but because He loved the world He sent His Son into the world that divinity clothed with humanity might touch humanity, while divinity lays hold of divinity. Though sin had produced a gulf between man and his God, a divine benevolence provided a plan to bridge that gulf. And what material did He use? A part of Himself. The brightness of the Father's glory came to a world all seared and marred with the curse, and in His own divine character, in His own divine body, bridged the gulf. . . . The windows of

heaven were opened and the showers of heavenly grace in healing streams came to our benighted world.” —*Our High Calling*, p. 12.

“Through Christ, restoration as well as reconciliation is provided for man. The gulf that was made by sin has been spanned by the cross of Calvary.” —*Faith and Works*, p. 93.

7. Is there something required of us to benefit from the provision of heaven? Prov. 2:3-5, 9

“Conversion is a change of heart, a turning from unrighteousness to righteousness. Relying upon the merits of Christ, exercising true faith in Him, the repentant sinner receives pardon for sin. As he ceases to do evil and learns to do well, he grows in grace and in the knowledge of God. He sees that in order to follow Jesus he must separate from the world, and after counting the cost, he looks upon all as loss if he may but win Christ. He enlists in His army and bravely and cheerfully engages in the warfare, fighting against natural inclinations and selfish desires and bringing the will into subjection to the will of Christ. Daily he seeks the Lord for grace, and he is strengthened and helped. Self once reigned in his heart, and worldly pleasure was his delight. Now self is dethroned, and God reigns supreme. His life reveals the fruit of righteousness. The sins he once loved he now hates. Firmly and resolutely he follows in the path of holiness. This is genuine conversion.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 20.

MEDITATION

“No man, without divine aid, can attain to this knowledge of God. The apostle says that "the world by wisdom knew not God." Christ "was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Jesus declared to His disciples: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." In that last prayer for His followers, before entering the shadows of Gethsemane, the Saviour lifted His eyes to heaven, and in pity for the ignorance of fallen men He said: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee." "I have

manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world." — *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5, p. 737.*

Dependence on Revelation

He revealeth the deep and secret things. Daniel 2:22

OBJECTIVES

- To know that to understand God, we need His illumination.
- To train our minds to rely upon clear scriptural declarations.
- To guard against misuse of Scripture.

OUR DEPENDENCE

- 1. What is it that we are depending on to obtain a knowledge of God? John 5:39; Ps. 119:169**

“But it is in the written word that a knowledge of God is most clearly revealed to fallen man. This is the treasure house of the unsearchable riches of Christ.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 126.

“God has revealed himself to us in his word and in the works of creation. Through the volume of inspiration and the book of nature, we are to obtain a knowledge of God.” —*Christian Education*, p. 64.

- 2. Are there dangers for us in trying to understand God unaided by the word and His Holy Spirit? Ps. 119:130; Prov. 5:1, 2**

“There are deep mysteries in the word of God, which will never be discovered by minds that are unaided by the Spirit of God.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 4*, p. 444.

“All who trust to the boastful decisions of human reason and imagine that they can explain divine mysteries and arrive at truth unaided by the wisdom of God are entangled in the snare of Satan.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 600.

CONCISE SCRIPTURES

3. How are we admonished to gather the evidences of Scripture on any point of truth? Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 28:9, 10; 34:16

“The Scriptures were given to men, not in a continuous chain of unbroken utterances, but piece by piece through successive generations, as God in His providence saw a fitting opportunity to impress man at sundry times and divers places. Men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. There is "first the bud, then the blossom, and next the fruit," "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." This is exactly what the Bible utterances are to us.” —*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 19.

“You need to gather every ray of light that you can find upon the essential points of truth, and then when you are speaking, make the most of these points. Give them all the force you can by presenting them in a clear, concise manner, fastening down the evidence on these points like a nail in a sure place. Make a straight, clear application, and then call for a decision.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 18*, p. 43

4. In gathering the concise scripture texts describing the truth of God, can we arrive at a true appreciation of the Godhead? 1 John 5:7; Isa. 48:16

“In Christ Jesus is a revelation of the glory of the Godhead. All that the human agent can know of God to the saving of the soul, is the measure of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, to which he can attain; for Christ is he who represents the Father. The most wonderful truth to be grasped by men is the truth, "Immanuel, God with us." Christ is the wisdom of God. He is the great "I AM" to the world. As we contemplate the glory of the divine character as revealed in Christ, we are led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" This wisdom is displayed in the love that reaches out for the recovery of lost and ruined man.” —*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 12, 1895.

THE MISUSE OF SCRIPTURES

- 5. Because we are instructed to use God’s word precept upon precept, line upon line, what other instruction are we to heed?
2 Tim. 2:14, 15**

“We must cherish carefully the words of our God lest we be contaminated by the deceptive workings of those who have left the faith. We are to resist their spirit and influence with the same weapon our Master used when assailed by the prince of darkness--"It is written." We should learn to use the Word of God skilfully. The exhortation is, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." There must be diligent work and earnest prayer and faith to meet the winding error of false teachers and seducers; for "in the last days perilous times shall come."” —*Evangelism*, p. 625.

- 6. What is the danger of bypassing concise Bible texts and using those that can appear ambiguous in meaning? Isa. 28:12, 13**

“Many will honestly search the Word for Light as those in the past have searched it; and they see light in the Word. But they did not pass over the ground in their experience, when these messages of warning were first proclaimed. Not having had this experience, some do not appreciate the value of the truths that have been to us as waymarks, and that have made us as a peculiar people what we are. They do not make a right application of the Scriptures, and thus they frame theories that are not correct. It is true that they quote an abundance of Scripture, and teach much that is true; but truth is so mixed with error as to lead to wrong conclusions. Yet because they can weave Scripture into their theories, they think that they have a straight chain of truth. Many who did not have an experience in the rise of the messages, accept these erroneous theories, and are led into false paths, backward instead of forward. This is the enemy's design.” —*Selected Messages Book 2*, p. 110.

7. Deriving our understanding from question 6, what should we pay heed to? 2 Pet. 1:20, 21

“It is all-important that we each have an eye single to discern and understand from the heart the high things of God; for even that which we have before considered to be light may be found to be sparks of our own kindling [Isaiah 50:11]. Man cannot possibly interpret the Scriptures correctly by his own light, and measure them by his own narrow comprehension. "Let no man deceive himself.” —*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, p. 76.

Establishing Bible Deduction

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

OBJECTIVES

- To expand upon how the Bible is to be studied.
- To give a sample of Bible deduction of truth.
- To sharpen our skill of Bible interpretation.

THE SKILL REQUIRED

- 1. Does the Bible call upon diligent skill in the study of its pages?**
2 Tim. 2:15; Prov. 23:12

“The mind will enlarge, if it is employed in tracing out the relation of the subjects of the Bible, comparing scripture with scripture, and spiritual things with spiritual. Go below the surface; the richest treasures of thought are waiting for the skilful and diligent student.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 126.

- 2. What is the work of the minister for the flock of God? Jer. 3:15; Eccl. 12:10, 11**

“The work of the minister must be approved of God. He must live and work as in his sight, having an eye single to his glory. He must study,

watch, pray, and search the Scriptures; and practical godliness must appear in his life. God requires that his hired servants shall be workmen of the highest order.

“What is the work of the minister of the gospel? It is to rightly divide the word of truth; not to invent a new gospel, but to rightly divide the gospel already committed to them.” —*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 11, 1888.

3. Is the minister responsible to impart the skill of Bible study to those under his care? 2 Tim. 2:24; Titus 1:9

“Our ministers who have gone to important places to hold tent-meetings, have often made a serious mistake in devoting all their time to sermonizing. There should be less preaching and more teaching, --teaching the people, and also teaching young men how to labor successfully. Ministers should become efficient in teaching others how to study the Bible, and in training the minds and manners of those who would become workers in the cause of God. And they should be ready to counsel and instruct those who have newly come to the faithful, and who give promise of possessing ability to work for the Master.” —*Gospel Workers*, p. 76.

HOW TO STUDY

4. Having already covered the meaning of Isaiah 28:9-10, is there further detail to guide the Bible student? Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 34:16

“The Bible should never be studied without prayer.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 599.

“As our physical life is sustained by food, so our spiritual life is sustained by the word of God. And every soul is to receive life from God's word for himself. As we must eat for ourselves in order to receive nourishment, so

we must receive the word for ourselves. We are not to obtain it merely through the medium of another's mind. We should carefully study the Bible, asking God for the aid of the Holy Spirit, that we may understand His word. We should take one verse, and concentrate the mind on the task of ascertaining the thought which God has put in that verse for us. We should dwell upon the thought until it becomes our own, and we know "what saith the Lord." —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 390.

5. When coming across scriptures that are ambiguous, what counsel is given to find their true meaning? 2 Pet. 1:20

“The apostle says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The Bible is its own expositor. One passage will prove to be a key that will unlock other passages, and in this way light will be shed upon the hidden meaning of the word. By comparing different texts treating on the same subject, viewing their bearing on every side, the true meaning of the Scriptures will be made evident.” —*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 187.

“The Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts...” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 203.

AN EXAMPLE

6. Is it possible to interpret the following texts to mean that the Father gave birth to a Son? John 1:18; 1 John 4:9; 5:1; John 3:18

7. By using “other and clearer texts”, are we able to discern the meaning of the use of the word “begotten”? Micah 5:2; Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5, 8-10

**8. Although we are already alive, can we also be begotten of God?
1 Cor. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 John 5:18**

The Source of Bible Inspiration

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1:21

OBJECTIVES

- To establish how the Bible writers were informed.
- To explore the revelations regarding their informant.
- To appreciate the activities of the Holy Spirit.

BIBLE WRITERS' INSPIRATION

1. How did the psalmist declare the source of his writings? 2 Sam. 23:1, 2

“David was preparing to take a high position with the noblest people of the earth. Clearer understandings of God opened before his mind, obscure themes were illuminated, difficulties made plain, perplexities harmonized. Each ray of new light inspired sweeter songs of devotion to the glory of God and the Redeemer. As he saw the love of God in the events of his life, his heart throbbed with more fervent adoration and gratitude. His voice rang out in richer melody; he swept his harp with more exultant joy. And the shepherd boy developed stronger and stronger, from knowledge to knowledge, for the Spirit of the Lord was on him.” —*The Beginning of the End*, p. 323.

2. As with David, can it be shown that all the other scriptures were also inspired by the Spirit of the Lord? 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21

“The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men. The Infinite One by His Holy Spirit has shed light into the minds and hearts of His servants. He has given dreams and visions, symbols and figures; and those to whom the truth was thus revealed, have themselves embodied the thought in human language.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 10.

