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Lesson 1 – God's Purpose for His Church

1) What is God's church to reveal to humanity?
Ephesians 3:10-11 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be _____ by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory.

2) What will God's house be called?
Isaiah 56:7-8 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of _____: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for _____ _____. The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.
3) What are God's plans for His Church?
Ezekiel 34:29-30 And I will raise up for them a plant of _____, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am _____ _____, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord GOD.
4) What are we called to do?
Isaiah 43:10-12 Ye are my _____, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that _____ _____ _____.
5) What will God do with and for us?
Isaiah 42:6-7 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine _____, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a _____ of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.
6) Does God answer when we cry out?
Isaiah 49:8 Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I _____ thee, and in a day of salvation have I _____ thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;
7) What scars will Jesus keep in Heaven?
Isaiah 49:15-16 Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have _____ thee upon the _____ of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

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The church is God's fortress, His city of refuge, which He holds in a revolted world. Any betrayal of the church is treachery to Him who has bought mankind with the blood of His only-begotten Son. From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth. In every age the Lord has had His watchmen, who have borne a faithful testimony to the generation in which they lived. These sentinels gave the message of warning; and when they were called to lay off their armor, others took up the work. God brought these witnesses into covenant relation with Himself, uniting the church on earth with the church in heaven. He has sent forth His angels to minister to His church, and the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against His people.

Through centuries of persecution, conflict, and darkness, God has sustained His church. Not one cloud has fallen upon it that He has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork His work, that He has not foreseen. All has taken place as He predicted. He has not left His church forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and that which His Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell has been brought about. All His purposes will be fulfilled. His law is linked with His throne, and no power of evil can destroy it. Truth is inspired and guarded by God; and it will triumph over all opposition.

8) How did Jesus teach the Disciples what the Kingdom of God is like?
Mark 4:30-32 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of _____ _____, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out _____ _____; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

Jesus could not employ the kingdoms of the world as a similitude. In society He found nothing with which to compare it. Earthly kingdoms rule by the ascendancy of physical power; but from Christ's kingdom every carnal weapon, every instrument of coercion, is banished. This kingdom is to uplift and ennoble humanity. God's church is the court of holy life, filled with varied gifts and endowed with the Holy Spirit. The members are to find their happiness in the happiness of those whom they help and bless.

9) Does God want to heal this Earth?
Ezekiel 47:8-9 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be _____. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall _____…
Ezekiel 47:12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his _____, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for _____.

10) What did John see in vision?
Revelation 22:1-4 And he shewed me a pure _____ of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the _____ of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the _____ of the nations. And there shall be no more curse:

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but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

11) How do people lose sight of God?
Romans 1:21-22 Because that, when they knew God, they _____ him not as God, neither were _____; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be _____, they became fools,

God chose Israel to reveal His character to men. He desired them to be as wells of salvation in the world. To them were committed the oracles of heaven, the revelation of God's will. In the early days of Israel the nations of the world, through corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God.

The people of Israel lost sight of their high privileges as God's representatives. They forgot God and failed to fulfill their holy mission. The blessings they received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages they appropriated for their own glorification. They shut themselves away from the world in order to escape temptation. The restrictions that God had placed upon their association with idolaters as a means of preventing them from conforming to the practices of the heathen, they used to build up a wall of separation between themselves and all other nations. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example.

12) What were God's people like when Jesus appeared at His 1st coming?
Jeremiah 2:21 Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the _____ plant of a strange vine unto me?
Hosea 10:1 Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto _____: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.

13) What will God do with false messages?
Isaiah 5:3-5 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth _____ grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be _____ down:

The Jewish leaders thought themselves too wise to need instruction, too righteous to need salvation, too highly honored to need the honor that comes from Christ. The Saviour turned from them to entrust to others the privileges they had abused and the work they had slighted. God's glory must be revealed, His word established. Christ's kingdom must be set up in the world. The salvation of God must be made known in the cities of the wilderness; and the disciples were called to do the work that the Jewish leaders had failed to do.

14) What did Jesus declare as He left Herod's Temple for the last time?
Matthew 23:38-39 Behold, your house is left unto you _____. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, _____ is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

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15) How did Jesus rebuild His Church?

Mark 3:13-15 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he _____ _____, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to _____, And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out _____:

Can you see God has a plan?

Do you want to be part of His designs?

When is the time to live life to the fullest?

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Lesson 2 – The Great Commission

Based on Luke 24:36-51; Acts 1:4-12

1) What did the Priests and rulers goad Christ with on the Cross?
Matthew 27:42-43 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will _____ him. He trusted in God; let him _____ him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

After the death of Christ, the disciples were well-nigh overcome by discouragement. Their Master had been rejected, condemned, and crucified.