UNDERSTANDING THE INSPIRER

3. The Holy Spirit being evidently the One that spake by the writers of the Bible, what is the reason that there is little in it to define His personhood? John 16:13, 14

“It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that the Spirit is the Comforter, "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father." It is plainly declared regarding the Holy Spirit that, in His work of guiding men into all truth, "He shall not speak of Himself." John 15:26; 16:13.

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them, but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 51, 52.

4. Not being able ourselves to define the nature of the Holy Spirit by the absence of His own description, is there another who speaks of Him? John 16:7, 8; 15:26

“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

5. Does the Bible represent the Holy Spirit as a separate entity from the Father and His Son? Isa. 48:12, 13, 16

“It is the glory of the gospel that it is founded on the principles of restoring in the fallen race the divine image. The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out his plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give himself an offering for sin. And in giving Christ, God gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting for the work of man's uplifting. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that he could have done more.” —*The Review and Herald*, May 2, 1912.

A BEING OF ACTIVITY

6. What does the Bible reveal as to the active agency during the creation of this earth? Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4

“He causes "the light to shine out of darkness." 2 Corinthians 4:6. When "the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep," "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Genesis 1:2, 3. So in the night of spiritual darkness, God's word goes forth, "Let there be light." To His people He says, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Isaiah 60:1.” —*Prophets and Kings*, p. 717.

**7. As the Holy Spirit was the active agency during creation, is He also the active agency during the recreative activity of salvation?
Titus 3:4-6**

“The sanctification of the soul by the working of the Holy Spirit is the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 384.

“It is the Holy Spirit that brings to the darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness. It is the Holy Spirit that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened intelligence of the truths of eternity. It is the Holy Spirit that presents before the mind the moral standard of righteousness and convicts of sin. It is the Holy Spirit that produces godly sorrow which worketh repentance that needeth not to be repented of, and inspires faith in Him who alone can save from all sin. It is the Holy Spirit that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance which is imperishable. The Holy Spirit re-creates, refines, and sanctifies the human agents, that they may become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 355.

MEDITATION

“The Bible shows us God in His high and holy place, not in a state of inactivity, not in silence and solitude, but surrounded by ten thousand times

ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy beings, all waiting to do His will. Through these messengers He is in active communication with every part of His dominion. By His Spirit He is everywhere present. Through the agency of His Spirit and His angels He ministers to the children of men.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 417.

Bible Revelations of God

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19

OBJECTIVES

- To scan the Bible for specific references dealing with God.
- To narrow down to those references that suggest a plurality of God.
- To draw Biblical conclusions in reference to the Godhead.

BIBLE REFERENCES

- 1. How does the Old Testament refer to the description of God?**
Mal. 2:10; Deut. 6:4

“It is our privilege to know God experimentally, and in true knowledge of God is life eternal. The only begotten Son of God was God's gift to the world, in whose character was revealed the character of him who gave the law to men and angels. He came to proclaim the fact, "The Lord our God is one Lord," and him only shalt thou serve.” —*The Review and Herald*, March 9, 1897.

- 2. Does the New Testament also use and apply to God the singular term?** Gal. 3:20; Mark 12:29, 32; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6

“The Author of nature is the Author of the Bible. Creation and Christianity have one God. God is revealed in nature, and God is revealed in His word. In clear rays the light shines from the sacred page, showing us the living God, as represented in the laws of His government, in the creation of the world, in the heavens that He has garnished. His power is to be recognized as the only means of redeeming the world from the degrading superstitions that are so dishonoring to God and man.” —*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 395.

PLURAL REFERENCES

3. When God created man, what did He express as to who was engaged in the transaction? Gen. 1:26, 27

“After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God says to his Son, "Let us make man in our image."” —*The Signs of the Times*, Jan. 9, 1879.

4. Where else in the Bible do we find a reference that suggests a plurality of God? Isa. 48:12, 13, 15, 16; 1 John 5:7; John 1:1-3

“The world was made by him, "and without him was not anything made that was made." If Christ made all things, he existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.” —*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

5. What direction did Christ give to His disciples in reference to the name of God they were to baptise the converts in? Matt. 28:19. How did they articulate this direction? Acts 2:38

“All who enter into a covenant with Jesus Christ become by adoption the children of God. They are cleansed by the regenerating power of the Word, and angels are commissioned to minister unto them. They are baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They pledge themselves to become active members of His church in the earth. They are to be dead to all the allurements of worldly desires; but in conversation and godliness, they are, through sanctification of the Spirit to exert a living influence for God.” —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 15.

THE GODHEAD

6. As the name of Jesus and the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost appear to be interchangeable, can this be recognised in the expression of Scripture? Col. 2:8-10

“The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him. What a thought is this! In Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him" (Colossians 2:9, 10).” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 344.

“In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fullness of the Godhead. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person.” —*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 115.

7. Can the term “Godhead” clearly be understood as the description of three separate individuals comprising the title of God?

John 1:1; Acts 5:3, 4

“The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and is invisible to mortal sight.

“The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested.”

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” —*Evangelism*, pp. 614, 615.

The Meaning of One God

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD. Deuteronomy 6:4

OBJECTIVES

- To gather scriptural expressions describing one God.
- To ascertain the term of oneness through Scripture.
- To acknowledge the truth of the oneness of God.

ONE GOD

- 1. Besides the scriptures cited in lesson seven, are there other references expressing God's singularity? Isa. 43:10, 11; 44:6, 8; 1 Tim. 2:5**

- 2. By close examination of the scriptures quoted in question one, do we discern the message God is trying to convey? Isa. 44:8-10; 1 Cor. 8:5-6**

“God has endowed humanity with attributes whereby we may appreciate God, and though man has revolted from God and has endeavored to supply the place of God with other objects of worship, the true God alone can fill the wants of the soul.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 206.

THE ONENESS OF GOD

3. How concisely does Apostle John describe the oneness of three heavenly individuals? 1 John 5:7

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7A*, p. 441.

“Wonderful statement! The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. They are one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person. It is thus that God and Christ are one...” —*Counsels for the Church*, p. 76.

4. Does Jesus help us to understand His oneness with the Father? and note how the Jews understood it. John 10:30-33

“True, He declared, "There is none good but one, that is, God"; but again He said, "I and my Father are one." Jesus speaks of Himself as well as the Father as God, and claims for Himself perfect righteousness.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 929.

5. Again, can we appreciate the meaning of one God by the prayer of Jesus in John 17? John 17:21, 23

“Christ is one with the Father, but Christ and God are two distinct personages. Read the prayer of Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John, and you will find this point clearly brought out.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1148.

AN IMPORTANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

6. How did Jesus answer Philip upon the request that Jesus show them the Father? John 14:8-11

“Christ had not ceased to be God when He became man. Though He had humbled Himself to humanity, the Godhead was still His own. Christ alone could represent the Father to humanity, and this representation the disciples had been privileged to behold for over three years.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 663.

7. What is the benefit for us to believe that the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and the Father are one? John 14:16-18, 23

“Under the Holy Spirit’s working even the weakest, by exercising faith in God, learned to improve their entrusted powers and to become sanctified, refined, and ennobled. As in humility they submitted to the molding influence of the Holy Spirit, they received of the fullness of the Godhead and were fashioned in the likeness of the divine.” —*Be Like Jesus*, p. 21.

MEDITATION

“Those who have by baptism given to God a pledge of their faith in Christ, and their death to the old life of sin, have entered into covenant relation with God. The three powers of the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are pledged to be their strength and their efficiency in their new life in Christ Jesus.” —*Australasian Union Conference Record*, Oct. 7, 1907.

Multiplicity of the Bible Unit

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Romans 12:5

OBJECTIVES

- To come to a deeper understanding of the Bible unit.
- To learn from the Godhead unit the family unit.
- To come to appreciate the unit of the born again.

BIBLE ONENESS

1. How does the Bible articulate the concept of unity? Eph. 4:3-6

“Bible truth, believed and practiced, reveals the oneness that exists between the Father and the Son. This manifestation of unity separates all selfishness from the character, and is an evidence that God loves the followers of Christ as He loves His Son.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 6, p. 235.*

2. From the answer to question one, is it evident that the use of the word “one” refers to multiple facets working together as one? 1 Cor. 12:12-14

“Oh, I wish that we had far greater wisdom in all things than we now have! One thing every worker in the vineyard of the Lord must learn, that is, to

practice the prayer of Christ, to move as one in Christ Jesus. Jesus prayed that His disciples might be one, as He is one with the Father. The enemy is at work, to divide, to scatter. Now as never before he will make determined efforts to scatter our forces. Above every other period it is unsafe now for us to move out in lines of our own. The truth for this time is broad in its outlines, far reaching, embracing many doctrines; but these doctrines are not detached items, which mean little; they are united by golden threads, forming a complete whole, with Christ as the living center. The truths we present from the Bible are as firm and immovable as the throne of God.” —*Selected Messages Book 2*, p. 87.

THE GODHEAD PARADIGM

3. Having already seen that the Godhead is a unit comprised of three persons, is there another unit comprised of more than one person? Gen. 1:27, 28; 2:21-24

“Christ did not come to this world to forbid marriage or to break down or destroy the relationship and influence which exist in the domestic circle. He came to restore, elevate, purify, and ennoble every current of pure affection, that the family on earth might become a symbol of the family in heaven.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 39.

4. How does the apostle Paul describe the unit of the Godhead in its relation to husband and wife? 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22, 23

“The wife is to stand by the side of the husband as his equal, sharing all the responsibilities of life, rendering due respect to him who has selected her for his lifelong companion.”

“Christ's rule is one of wisdom and love, and when husbands fulfill their obligations to their wives, they will use their authority with the same tenderness as Christ uses toward the church. When the Spirit of Christ controls the husband, the wife's subjection will only result in rest and benefit, for he will require from her only that which will result in good, and in the same way that Christ requires submission from the church.”

—*Manuscript Releases Vol. 21*, pp. 214, 215.

5. Does the marital oneness representing the heavenly family also branch into another unit of multiple components? Eph. 5:28-30; Rom. 12:5

“God is the husband of His church. The church is the bride, the Lamb's wife. Every true believer is a part of the body of Christ. Christ regards unfaithfulness shown to Him by His people as the unfaithfulness of a wife to her husband. We are to remember that we are members of Christ's body.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 985.

BAPTISED INTO ONE BODY

6. As baptism is a symbol of new birth, what does a baptised soul become part of? 1 Cor. 12:12-14, 27

“The vine has many branches, but though all the branches are different, they do not quarrel. In diversity there is unity. All the branches obtain their nourishment from one source. This is an illustration of the unity that is to exist among Christ's followers. In their different lines of work they all have but one Head. The same Spirit, in different ways, works through them. There is harmonious action, though the gifts differ. Study this chapter. You will see from it that the man who is truly united with Christ will never act

as though he were a complete whole in himself.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 21*, p. 276.

7. Is the unity of the Godhead in Jesus transferred through Him to every born again believer in the body of Christ? John 17:21-23

“And yet the Creator of worlds, he in whom was the fulness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in him the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person.” —*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896.

“Christ became one with us in order that we might become one with Him in divinity.” —*The Review and Herald*, June 18, 1901.

MEDITATION

“From that scene of heavenly joy [the ascension of Christ] there comes back to us on earth the echo of Christ's own wonderful words, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." The family of heaven and the family of earth are one. For us our Lord ascended, and for us He lives. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."” —*The Adventist Home*, p. 544.

Understanding Difficult Scriptures

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

OBJECTIVES

- To highlight concise scriptures defining the Godhead.
- To contrast those concise declarations against the ambiguous.
- To draw correct conclusions by comparing the concise with the ambiguous.

CLEAR DEFINITIONS

1. In what name did Jesus instruct His disciples to baptise the new converts? Matt. 28:19

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized and these powers will cooperate with the obedient.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 336.

2. What is the name by which these three living persons are encompassed? Ex. 6:3; 3:13, 14, 15

“With solemn dignity Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM."

“Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 469.

3. How else does Scripture clearly convey this heavenly trio? 1 John 5:7; Isa. 48:12, 13, 16

“The eternal heavenly dignitaries--God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit--arming them [the disciples] with more than mortal energy, . . . would advance with them to the work and convince the world of sin.” —*Evangelism*, p. 616.

THE SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS

4. With such clear defining scriptures and inspirational verifications rendered in questions one to three, are there scriptures used by some to confuse the narrative? 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 8:4-6

“God is our tender, pitiful Father, and every believing child is the object of His special care.

“He [Jesus] pointed . . . to the Ruler of the universe, under the new name, "Our Father."” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 38.

5. Is it possible to read the following scriptures and come to an interpretation that God is one person and His Spirit and His Son are derivatives from Him? 1 Cor. 2:12-14; 1 John 4:13-15; John 14:28

“God will communicate by His own Spirit with the soul. Pray as you study, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," Psalm 119:18. When the teacher will rely upon God in prayer, the Spirit of Christ will come upon him, and God will work through him by the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the student. The Holy Spirit fills mind and heart with hope and courage and Bible imagery, which will be communicated to the student.” —*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 172.

6. How easy is it also to interpret that the Holy Spirit is not a separate individual from the Father or the Son? John 14:17, 18, 23

“The influence of the Holy Spirit is the life of Christ in the soul. We do not now see Christ and speak to Him, but His Holy Spirit is just as near us in one place as another. It works in and through every one who receives Christ. Those who know the indwelling of the Spirit reveal the fruits of the Spirit,—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.”” —*The Bible Echo*, June 17, 1901.

CORRECT CONCLUSIONS

7. What is the instruction by which we are to draw correct conclusions by comparing the answers to questions one to three with questions four to six? Isa. 28:9-11; 2 Tim. 2:15

“The Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; . . . this Holy Book is, in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness.” —*The Great Controversy*, p. 203.

8. Evidently God being a unity of three beings, is it not obvious to conclude that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can be expressed as one of the other? ie. “Spirit of God”, “Son of God”, “Father of Christ”.

The Holy Spirit's Humility

...for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak... John 16:13

OBJECTIVES

- To gather concise references declaring the personhood of the Spirit.
- To identify the saving activities of the Holy Spirit.
- To understand the reason behind the rare Bible descriptions of the Holy Spirit.

HOLY SPIRIT, A PERSON

1. How clearly does Inspiration define the personhood of the Holy Spirit from the scriptural evidence? Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 2:10-11

“The Holy Spirit is a person, for He beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. When this witness is borne, it carries with it its own evidence. At such times we believe and are sure that we are the children of God. . . .

‘The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."' —*Evangelism*, pp. 616, 617.

2. Are there plain Bible statements defining the personhood of the Holy Spirit?

1) He speaks and hears. – John 16:13

2) He is identified as a being, not merely a force. – John 14:26

3) He can be lied to. – Acts 5:3

3. If the Holy Spirit was only God’s active force and not a literal person with feelings and emotions, how can the following scriptures be meaningful? John 14:16, 17; Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 13:14 (last part)

“When trials arise that seem unexplainable, we should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit. There is by our side a Witness, a heavenly Messenger, who will lift up for us a standard against the enemy. He will shut us in with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Beyond this Satan cannot penetrate. He cannot pass this shield of holy light.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 132.

THE SPIRIT’S EFFORTS TO SAVE

4. Having seen already that the Holy Spirit was the active agency during creation do we also behold Him in the activities of salvation? Titus 3:5, 6

“Heavenly intelligences are waiting to cooperate with human instrumentalities, that the world may see what human beings may become

through a union with the divine. Those who consecrate body, soul, and spirit to God's service will constantly receive a new endowment of physical, mental, and spiritual power. The inexhaustible supplies of heaven are at their command. Christ gives them the life of His life. The Holy Spirit puts forth its highest energies to work in mind and heart. Through the grace given us we may achieve victories which, because of our defects of character and the smallness of our faith, may have seemed to us impossible.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 62.

5. In His work of salvation, or saving, how does the Holy Spirit do His work? John 16:13-15

“How does Christ subdue His chosen people to Himself? It is by the power of His Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures, speaks to the mind, and impresses truth upon the hearts of men.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 31.

HUMBLE SELFLESS WORK

6. Gauging from the words of Jesus, can we see the reason that the Bible speaks little of the details of the Holy Spirit? 2 Pet. 1:21

“The Holy Ghost is the author of the Scriptures and of the Spirit of Prophecy.” —*Manuscript Releases Vol. 2*, p. 189.

7. What is entailed in this selfless work of the Holy Spirit? John 16:14

“That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a mystery; and without the help of the Holy Spirit we can not hope to comprehend this subject. The most humbling lesson that man has to learn is the nothingness of human wisdom, and the folly of trying, by his own unaided efforts, to find out God.”

“The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the only begotten Son of God, binds the human agent, body, soul, and spirit, to the perfect, divine-human nature of Christ. This union is represented by the union of the vine and the branches. Finite man is united to the manhood of Christ. Through faith human nature is assimilated with Christ's nature. We are made one with God in Christ.” —*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

MEDITATION

“In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. The power of evil had been strengthening for centuries, and the submission of men to this satanic captivity was amazing. Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

The Word That Became Flesh

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

OBJECTIVES

- To find Biblical evidence that Jesus is He who is the Word.
- To gain a clear understanding that Jesus is truly God with us.
- To appreciate the importance for our salvation of Jesus being God.

IDENTITY OF THE WORD

1. What is the title the apostle John gave under inspiration to the second person of the Godhead? John 1:1-3; 1 John 5:7

“Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God.” —*Evangelism*, p. 615.

“By coming to dwell with us, Jesus was to reveal God both to men and to angels. He was the Word of God,--God's thought made audible.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

2. If the Word is God, how clearly does the inspiration of the Holy Spirit define the Word to be Jesus Christ? John 1:14; Isa. 9:6

“The Son of God stooped to uplift the fallen. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth

to be "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities." Isaiah 53:5. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He knew what it meant to be hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He was a stranger and a sojourner on the earth--in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women of today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, . . . full of grace and truth." John 1:14." —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 472.

GOD WITH US

3. What is the meaning of the name Emmanuel ascribed to the child born of a virgin? Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:20-23

“From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of his glory." It was to manifest this glory that He came to our world. To this sin-darkened earth He came to reveal the light of God's love—to be "God with us."” —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 45.

4. How clearly is it expressed in the Scripture that Jesus is equal to God? Phil. 2:5-8

“He was equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. . . . He is the eternal, self-existent Son.” —*Evangelism*, p. 615.

5. Once again, are there other scriptures in which are unmistakable evidence that Jesus is God while simultaneously a human being? Ps. 45:6, 7; Heb. 1:8-11

“Of Christ it is written, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."” —*The Signs of the Times*, Sept. 4, 1893.

A SALVATIONAL ISSUE

6. Is it truly so important for our salvation to acknowledge Jesus Christ to be God? John 8:24

“Still seeking to give a true direction to her faith, Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life." In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. "He that hath the Son hath life." 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.”

“Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character.” —*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 530, 123.

7. How perfectly does Inspiration declare that only one equal with God could save us from sin? Job 33:24, 28

“Not one of the angels could have become surety for the human race: their life is God's; they could not surrender it. The angels all wear the yoke of obedience. They are the appointed messengers of Him who is the

Commander of all heaven. But Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. He could pay the ransom for man's freedom. He is the eternal self-existing Son, on whom no yoke had come; and when God asked, "Whom shall I send?" He could reply, "Here am I; send Me." He could pledge Himself to become man's surety; for He could say that which the highest angel could not say,--I have power over My own life, "power to lay it down, and . . . power to take it again".” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 5*, p. 1136.

MEDITATION

“Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf. Justice moved from its exalted throne, and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, It is enough.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 936.

Jesus and His Father

If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. John 14:28

OBJECTIVES

- To show the reason as to why the Father is the Head of Christ.
- To revisit the decree of God where He declared the Word to be His Son.
- To discover God's wisdom in making His counterpart His Son.

THE HUMAN HEADSHIP

1. How does the apostle Paul describe the lineup of headship in the human realm? 1 Cor. 11:3

“Clothing His divinity with humanity, Christ came to this world to stand at the head of the human race.” —*Sermons and Talks Vol. 2, p. 190.*

2. Did Jesus express this reality that He was indeed in a position below the Father in heaven? John 14:28

“He told them that the Father was greater than himself, that he would stand by the Father's side as the friend of his followers, to speak in their behalf. He is acquainted with human nature and the tendencies of the human heart,

and promises to unite his petition with theirs, that the comforter, the spirit of truth might abide with them and shine forth in their lives and works, winning many to Christ. This promise has been the comfort and stay of millions who have since followed Jesus in humble obedience.” —*The Signs of the Times*, Jan. 17, 1878.

3. How could Jesus mean that He was lower than the Father when we have already found that He was equal to God? Phil. 2:6, 7; Heb. 2:9, 16

“Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took upon Him our sinful nature. Clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might associate with fallen humanity, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7A*, p. 452.

SON OF GOD

4. Just as a son is under his father, how did God prepare this position for His equal counterpart? Ps. 2:7; Heb. 1:5

“God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 8*, p. 268.