2) What did they keep saying to themselves?
Luke 24:21 But we _____ that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.
3) What question did Jesus ask the women that were weeping for him?
Luke 23:31 For if they do these things in a _____ tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Jesus had several times attempted to open the future to His disciples, but they had not cared to think about what He said. Because of this His death had come to them as a surprise; and afterward, as they reviewed the past and saw the result of their unbelief, they were filled with sorrow. When Christ was crucified, they did not believe that He would rise. He had stated plainly that He was to rise on the third day, but they were perplexed to know what He meant. This lack of comprehension left them at the time of His death in utter hopelessness.

4) How did most of the Disciples see Jesus after His resurrection?
Luke 24:36-37 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were _____ and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a _____.
5) How did He calm them down?
Luke 24:38-40 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? _____ my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a _____ hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.
6) What did Jesus do for them?
Luke 24:45-48 Then opened he their _____, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to _____ from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are _____ of these things.

For forty days Christ remained on the earth, preparing the disciples for the work before them and explaining that which heretofore they had been unable to comprehend. He spoke of the prophecies concerning His advent, His rejection by the Jews, and His death, showing that every specification of these prophecies had been fulfilled. He told them that they were to regard this fulfillment of prophecy as an assurance of the power that would attend them in their future labors.

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7) What are Christ's disciples able to say?
2 Timothy 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not _____: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have _____ unto him against that day.

They began to realize the nature and extent of their work, to see that they were to proclaim to the world the truths entrusted to them. The events of Christ's life, His death and resurrection, the prophecies pointing to these events, the mysteries of the plan of salvation, the power of Jesus for the remission of sins, to all these things they had been witnesses, and they were to make them known to the world.

8) What was Christ's commission to the Disciples and us?
Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All _____ is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, _____ them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: _____ them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the _____. Amen.

Before ascending to heaven, Christ gave His disciples their commission. He told them that they were to be the executors of the will in which He bequeathed to the world the treasures of eternal life. You have been witnesses of My life of sacrifice in behalf of the world, He said to them. You have seen My labors for Israel. And although My people would not come to Me that they might have life, although priests and rulers have done unto Me as they listed, although they have rejected Me, they shall have still another opportunity of accepting the Son of God.

9) What promise is still good?
John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in _____ _____ cast out.

10) Who or what is our real enemy?
Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against _____ and _____, but against principalities, against _____, against the rulers of the _____ of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Christ did not tell His disciples that their work would be easy. He showed them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against them. He assured them that He would be with them; and that if they would go forth in faith, they should move under the shield of Omnipotence. He bade them be brave and strong; for One mightier than angels would be in their ranks—the General of the armies of heaven. He made full provision for the prosecution of their work and took upon Himself the responsibility of its success.

11) What advice did Paul give us?
Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole _____ of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

12) What promises should we never forget?
Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and of a good _____, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not _____ thee, nor forsake thee.

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Hebrews 13:5-6 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will _____ leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my _____, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Labor in faith and confidence; for the time will never come when God will forsake you. He will be with you always, helping you to perform your duty, guiding, comforting, sanctifying, sustaining you, giving you success in speaking words that shall draw the attention of others to heaven.

13) What were Christ's Words just before going back to Heaven?
Acts1:4-5 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from _____, but wait for the _____ of the _____, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the _____ _____ not many days hence.

14) How did the Disciples reply?
Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to _____?

15) What was His reply?
Acts 1:7-8 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the _____, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the _____ _____ is come upon you: and ye shall be _____ unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

It was not necessary for them to see further into the future than the revelations He had enabled them to see. Their work was to proclaim the gospel message.

16) What was important for the Disciples to do?
Luke 24:49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but _____ ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

The Saviour knew that no argument, however logical, would melt hard hearts or break through the crust of worldliness and selfishness. He knew that His disciples must receive the heavenly endowment; that the gospel would be effective only as it was proclaimed by hearts made warm and lips made eloquent by a living knowledge of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. The work committed to the disciples would require great efficiency; for the tide of evil ran deep and strong against them. A vigilant, determined leader was in command of the forces of darkness, and the followers of Christ could battle for the right only through the help that God, by His Spirit, would give them.

17) What amazing testimony did Luke give us in the Book of Acts?
Acts 6:7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the _____ were obedient to the faith.

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There were in Jerusalem many who had secretly believed on Jesus, and many who had been deceived by the priests and rulers. To these also the gospel was to be presented. They were to be called to repentance. The wonderful truth that through Christ alone could remission of sins be obtained was to be made plain. While all Jerusalem was stirred by the thrilling events of the past few weeks, the preaching of the gospel would make the deepest impression.

18) What did Jesus do next?
Luke 24:51 And it came to pass, while he _____ them, he was parted from them, and _____ up into heaven.