5. What must we understand when God makes a decree; is it equal to any other utterance of His word? Ps. 33:8, 9; 148:5, 6

“These stood ready to second Lucifer's demand for equal authority with the Son of God. But angels who were loyal and true maintained the wisdom and justice of the divine decree and endeavored to reconcile this disaffected being to the will of God. Christ was the Son of God; He had been one with Him before the angels were called into existence. He had ever stood at the right hand of the Father; His supremacy, so full of blessing to all who came under its benignant control, had not heretofore been questioned. The harmony of heaven had never been interrupted; wherefore should there now be discord? The loyal angels could see only terrible consequences from this dissension, and with earnest entreaty they counseled the disaffected ones to renounce their purpose and prove themselves loyal to God by fidelity to His government.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 38.

THE WISDOM OF SONSHIP

6. Why did God make the decree to appoint His equal counterpart as His Son? Eph. 1:3-6

““If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” Here again the Lord Jesus presents his relationship to the Father as the exact counterpart of our relationship to himself. Let these lessons, so full of instruction, be carefully considered. Nowhere else can be found such large and comforting assurances. Nothing shows so much as this how the Lord Jesus estimates the souls he came to save, and his purpose in exalting them to the closest, most elevated and sacred companionship with himself. He identifies man with himself before the Lord and the whole universe.” —*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 28, 1891.

7. What did God do in His foreknowledge of man's fall and his restoration through His Son? Gen. 1:26

“All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of Adam and Eve. Human beings were a distinct order. They were made “in the image of God,” and it was the Creator’s design that they should populate the earth. They were to live in close communion with heaven, receiving and assimilating power from the great Source of power. Upheld by God, they were to live sinless lives.” —*Christ Triumphant*, p. 19.

“Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God. . . . Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image.” —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 45.

8. Contemplating the answers to questions six to seven, do we begin to understand God’s mind in declaring His equal counterpart as His Son? Rom. 8:15-17; 1 John 3:1

“The Son of God was the heir of all things, and the dominion and glory of the kingdoms of this world were promised to Him. Yet when He appeared in this world, it was without riches or splendor. The world understood not His union with the Father; the excellency and glory of His divine character were hid from them. He was therefore “despised and rejected of men,” and “we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Even as Christ was in the world, so are His followers. They are the sons of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and the kingdom and dominion belong to them. The world understand not their character and holy calling; they perceive not their adoption into the family of God. Their union and fellowship with the Father and Son is not manifest, and while the world behold their humiliation and reproach, it does not appear what they are, or what they shall be. They are strangers. The world know them not, and appreciate not the motives which actuate them.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 1*, p. 286.

SECTION 2

**THE GODHEAD
IN ACTION**

Introduction

HAVING SPENT thirteen lessons establishing point by point the true doctrine of the Godhead as adopted within the fifty years of doctrinal buildup in the original Seventh-day Adventist organisation, we now venture into perhaps the most important segment of this subject. It is one thing to get the doctrinal accuracy right, but another to receive the salvational benefit designed by the doctrine. The Spirit of Prophecy addresses this in the following:

“Firmly may certain doctrines of truth be held. Again and again they may be reiterated, till the holders come to think that they are indeed in possession of the great blessings which these doctrines represent. But the greatest, most powerful truths may be held, and yet kept in the outer court, exerting little influence to make the daily life wholesome and fragrant. The soul is not sanctified through the truth that is not practiced.” —*Evangelism*, p. 290.

So as we venture into the study of this section, let us open our hearts to the profound realities that blossom from the knowledge of the Godhead. Jesus thus expresses the true objective of this knowledge:

“Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. AND THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD, AND JESUS CHRIST, WHOM THOU HAST SENT.”
John 17:1-3

God grant us that we may find this eternal life encapsulated in the knowledge of the Godhead in this section.

In The Beginning God

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1:1

OBJECTIVES

- To ascertain the agencies operative during creation, entitled as God.
- To observe the Biblical record of the united action of these agencies.
- To discover the vast network encompassed by heaven and earth.

GOD IN ACTION

- 1. How can we tell that there was more than one agency engaged at the time of creation? Gen. 1:26 ie. verses 2-3; Job 33:4; John 1:1-3**

“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio...” —*Evangelism*, p. 615.

- 2. If God was active by these three agencies at creation, is it possible to discover them in the work of recreation? Eph. 4:24, 30; Titus 3:4-6**

“The eternal heavenly dignitaries--God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit--arming them [the disciples] with more than mortal energy, . . . would advance with them to the work and convince the world of sin.”

“We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven,--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, --and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.” —*Evangelism*, pp. 616, 617.

3. How did Jesus articulate this threefold activity of God?

John 14:16, 17, 23, 26

“Those who have by baptism given to God a pledge of their faith in Christ, and their death to the old life of sin, have entered into covenant relation with God. The three powers of the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are pledged to be their strength and their efficiency in their new life in Christ Jesus.” —*Australasian Union Conference Record*, Oct. 7, 1907.

UNITED ACTIVITY

4. Reflecting upon the account of creation in Genesis 1:2-3, do we discern the united activity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Rom. 1:20

- 1) Father—thought**
- 2) Word—thought made audible**
- 3) Spirit—moving**

“Who is Christ?--He is the only begotten Son of the living God. He is to the Father as a word that expresses the thought,--as a thought made audible. Christ is the word of God. Christ said to Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." His words were the echo of God's words. Christ was the likeness of God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.” —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 21.

5. If Jesus is the Word, God’s thought made audible, can it be shown in the work of recreation that the Holy Spirit is the active agency rendering the Word into existence?

“The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him. What a thought is this! In Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him" (Colossians 2:9, 10). Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. The Spirit conforms the renewed soul to the model, Jesus Christ. Through the influence of the Spirit, enmity against God is changed into faith and love, and pride into humility. The soul perceives the beauty of truth, and Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. As these changes are effected, angels break out in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 196.

6. Again, when Jesus speaks, is that the voice that can be recognised in the restoration of sinners? Ps. 33:9

“It required nothing less than creative power to restore health to that decaying body. The same voice that spoke life to man created from the dust of the earth, had spoken life to the dying paralytic. And the same power that gave life to the body had renewed the heart. He who at creation "spake, and it was," who "commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:9), had spoken life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. The healing of the body was an evidence of the power that had renewed the heart. Christ bade the paralytic arise and walk, "that ye may know," He said, "that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 77.

AN INFINITE REALM

- 7. In trying to comprehend the infinite power to recover sinners from sin and disease, can our understanding be assisted by the vastness of the universe the Word spoke into existence?
Heb. 11:3; 1:2; Ps. 33:6**

“The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God.

“The life thus imparted is in like manner sustained. "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) shall man live.”
—*Education*, p. 126.

- 8. As we gaze upon the infinity of the universe, can we begin to realise the infinity of the Godhead? Job 11:7-9**

“No finite mind can fully comprehend the existence, the power, the wisdom, or the works of the Infinite One. Says the sacred writer: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." [Job 11:7-9.] The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. Men may be ever searching, ever learning, and still there is an infinity beyond.” —*Christian Education*, p. 196.

MEDITATION

“Let none think that there is no more knowledge for them to gain. The depth of human intellect may be measured; the works of human authors may be

mastered; but the highest, deepest, broadest flight of the imagination cannot find out God. There is infinity beyond all that we can comprehend. We have seen only the glimmering of divine glory and of the infinitude of knowledge and wisdom; we have, as it were, been working on the surface of the mine, when rich golden ore is beneath the surface, to reward the one who will dig for it. The shaft must be sunk deeper and yet deeper in the mine, and the result will be glorious treasure. Through a correct faith, divine knowledge will become human knowledge.” —*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 113.

God Is Love

*God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.
1 John 4:16*

OBJECTIVES

- To seek for the meaning of love as portrayed in Scripture.
- To discover its meaning in the manifestation of the Godhead.
- To let Jesus expand upon the love He knew of.

MEANING OF BIBLICAL LOVE

1. Where are we to look to obtain the understanding of the meaning of love? 1 John 4:7

“In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God; and that in the meek and lowly One is manifested the character of Him who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

2. Does the Bible define this self-renouncing love? 1 Cor. 13:4-8 (first phrase)

LOVE IN THE GODHEAD

3. How does the apostle John personify love? 1 John 4:16

“God is love, in himself, in his very essence. He makes the very best of that which appears an injury, and gives Satan no occasion for triumphing by making the worst appear, or by exposing our weaknesses to our enemies.” —*The Review and Herald*, Feb. 26, 1895.

4. Does the apostle Paul identify the items of the love of which the Godhead is composed? 2 Cor. 13:14; Rom. 5:5

5. Do the words of Jesus describe the love that exists in the Godhead? John 17:24

“How precious are these words! "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Christ wills that we should behold his glory. Where?--In the kingdom of heaven. He wills that we should be one with him. What a thought! How willing it makes me to make any and every sacrifice for his sake! He is my love, my righteousness, my comfort, my crown of rejoicing, and he wills that we should behold his glory. If we follow him in his humiliation, in his self-sacrifice, in trial and test, we shall behold him as he is, we shall see his glory; and if we see his glory, we shall be made partakers of it.” —*1888 Materials*, p. 559.

THE LOVE JESUS KNEW

- 6. What was the heart yearning of Jesus as He prayed to the Father of the love He knew existed within the Godhead? John 17:24-26; Eph. 3:17-19**

“In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

- 7. Are we beginning to recognise it is the love God is that portrayed the Godhead as one? John 17:21-23**

“Let these words be oft repeated and let every soul train his ideas and spirit and action daily that he may fulfill this prayer of Jesus Christ. He does not request impossible things of His Father. He prays for the very things which must be in His disciples in relation to their oneness to each other and their unity and oneness with God and Jesus Christ. Anything short of this is not attaining to perfection of Christian character. The golden chain of love, binding the hearts of the believers in unity, in bonds of fellowship and love, and in oneness with Christ and the Father, makes the connection perfect, and bears to the world a testimony of the power of Christianity that cannot be controverted.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 173.

- 8. How beautifully has Jesus articulated the transferral of the love of the Godhead to His church? John 15:8-10**

“It is our privilege to rest in an active, living faith in Christ as the Life-giver. It is our privilege to comprehend with all saints, what is the length and depth and height, and to know the love of God which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fullness of God. Let us contemplate Christ as the One in whom all fullness dwells. Beholding Him as our personal Saviour, we shall appreciate the value of His saving grace. We should think about Jesus more than we do. We should let His praise be in our hearts. We should speak of the love that has been so abundantly expressed for us. We certainly have every reason to praise God with heart and soul and voice, saying, I will praise the Lord for His great love wherewith He hath loved me.” —*The Upward Look*, p. 37.

MEDITATION

“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.” —*Steps to Christ*, p. 14.

Love Creates

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. Isaiah 43:7

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the reason behind God's creation of other intelligences.
- To let Scripture explain God's glory.
- To realise the love installed into the heart of those God created.

GOD'S MOTIVE FOR CREATION

- 1. Having seen the love that is the element within the Godhead, is it possible to deduct that the members of the Godhead could not keep that love to themselves? 1 John 4:7**

“God is love. Like rays of light from the sun, love and light and joy flow out from Him to all His creatures. It is His nature to give. His very life is the outflow of unselfish love.

“His glory is His children's good;
His joy, His tender Fatherhood.”

“He tells us to be perfect as He is, in the same manner. We are to be centers of light and blessing to our little circle, even as He is to the universe. We have nothing of ourselves, but the light of His love shines upon us, and we are to reflect its brightness. “In His borrowed goodness good,” we may be perfect in our sphere, even as God is perfect in His.” —*Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, p. 77.

- 2. In the light of the answer to question one, what is the natural conclusion as to why God created the intelligences of heaven and earth? Isa. 43:7**

“FOR MY GLORY”

- 3. How did Jesus refer to the glory that could only have been meant as the reason for the creation of other intelligences? John 17:24, 26**

“The creation of the worlds, the mystery of the gospel, are for one purpose, to make manifest to all created intelligences, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character. By the marvelous display of His love in giving "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the glory of God is revealed to lost humanity and to the intelligences of other worlds.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 129.

- 4. Can the love that motivated the Godhead to create the angelic host and humanity be comprehended in the story of redemption? 1 John 4:9, 10**

“Says the apostle: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." Only as we contemplate the great plan of redemption can we have a just appreciation of the character of God. The work of creation was a manifestation of His love; but the gift of God to save the guilty and ruined race, alone reveals the infinite depths of divine tenderness and compassion.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." While the law of God is maintained, and its justice vindicated, the sinner can be pardoned. The dearest gift that heaven itself had to bestow has been poured out that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." By that gift men are uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin to become children of God. Says Paul: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 739.

5. In that love-motivated creation, did God’s love also have a plan of love to restore if anything went wrong among His intelligences? 1 Pet. 1:20; Eph. 1:3-5

“God is love, God is life. It is the prerogative of God to redeem, reconstruct, and restore. Before the foundation of the world the Son of God was given to die, and redemption is the mystery that was "kept in silence through times eternal" (Romans 16:25, R.V.).” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 291.

“The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 76.

IMPLANTATION OF LOVE

6. Was that love intrinsic in the Godhead installed or implanted also in God’s intelligent creatures? Gen. 1:26-28

“So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the

heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 35.

7. When God has completed His recreation after the fall of Lucifer and humanity, will there be a full restoration in the redeemed of that which He had originally implanted? Rev. 21:1-7

“There the redeemed shall "know, even as also they are known." The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together "the whole family in heaven and earth"-- these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.”
—*The Adventist Home*, p. 544.

The Council of Creation

All these things spake Jesus... I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. Matthew 13:34, 35

OBJECTIVES

- To expand on God's love manifest in Scripture about the council of the Godhead.
- To dwell upon God's foresight.
- To appreciate the manifestation of the councils of love within the Godhead.

COUNCIL OF THE GODHEAD

- 1. How do we know that before anything was created, there was a counselling session conducted by the members of the Godhead?**
1 Pet. 1:19, 20

“The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Romans 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22.

2. Do we find an account in the Bible of this threefold council that sent one of the members of the Godhead to earth? Isa. 48:16

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin.”

—*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

3. When only were the councils of the Godhead from eternity made manifest? Rom. 16:25, 26; Matt. 13:34, 35

“Let those who are oppressed under a sense of sin remember that there is hope for them. The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity.”

—*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 934.

GOD'S FORESIGHT

4. What is in God's name that represents to us God's foresight in His heavenly council to create? Ex. 3:13, 14

“I Am means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike to God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and the far distant

future with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 1*, p. 1099.

5. How else did God express His foresight? Isa. 46:9, 10

“He that ruleth in the heavens is the one who sees the end from the beginning--the one before whom the mysteries of the past and the future are alike outspread, and who, beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, beholds the accomplishment of His own purposes of love and blessing. Though "clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne." Psalm 97:2, R.V. And this the inhabitants of the universe, both loyal and disloyal, will one day understand. "His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deuteronomy 32:4.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 43.

COUNCILS OF LOVE

6. Although God knew beforehand of the likelihood of the rising of sin and rebellion, with what love did He proceed just the same? Isa. 43:7; 46:10

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man's uplifting. Here is love--the contemplation of which should fill

the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

7. By what decree and expression of love could the Godhead proceed to create irrespective of the odds against it? Ps. 2:7; Job 33:24

“Christ rejoiced that He could do more for His followers than they could ask or think. He spoke with assurance, knowing that an almighty decree had been given before the world was made. He knew that truth, armed with the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, would conquer in the contest with evil; and that the bloodstained banner would wave triumphantly over His followers. He knew that the life of His trusting disciples would be like His, a series of uninterrupted victories, not seen to be such here, but recognized as such in the great hereafter.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 679.

MEDITATION

“The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created, endowed with power to do the divine will. But the defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent, and yet it did not deter him from carrying out his eternal purpose; for the Lord would establish his throne in righteousness. God knows the end from the beginning; "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Therefore redemption was not an afterthought--a plan formulated after the fall of Adam--but an eternal purpose to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created.” —*The Signs of the Times*, April 25, 1892.

Creation of the Universe

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God... Hebrews 11:3

OBJECTIVES

- To understand that the vastness of the universe had a beginning by God's hand.
- To realise that the universe already existed before this earth.
- To appreciate that this earth is the lesson of God's love to the inhabitants of the universe.

IN THE BEGINNING

- 1. How does the Bible express the beginning of the universe?**
Gen. 1:1, 2; Ps. 104:1, 2; Isa. 45:12 (last half)

“[The Bible] came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and a divine hand has preserved its purity through all the ages. Its bright rays shine into the far distant past, where human research seeks vainly to penetrate. In God's word alone we find an authentic account of creation. Here we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth and that stretched out the heavens. Here only can we find a history of our race, unsullied by human prejudice or human pride.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5, p. 25.*

- 2. Is it evident that in the beginning of the universe, planet earth was an uninhabited foundation for future development?**
Ps. 104:5, 6

“The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. [...] The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God's plan, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

3. Does the Bible verify the fact that when life on earth was created, other inhabitants of the universe already existed to witness the event? Job 38:4-7

“Before the creation of man, angels were in existence; for when the foundations of the earth were laid, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7. . . . Angels are in nature superior to men, for the psalmist says that man was made “a little lower than the angels.” Psalm 8:5.” —*The Truth About Angels*, p. 9.

CREATION'S LAST ITEM

4. How does Scripture declare that the creation of this world was the finishing touch of the creation of the universe? Gen. 2:1

“As regards this earth, Scripture declares the work of creation to have been completed. "The works were finished from the foundation of the world."” —*Education*, p. 130.

5. What does Inspiration reveal regarding the test Adam and Eve failed in reference to the tree of good and evil, and how other worlds before them did not fail? Heb. 1:2; 11:3

“The Lord has given me a view of other worlds. Wings were given me, and an angel attended me from the city to a place that was bright and glorious. The grass of the place was living green, and the birds there warbled a sweet song. The inhabitants of the place were of all sizes; they were noble, majestic, and lovely. They bore the express image of Jesus, and their countenances beamed with holy joy, expressive of the freedom and happiness of the place. I asked one of them why they were so much more lovely than those on the earth. The reply was, "We have lived in strict obedience to the commandments of God, and have not fallen by disobedience, like those on the earth." Then I saw two trees, one looked much like the tree of life in the city. The fruit of both looked beautiful, but of one they could not eat. They had power to eat of both, but were forbidden to eat of one. Then my attending angel said to me, "None in this place have tasted of the forbidden tree; but if they should eat, they would fall."” —*Early Writings*, p. 39.

A WATCHING UNIVERSE

6. Are we on this planet being watched by angels and unfallen worlds? 1 Cor. 4:9 (last half)

“The Lord is good, and greatly to be praised. Let us learn to praise Him with our voices, and to realize that at all times we are in excellent companionship--even with God and with His Son, Jesus. We are a spectacle to the unfallen worlds, to angels, and to our fellow men. A realization of this will lead us to go forth as the Lord may direct, with a firm, well-garrisoned heart.” —*This Day With God*, p. 238.

7. As the unfallen worlds behold the events on this planet, what does this world become to them? Eph. 3:10, 11

“Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look", and it will be their study throughout endless ages. Both the redeemed and the unfallen beings will find in the cross of Christ their science and their song. It will be seen that the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of self-sacrificing love. In the light from Calvary it will be seen that the law of self-renouncing love is the law of life for earth and heaven; that the love which "seeketh not her own" has its source in the heart of God.” —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 45.

MEDITATION

“The sacrifice required of Abraham was not alone for his own good, nor solely for the benefit of succeeding generations; but it was also for the instruction of the sinless intelligences of heaven and of other worlds. The field of the controversy between Christ and Satan--the field on which the plan of redemption is wrought out--is the lesson book of the universe. Because Abraham had shown a lack of faith in God's promises, Satan had accused him before the angels and before God of having failed to comply with the conditions of the covenant, and as unworthy of its blessings. God desired to prove the loyalty of His servant before all heaven, to demonstrate that nothing less than perfect obedience can be accepted, and to open more fully before them the plan of salvation.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 154.

Multiple Sons of God

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. Job 1:6

OBJECTIVES

- To expand upon the inhabitants of the universe.
- To fully realise that the vast universe is God's dominion.
- To marvel over God's devoted attention upon this renegade planet.

GOD'S OTHER WORLDS

1. Is there such a thing in God's realm in which He summons conferences with heads of the multiple worlds of the universe?

Job 1:6; 2:1-3

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion,—all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 834.

2. How else are those sons of God identified in Scripture? Eph. 3:10

“Principalities and powers in heavenly places combine with these angels in their ministration for those who shall be heirs of salvation.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 923.

“The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. Ephesians 3:10.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9.

GOD’S DOMINION

3. How vast is the dominion of God as described by the Bible? Deut. 10:14; Neh. 9:6

“From light to light God is leading his people. He liveth in light unapproachable, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of holy, happy beings, every one of them waiting to do his bidding. They are not inactive, but in communication with other worlds, in all God's vast dominion. This little world is but an atom of the Lord's dominion. Through various agencies, divine and human, He is seeking to save. He is actually stooping from his throne and observing the movements of every living being, and in his books are recorded every transaction; and through heavenly agencies He is lifting up the oppressed and pointing the way before every soul, --the way to reach the mansions above.” —*1888 Materials*, p. 711.

4. In contemplation of God’s vast dominion which exists by His creative power, do we realise the insignificance of our little earth? Ps. 8:3-6

“Behold Him, the beginning of the creation of God, who numbers the stars, who created the worlds-- among which this earth is but a small speck, and

would scarcely be missed from the many worlds more than a tiny leaf from the forest trees. The nations before Him are but "as a drop of a bucket," and "as the small dust of the balance" . . . (Isaiah 40:15)." —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 40.

GOD'S DEVOTED ATTENTION

5. Does Inspiration differentiate between the creation of man and that of other sons of God? Gen. 1:26, 27

"All heaven took a deep and joyful interest in the creation of the world and of man. Human beings were a new and distinct order. They were made "in the image of God," and it was the Creator's design that they should populate the earth." —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 1*, p. 1081.

"God created man a superior being; he alone is formed in the image of God, and is capable of partaking of the divine nature, of cooperating with his Creator and executing His plans." —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 7.

6. In the light of the answer to question five, is it discernable that God's foreknowledge made provision for the combination of the atonement of God with man? John 17:23; Col. 2:9; Eph. 3:18, 19

"From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God. He is the link that unites God with humanity. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Hebrews 2:14). Only through Him can we become children of God. To all who believe on Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. Thus the heart becomes the temple of the living God. It is because Christ took human nature that men and women become partakers of the divine nature. He brings life and immortality to light through the gospel." —*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 228.

7. While there are multiple variations of sons of God, what makes the human race so special to God? Rom. 8:14-17; Rev. 3:21

“In his relation to Christ [the human agent] will be bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, one with Christ in a peculiar relationship, because Christ took the humanity of man. He became subject to temptation, endangering as it were, His divine attributes. Satan sought, by the constant and curious devices of his cunning, to make Christ yield to temptation. Man must pass over the ground over which Christ has passed. As Christ overcame every temptation which Satan brought against Him, so man is to overcome. And those who strive earnestly to overcome are brought into a oneness with Christ that the angels in heaven can never know.”

“The divine culture of men and women will be carried forward to completion only as they are partakers of the divine nature. Thus they may overcome as Christ overcame in their behalf.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7, p. 926.*

MEDITATION

“The rabbis understood Christ's parable as applying to the publicans and sinners; but it has also a wider meaning. By the lost sheep Christ represents not only the individual sinner but the one world that has apostatized and has been ruined by sin. This world is but an atom in the vast dominions over which God presides, yet this little fallen world--the one lost sheep--is more precious in His sight than are the ninety and nine that went not astray from the fold. Christ, the loved Commander in the heavenly courts, stooped from His high estate, laid aside the glory that He had with the Father, in order to save the one lost world. For this He left the sinless worlds on high, the ninety and nine that loved Him, and came to this earth, to be "wounded for our transgressions" and "bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah 53:5.) God gave Himself in His Son that He might have the joy of receiving back the sheep that was lost.” —*Christ's Object Lessons, p. 190.*

Possibility of Sin

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. Ezekiel 28:15

OBJECTIVES

- To study God's creation of intelligent beings with the quality of pleasure.
- To see that the capacity for pleasure and enjoyment raises danger.
- To recognise that God, being love personified, could do no other.

THE CREATURE WITH SENSES

- 1. When God created other intelligences, did He endow them with faculties by which they could experience pleasure and enjoyment?
1 Tim. 6:17 (last part)**

“It was the Maker of all things who ordained the wonderful adaptation of means to end, of supply to need. It was He who in the material world provided that every desire implanted should be met. It was He who created the human soul, with its capacity for knowing and for loving. And He is not in Himself such as to leave the demands of the soul unsatisfied.”
—*Education*, p. 133.

- 2. What can we learn from one of the most honoured of God's creatures? Ezek. 28:14-17**

“The greatness and power with which the Creator endowed Lucifer he has perverted; and yet, when it suits his purpose, he can impart to men sentiments that are enchanting. Everything in nature comes from God; yet Satan can inspire his agents with thoughts that appear elevating and noble.”
—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 176.

THE DANGER OF DESIRE TO ENJOY

3. Having given to His intelligent creatures the capacity to enjoy and therefore to desire, is it evident that within this capacity lies the possibility to sin? Gen. 3:6

“Our first parents, though created innocent and holy, were not placed beyond the possibility of wrongdoing. God made them free moral agents, capable of appreciating the wisdom and benevolence of His character and the justice of His requirements, and with full liberty to yield or to withhold obedience. They were to enjoy communion with God and with holy angels; but before they could be rendered eternally secure, their loyalty must be tested. At the very beginning of man's existence a check was placed upon the desire for self-indulgence, the fatal passion that lay at the foundation of Satan's fall. The tree of knowledge, which stood near the tree of life in the midst of the garden, was to be a test of the obedience, faith, and love of our parents. While permitted to eat freely of every other tree, they were forbidden to taste of this, on pain of death. They were also to be exposed to the temptations of Satan; but if they endured the trial, they would finally be placed beyond his power, to enjoy perpetual favor with God.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48.

4. While sin is defined as the transgression of the law, how is temptation that leads to it articulated? James 1:13-15

“The reason many in this age of the world make no greater advancement in the divine life is because they interpret the will of God to be just what

they will to do. While following their own desires, they flatter themselves that they are conforming to God's will. These have no conflicts with self. There are others who for a time are successful in the struggle against their selfish desire for pleasure and ease. They are sincere and earnest, but grow weary of protracted effort, of daily death, of ceaseless turmoil. Indolence seems inviting, death to self repulsive; and they close their drowsy eyes and fall under the power of temptation instead of resisting it.” —*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 565.

5. Do we recognise that those endowments of the capacity for pleasure and enjoyment can be a source of sin if they are not harnessed by the power of godly choice? Prov. 16:32

“The power of the truth should be sufficient to sustain and console in every adversity. It is in enabling its possessor to triumph over affliction that the religion of Christ reveals its true value. It brings the appetites, the passions, and the emotions under the control of reason and conscience, and disciplines the thoughts to flow in a healthful channel. And then the tongue will not be left to dishonor God by expressions of sinful repining.” —*Mind, Character, and Personality Vol. 1*, p. 124.

CREATION OF LOVE

6. Why is it that in the creation of other intelligences God could do no other than to endow them with that capacity of enjoyment? Deut. 30:19, 20

“There are thousands today echoing the same rebellious complaint against God. They do not see that to deprive man of the freedom of choice would be to rob him of his prerogative as an intelligent being, and make him a mere automaton. It is not God's purpose to coerce the will. Man was created a free moral agent. Like the inhabitants of all other worlds, he must

be subjected to the test of obedience; but he is never brought into such a position that yielding to evil becomes a matter of necessity. No temptation or trial is permitted to come to him which he is unable to resist. God made such ample provision that man need never have been defeated in the conflict with Satan.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 331.

7. How well does Inspiration convey that it was God’s attribute of love which installed this capacity of enjoyment? Gen. 2:8, 9, 15

“Well, what are we doing with the gifts that God has so richly bestowed upon us? Do we not overlook the most precious things in nature? Do we not fail to appreciate the things that are lovely and charming to the senses, and manifest no gratitude, and have no thankfulness to return to God, who has provided these very things as an expression of his love toward us? Do we closely investigate these treasures in various ways, that we may take in all the depth of his love in providing them for our comfort and delight? Do the glories of earth, and sea, and sky, kindle in our hearts grateful, happy thoughts of God? Do you read in the lofty trees, in the waving grass, in the flowers of the field, the lesson that is taught there,—that God loves you?”
—*The Signs of the Times*, June 29, 1888.

MEDITATION

“We are to see and enjoy the works of God in the beauties of nature, and in them read the love of God to man, which should ever call forth from our hearts a response of gratitude and love to our Creator. As we look upon the things of natural loveliness, they have ever a softening, subduing influence upon the mind and character; and these things of nature are the expression of the love of God to man; for the Lord is a lover of the beautiful. The shrubs and flowers, with their varied tints, are God's ministers, carrying the mind up from nature to nature's God. Christ, the world's Redeemer, made these flowers of natural loveliness, to delight the senses, and to teach to the inhabitants of earth lessons of God's love, and care, and continual working for the happiness and benefit of his children—to teach them that God loves the beautiful. Jesus said: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That

even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”
—*The Review and Herald*, Oct. 11, 1887.

Creation of Man in God's Image

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...
Genesis 1:26*

OBJECTIVES

- To revisit the Biblical account of the origin of man.
- To examine the detail of God's image in man.
- To introduce God's forethought behind His image in humanity.

GOD'S DESIGN FOR MAN

- 1. When God decided to create the human being, what became evident in that He did so after He had created all the other life systems? Gen. 1:26; Heb. 2:7, 8 (first sentence)**

“Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands. Man, made in the divine image, could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature.” —*Confrontation*, p. 10.

- 2. In consideration of man being created as a sovereign over God's works, can we comprehend what that encompasses? Ps. 8:6-8**

“While they remained true to God, Adam and his companion were to bear rule over the earth. Unlimited control was given them over every living thing. The lion and the lamb sported peacefully around them or lay down together at their feet. The happy birds flitted about them without fear; and as their glad songs ascended to the praise of their Creator, Adam and Eve united with them in thanksgiving to the Father and the Son.” —*Be Like Jesus*, p. 228.

DETAILS OF GOD’S IMAGE IN MAN

3. What is encompassed by the fact that man was created in God’s image in order to have dominion over God’s works? Gen. 1:27

“Adam was crowned king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as He had not given to any other creature. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of His hands.

“Created to be "the image and glory of God," Adam and Eve had received endowments not unworthy of their high destiny. . . . Every faculty of mind and soul reflected the Creator's glory. Endowed with high mental and spiritual gifts, Adam and Eve were made but "little lower than the angels."” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 40.

“His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.” —*Conflict and Courage*, p. 11.

4. To what degree was Adam made into God’s image? Ezek. 1:26-28

“Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is "the express image" (Hebrews 1:3) of the Father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God and in perfect obedience to His will.”

“As man came forth from the hand of his Creator, he was of lofty stature and perfect symmetry. His countenance bore the ruddy tint of health and glowed with the light of life and joy. Adam's height was much greater than that of men who now inhabit the earth.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 45.

“Created to be "the image and glory of God," Adam and Eve had received endowments not unworthy of their high destiny. Graceful and symmetrical in form, regular and beautiful in feature, their countenances glowing with the tint of health and the light of joy and hope, they bore in outward resemblance the likeness of their Maker.” —*My Life Today*, p. 126.

GOD'S FORETHOUGHT

5. Is there a hidden reason behind God's construction of a being in His own image? Rev. 3:21, 22; Gal. 4:6, 7

“Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God. . . . Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image.” —*My Life Today*, p. 126.

6. In God's forethought, knowing ahead of time man's loss of His image due to sin, did God provide a physical template to which He could join Himself to deal with the whole sin question? Heb. 2:6-9, 14-17

“Christ became a man that he might mediate between man and God. He clothed his divinity with humanity, he associated with the human race, that with his human arm he might encircle humanity, and with his divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this humiliation on his part was that he might restore to man the original mind, the image of God, which he lost in Eden through Satan's alluring temptations, that man might realize that it is for his present and eternal good to obey the requirements of God. Disobedience is not in accordance with the nature which God gave to man in Eden.” —*The Signs of the Times*, Oct. 14, 1897.

7. How does Inspiration express this bonding of God with man both in creation and redemption? Eph. 2:14-16

“By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; He gave Him to the fallen race. To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder." God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. The I AM is the Daysman between God and humanity, laying His hand upon both. He who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," is not ashamed to call us brethren. Hebrews 7:26; 2:11. In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is

enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25.

Sin and God's Forethought

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself... Ephesians 1:5

OBJECTIVES

- To revisit and expand on God's ability to see the end from the beginning.
- To observe how God made provision at the beginning for the end.
- To see the all-comprehensive application of the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world.

GOD'S FORESIGHT

1. How thoroughly does God impress us with His ability to declare the end from the beginning? Isa. 46:9-11

“Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?” “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” “I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” It is impossible for the finite minds of men to fully comprehend the character or the works of the Infinite One. To the keenest intellect, to the most powerful and highly educated mind, that holy Being must ever remain clothed in mystery.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, p. 698.

2. Where does Jesus fit into this description of God's end-from-the beginning component? Rev. 1:8

“God and Christ knew from the beginning, of the apostasy of Satan and of the fall of Adam through the deceptive power of the apostate. The plan of salvation was designed to redeem the fallen race, to give them another trial. Christ was appointed to the office of Mediator from the creation of God, set up from everlasting to be our substitute and surety. Before the world was made, it was arranged that the divinity of Christ should be enshrouded in humanity. "A body," said Christ, "hast thou prepared me" (Hebrews 10:5). But He did not come in human form until the fullness of time had expired. Then He came to our world, a babe in Bethlehem.” —*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 250.

GOD'S PROVISION FOR SIN'S END

3. What was decided by the Godhead before the foundation of the world? 1 Pet. 1:18-20

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

4. Can it be shown that even for the fall of Lucifer there was provided recovery by him discovering the knowledge of the Son of God? 2 Pet. 3:9

“The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father's throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both. About the throne gathered the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng--"ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Revelation 5:11.), the most exalted angels, as ministers and subjects, rejoicing in the light that fell upon them from the presence of the Deity. Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will. The Son of God had wrought the Father's will in the creation of all the hosts of heaven; and to Him, as well as to God, their homage and allegiance were due. Christ was still to exercise divine power, in the creation of the earth and its inhabitants. But in all this He would not seek power or exaltation for Himself contrary to God's plan, but would exalt the Father's glory and execute His purposes of beneficence and love.

“The angels joyfully acknowledged the supremacy of Christ, and prostrating themselves before Him, poured out their love and adoration. Lucifer bowed with them, but in his heart there was a strange, fierce conflict. Truth, justice, and loyalty were struggling against envy and jealousy. The influence of the holy angels seemed for a time to carry him with them. As songs of praise ascended in melodious strains, swelled by thousands of glad voices, the spirit of evil seemed vanquished; unutterable love thrilled his entire being; his soul went out, in harmony with the sinless worshippers, in love to the Father and the Son.” —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

5. How far-reaching was this provision designed for the whole universe of God's intelligent creatures? Eph. 3:9-11

“Through Christ's redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all are secure

from apostasy. By love's self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

GOD'S FAR-REACHING PROVISION

6. When Jesus fulfilled that which was predestined before the foundation of the world, what was achieved in the eyes of all unfallen worlds and angels? Heb. 2:14

“The battle going on in this world was witnessed by the heavenly universe, and by the worlds unfallen. They saw the purposes of hate cherished by the wily foe against the only-begotten Son of God. Satan's enmity against truth and righteousness was seen. By his treatment of Christ, Satan demonstrated the falsity of his own attributes, and of his deceiving, crooked pretensions as the friend of God. He showed himself to be the enemy of God and of man. The sacrificial offering upon the cross of Calvary sounded the death knell of Satan and of all who choose him as their leader. He fell forever from the sympathy of the heavenly angels.”
—*The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897.

7. To what other far-reaching result was the sacrifice of Christ predestined? Eph. 1:4-6

“In the council of heaven, provision was made that men, though transgressors, should not perish in their disobedience, but, through faith in Christ as their substitute and surety, might become the elect of God, predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving His only-begotten Son to pay man's ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse

to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6*, p. 1114.

MEDITATION

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid the covenant was made that all who were obedient, all who should through the abundant grace provided become holy in character and without blame before God by appropriating that grace, should be children of God.

“We owe everything to grace, free grace, sovereign grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our adoption to heirship with Christ.”
—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 54.

Activity of the Godhead

...and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me. Isaiah 48:16

OBJECTIVES

- To reaffirm the activity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in creation.
- To behold the members of the Godhead active in salvation.
- To open our hearts to the activity of the heavenly Trio.

THE GODHEAD CREATING

1. How clearly does the Bible show that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were engaged in the creation of the living universe?

Heb. 1:1, 2; 11:3; John 1:1-3; Gen. 1:1-3; Job 33:4

2. Does the apostle Paul connect creation with the Godhead?

Rom. 1:19, 20

ACTIVITY OF SALVATION

3. If the three members of the Godhead were active in creation, can it be revealed that they would be even more manifest in the work of salvational re-creation? John 14:16, 17

“The creative energy that called the worlds into existence is in the word of God. This word imparts power; it begets life. Every command is a promise; accepted by the will, received into the soul, it brings with it the life of the Infinite One. It transforms the nature and re-creates the soul in the image of God.” —*Education*, p. 126.

“The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness.” —*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6*, p. 350.

4. Is it revealed in abundant clarity by Inspiration that the three powers of the Godhead are active in man’s full recovery to the image of God? John 14:23

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Saviour. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” —*Evangelism*, p. 615.

“Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfilment of the covenant that God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, with His Son, and with His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then co-operate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your behalf. Doing this you will reveal to the world the principles of righteousness.” —*The Signs of the Times*, June 19, 1901.

5. Who of the heavenly trio was sent in human form to demonstrate the living elements of the gospel? Isa. 48:16; 61:1-3

“The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave Themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption. In order fully to carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? God would make it impossible for man to say that He could have done more. With Christ He gave all the resources of heaven, that nothing might be wanting in the plan for man's uplifting. Here is love--the contemplation of which should fill the soul with inexpressible gratitude! Oh, what love, what matchless love! The contemplation of this love will cleanse the soul from all selfishness. It will lead the disciple to deny self, take up the cross, and follow the Redeemer.” —*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

HUMAN COOPERATION NEEDED

6. What is the part the sinner needs to fulfill in order to benefit from the activity of the Godhead? Prov. 23:26; Phil. 2:12, 13

“The Lord God through Christ holds out His hand all the day long in invitations to the needy. He will receive all. He welcomes all. He rejects none. It is His glory to pardon the chief of sinners. He will take the prey from the mighty, He will deliver the captive, He will pluck the brand from the burning. He will lower the golden chain of His mercy to the greatest depths of human wretchedness and guilt and lift up the debased soul contaminated with sin. But man must will to come, and cooperate in the work of saving his soul by availing himself of opportunities given him of God. The Lord forces no one. The spotless wedding robe of Christ's

righteousness is prepared to clothe the sinner, but if he refuses it he must perish.” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 235.

**7. Having learnt from question two that the activities of the Godhead can be read in creation around us, what do we learn from nature as to our part in cooperation with the Godhead?
Heb. 6:7**

“The plant grows by receiving that which God has provided to sustain its life. It sends down its roots into the earth. It drinks in the sunshine, the dew, and the rain. It receives the life-giving properties from the air. So the Christian is to grow by co-operating with the divine agencies. Feeling our helplessness, we are to improve all the opportunities granted us to gain a fuller experience. As the plant takes root in the soil, so we are to take deep root in Christ. As the plant receives the sunshine, the dew, and the rain, we are to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. The work is to be done "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6. If we keep our minds stayed upon Christ, He will come unto us "as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3. As the Sun of Righteousness, He will arise upon us "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2. We shall "grow as the lily." We shall "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." Hosea 14:5, 7. By constantly relying upon Christ as our personal Saviour, we shall grow up into Him in all things who is our head.”
—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 66.

MEDITATION

“The Spirit is constantly showing to the soul glimpses of the things of God. A divine presence seems to hover near, and then if the mind responds, if the door of the heart is opened, Jesus abides with the human agent. The Spirit's energy is working in the heart and leading the inclination of the will to Jesus by living faith and complete dependence on divine power to will and to do of His good pleasure. The Spirit taketh the things of God, just as fast as the soul resolves and acts in accordance with the light revealed.” —*Ye Shall Receive Power*, p. 178.

Atonement

...God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Romans 8:3

OBJECTIVES

- To explore Inspiration for the meaning of atonement.
- To study the degree of God's entwinement with humanity.
- To comprehend the destruction of sin by the atonement.

MEANING OF ATONEMENT

- 1. To comprehend the atonement, how does God articulate the rhetoric to bring it to our understanding? Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14, 17, 18; 1 Pet. 2:24; Rom. 5:11**

- 2. In creating humanity in His own image, how did this enable God to reach man in His effort to restore him from sin? Phil. 2:6-8; Heb. 2:6-11**

“The apostle called upon them to consider the example of Christ. The Commander of heaven gave Himself to a life of humiliation and poverty that He might stand side by side with the fallen race, to restore the moral image of God in man. The Lord Jesus was willing to become poor, that

through His humiliation and His death on the cross He might pay the ransom for us.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6*, p. 1103.

“Jesus became a man that He might mediate between man and God. He clothed His divinity with humanity, He associated with the human race, that with His long human arm He might encircle humanity, and with His divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this, that He might restore to man the original mind which he lost in Eden through Satan's alluring temptation; that man might realize that it is for his present and eternal good to obey the requirements of God. Disobedience is not in accordance with the nature which God gave to man in Eden.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 7*, p. 926.

3. How perfectly is all the detail of questions one and two summarised by the Spirit of Prophecy?

“The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters.”

“All who comprehend the spirituality of the law, all who realize its power as a detector of sin, are in just as helpless a condition as is Satan himself, unless they accept the atonement provided for them in the remedial sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is our atonement--at-one-ment with God.” —*S.D.A. Bible Commentary Vol. 6*, pp. 1074, 1077.

“Jesus encircled the race with His humanity, and united divinity with humanity; thus moral power is brought to man through the merits of Jesus. Those who profess His name through His grace are to sanctify themselves that they may exert a sanctifying influence on all with whom they associate.” —*Selected Messages Book 3*, p. 198.

GOD'S ENTWINEMENT

4. To what extent did God in Jesus entwine Himself with sinful humanity? 2 Cor. 5:21; Isa. 53:12

“The transgression of God's law made the death of Christ essential to save man and yet maintain the dignity and honor of the law. Christ took upon Himself the condemnation of sin. He opened His bosom to the woes of man. He who knew no sin became sin for us.

“As man's substitute and surety, the iniquity of men was laid upon Christ; He was counted a transgressor that He might redeem them from the curse of the law. . . . He, the Sin-Bearer, endures judicial punishment for iniquity and becomes sin itself for man.” —*The Faith I Live By*, p. 104.

5. Speaking of entwinement, how realistically was this expressed by Jesus? Lam. 1:12-14; Ps. 40:12

“In His humanity Christ was tried with as much greater temptation, with as much more persevering energy than man is tried by the evil one, as His nature was greater than man's. This is a deep mysterious truth, that Christ is bound to humanity by the most sensitive sympathies. The evil works, the evil thoughts, the evil words of every son and daughter of Adam press upon His divine soul. The sins of men called for retribution upon Himself, for He had become man's substitute, and took upon Him the sins of the world. He bore the sins of every sinner, for all transgressions were imputed unto Him. . . . "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3).” —*That I May Know Him*, p. 66.

A COUNTERPART BY ATONEMENT

6. What was the result of God becoming one with the sinner? 1 John 3:8, 9; Rom. 8:3, 4

“He who knows the depths of the world's misery and despair, knows by what means to bring relief. . . . Although human beings have abused their mercies, wasted their talents, and lost the dignity of godlike manhood, the Creator is to be glorified in their redemption.

“In order to destroy sin and its results He gave His best Beloved, and He has put it in our power, through cooperation with Him, to bring this scene of misery to an end.” —*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 189.

7. By Christ becoming entwined with the sinner, how may the believing, repenting sinner benefit from Christ's entwinement with him? John 17:21

“Man was the crowning act of the creation of God, made in the image of God, and designed to be a counterpart of God. . . . Man is very dear to God, because he was formed in His own image.” —*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 45.

“How man can be a counterpart of Jesus Christ is beyond human comprehension. But the Holy Spirit can strengthen our spiritual eyesight, enabling us to see what our natural eyes cannot see, or our ears hear, or our minds comprehend. By the Spirit which searches all things, even the deep things of God, have been revealed precious truths which cannot be described by pen or voice.

“In all who will submit themselves to the Holy Spirit a new principle of life is to be implanted; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity.” —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 34.

MEDITATION

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” Here again the Lord Jesus presents his relationship to the Father as the exact counterpart of our relationship to himself. Let these lessons, so full of instruction, be carefully considered. Nowhere else can be found such large and comforting assurances. Nothing shows so much as this how the Lord Jesus estimates the souls he came to save, and his purpose in exalting them to the closest, most elevated and sacred companionship with himself. He identifies man with himself before the Lord and the whole universe.

“What a favor, what mercy, what inexpressible love, is thus revealed! This intimacy of Jesus with man can be brought about only through his taking upon himself our sins and imputing unto us his own righteousness.”
—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 28, 1891.

Man Forever One With God

For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him... 2 Timothy 2:11, 12

OBJECTIVES

- To realise the bond of man with God forged by the atonement.
- To comprehend the permanence of God's union with man.
- To be informed of Christ's humanity carried into eternity.

GOD IN MAN'S NATURE

1. Who was the child that was born to Mary in Bethlehem?

Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:23; Micah 5:2

“How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one.”

—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 48.

“The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Saviour, is God "manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). . . . "God with us" is the surety of our deliverance from sin, the assurance of our power to obey the law of heaven.”

—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 79.

2. Contemplating the conception of “that holy thing” in Mary’s womb, how inseparably did God combine Himself with the human race? Isa. 9:6

“In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us. . . . "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: . . ." (Isaiah 9:6). God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. . . . In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.”
—*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 79.

A PERMANENT BOND

**3. Does the Bible clearly identify Jesus as a man? 1 Tim. 2:5;
Rom. 1:3**

“Christ did not make believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same" (Hebrews 2:14). He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a man, even the Man Christ Jesus. "This man," writes Paul, "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Hebrews 3:3).” —*Selected Messages Book 1*, p. 247.

4. How did the priests and rulers of Judah only see Jesus standing there before them? John 10:32, 33

“To human eyes Christ was only a man, yet He was a perfect man.”
—*That I May Know Him*, p. 111.

5. Just as every human can die, was the human Jesus so one with humanity that He also was subject to death? Heb. 2:14

“The Son of God stepped down from His heavenly throne, laid off His royal robe and kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity. He came to die for us, to lie in the tomb as human beings must, and to be raised for our justification.” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 13.

FOREVER A HUMAN

6. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, did He retain His humanity and continued in heaven as a man? Rev. 1:13

“Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God, the One who has pleaded before the Father, “I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.”” —*In Heavenly Places*, p. 13.

7. In uniting Himself with humanity, what has God done for us in Jesus? Eph. 2:4-7

“By His life and His death, Christ has achieved even more than recovery from the ruin wrought through sin. It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us.... To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature.... God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven. It is the "Son of man" who shares the throne of the universe. It is the "Son of man" whose name shall be called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).... In Christ the family of earth and the family of heaven are bound together. Christ glorified is our brother. Heaven is enshrined in humanity, and humanity is enfolded in the bosom of Infinite Love.”

—*Reflecting Christ*, p. 45.

MEDITATION

“Having undertaken the work of man's redemption, the Father would spare nothing, however dear, which was essential for the completion of his work. He would make opportunities for men; he would pour upon them his blessings; he would heap favor upon favor, gift upon gift, until the whole treasury of heaven was open to those whom he came to save. Having collected all the riches of the universe, and laid open all the resources of his divine nature, God gave them all for the use of man. They were his free gift. What an ocean of love is circulating, like a divine atmosphere, around the world! What manner of love is this, that the eternal God should adopt human nature in the person of his Son, and carry the same into the highest heaven!” —*The Youth Instructor*, July 29, 1897.

An Enlightened Universe

*To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.
Ephesians 3:10*

OBJECTIVES

- To summarise the mystery of the Godhead in action
- To see that God’s hidden mystery could only come to light via this earth.
- To appreciate God’s strategic activity to enlighten the universe for sin never to rise again.

THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION

- 1. What is written regarding the wisdom of God that was hidden to all His creatures until He could unfold it? Eph. 3:8-11**

“Even these words fail of expressing the greatness and the glory of God’s purpose to be accomplished through His people. Not to this world only but to the universe are we to make manifest the principles of His kingdom.”
—*Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6*, p. 13.

- 2. How does the mystery of God’s wisdom play out here on earth for the universe to witness? Col. 1:26-28; 1 Tim. 3:16**

“The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created, endowed with power to do the divine will. But the defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent, and yet it did not deter Him from carrying out His eternal purpose; for the Lord would establish His throne in righteousness. God knows the end from the beginning. . . . Therefore redemption was not an afterthought . . . but an eternal purpose to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created.

“The creation of the worlds, the mystery of the gospel, are for one purpose, to make manifest to all created intelligences, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character. By the marvelous display of His love in giving "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the glory of God is revealed to lost humanity and to the intelligences of other worlds.” —*God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 129.

3. As Jesus was approaching the experience of the cross, were His words descriptive of the resolution of the sin problem affecting the universe? John 12:30-33

“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."” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 626.

MYSTERY MANIFEST ON EARTH

4. Did God in His divine foresight select this planet to be the place where He could unfold His mystery to the universe? 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Eph. 3:10

“Our little world is the lesson book of the universe. God's wonderful purpose of grace, the mystery of redeeming love, is the theme into which "angels desire to look", and it will be their study throughout endless ages.”

—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 45.

“Let us notice the steps that the Son of man had to take in order to carry out the plan of salvation. He stepped down from the royal throne, laid aside His royal robes, clothed His divinity with humanity, and consented to come to this world. This world—right here—was to be the field of battle where Christ and Satan, the prince of this earth, should engage in conflict. And the question to be settled was How could God be just and true to His law and yet justify the sinner? This could be done only by the sacrifice of the Son of God. . . .

“It was difficult to uproot Satan from the affection of the angels in heaven.”

—*Christ Triumphant*, p. 216.

5. In reflection on the mystery of Christ's incarnation, is it evident that this planet was created for the very purpose of being the lesson book for the universe? Eph. 3:9; Rom. 16:25, 26; 1 Pet. 1:19, 20

“The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created and endowed with power to do the divine will. The fall of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an after thought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose, suffered to be wrought out for the blessing, not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created.” —*The Signs of the Times*, Feb. 13, 1893.

AN ETERNALLY SAFE UNIVERSE

6. Having witnessed the true nature of Lucifer in his challenge against God's justice, what is the impact on the inhabitants of other worlds and the angels? Ps. 111:6-9

“Through Christ's redeeming work the government of God stands justified. The Omnipotent One is made known as the God of love. Satan's charges are refuted, and his character unveiled. Rebellion can never again arise. Sin can never again enter the universe. Through eternal ages all are secure from apostasy. By love's self-sacrifice, the inhabitants of earth and heaven are bound to their Creator in bonds of indissoluble union.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.

7. As witnesses of the activities of the Godhead and the hateful treatment by Satan of the Son of God, are the inhabitants of the universe eternally secure from any doubts of God's love? Nah. 1:9

“The cross of Calvary, while it declares the law immutable, proclaims to the universe that the wages of sin is death. In the Saviour's expiring cry, "It is finished," the death knell of Satan was rung. The great controversy which had been so long in progress was then decided, and the final eradication of evil was made certain.”

“The whole universe will have become witnesses to the nature and results of sin. And its utter extermination, which in the beginning would have brought fear to angels and dishonor to God, will now vindicate His love and establish His honor before the universe of beings who delight to do His will, and in whose heart is His law. Never will evil again be manifest. Says the word of God: "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9. The law of God, which Satan has reproached as the yoke of

bondage, will be honored as the law of liberty. A tested and proved creation will never again be turned from allegiance to Him whose character has been fully manifested before them as fathomless love and infinite wisdom.” —*The Great Controversy*, pp. 503, 504.

MEDITATION

“The work of redemption will be complete. In the place where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds. The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God. Here, where the Son of God tabernacled in humanity; where the King of glory lived and suffered and died,—here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, "and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." And through endless ages as the redeemed walk in the light of the Lord, they will praise Him for His unspeakable Gift,— Immanuel, "God with us."”

—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26.