19) What did the angels sing as they went heavenward with Him?
Psalms 68:32-34 Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the _____; Selah: To him that _____ upon the heavens of heavens, which were of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice. Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the _____.

20) Who interrupted the Disciples as they look upward?
Acts 1:10-11 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in _____ apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in _____ _____ as ye have seen him go into heaven.

21) How will Jesus appear when He returns?
Mark 9:3 And his raiment became shining, _____ white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest; so, Christ laid aside His royal robes and garbed Himself with humanity and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim. As the high priest, after performing his service in the holy of holies, came forth to the waiting congregation in his pontifical robes; so, Christ will come the second time, clothed in garments of whitest white. He will come in His own glory, and in the glory of His Father, and all the angelic host will escort Him on His way.

22) What promise burned within the Disciples hearts?
John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Those who have loved Him and waited for Him, He will crown with glory and honor and immortality. The righteous dead will come forth from their graves, and those who are alive will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. They will hear the voice of Jesus, sweeter than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, saying to them, Your warfare is accomplished.

23) What are we and the Disciples waiting to hear?
Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye _____ of my Father, _____ the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Can you see God made some BIG promises? **Do you want to see them fulfilled?**

When is the time let Him lead?

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Lesson 3 - Pentecost

Based on Acts 2:1-39

1) Were the Disciples sad when they returned to Jerusalem after Jesus' ascension?
Luke 24:51-52 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they _____ him, and returned to Jerusalem with great _____:

As the disciples returned from Olivet to Jerusalem, the people looked on them, expecting to see on their face's expressions of sorrow, confusion, and defeat; but they saw there gladness and triumph. The disciples did not now mourn over disappointed hopes. They had seen the risen Saviour, and the words of His parting promise echoed constantly in their ears.

2) How did they spend their time in Jerusalem?
Luke 24:53 And were continually in the temple, _____ and blessing God. Amen.

In obedience to Christ's command, they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father—the outpouring of the Spirit. They did not wait in idleness. They also met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus. They knew that they had a Representative in heaven, an Advocate at the throne of God. In solemn awe they bowed in prayer.

3) What Promise did they repeat?
John 16:23-24 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in _____ _____, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

4) What hope did the Disciples share with Paul?
Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh _____ for us.

As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief. As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death they understood more fully their meaning. Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds, and these they repeated to one another. They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour.

They were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven. And they determined that, so far as possible, they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world.

Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship. They drew nearer and nearer to God, and as they did this, they realized what a privilege had been theirs in being permitted to associate so closely with Christ.

5) What Wonderful Promise came to fruition?
Acts 2:1-2 And when the day of _____ was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty _____, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit's grace. And under the influence of the Spirit, words of penitence and confession mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven. Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard. All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love.

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6) What had Christ told them previously?
John 16:7,13 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the _____ will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of _____, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.

7) What appeared over the heads of those who were assembled?
Acts 2:3-4 And there appeared unto them _____ _____ like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other _____, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Holy Spirit, assuming the form of tongues of fire, rested upon those assembled. This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted. The appearance of fire signified the fervent zeal with which the apostles would labor and the power that would attend their work.

8) What does the next verse in Acts say?
Acts 2:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every _____ under heaven.

During the dispersion the Jews had been scattered to almost every part of the inhabited world, and in their exile, they had learned to speak various languages. Many of these Jews were on this occasion in Jerusalem, attending the religious festivals then in progress. Every known tongue was represented by those assembled. This diversity of languages would have been a great hindrance to the proclamation of the gospel; God therefore in a miraculous manner supplied the deficiency of the apostles.

9) What happened?
Acts 2:6-7 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his _____ language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak _____?

The Holy Spirit did for them that which they could not have accomplished for themselves in a lifetime. They could now proclaim the truths of the gospel abroad, speaking with accuracy the languages of those for whom they were laboring. This miraculous gift was a strong evidence to the world that their commission bore the signet of Heaven. From this time forth the language of the disciples was pure, simple, and accurate, whether they spoke in their native tongue or in a foreign language.

10) What did they marvel?
Acts 2:8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were _____?
11) What did the nay-sayers say?
Acts 2:13 Others mocking said, These men are full of _____ _____.

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The priests, determined to account for the miraculous power of the disciples in some natural way, declared that they were drunken from partaking largely of the new wine prepared for the feast. Some of the most ignorant of the people present seized upon this suggestion as the truth, but the more intelligent knew it to be false; and those who understood the different languages testified to the accuracy with which these languages were used by the disciples.

12) What did Peter tell the crowd?
Acts 2:14-16 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the _____ hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet _____;

13) What did he quote from the prophet Joel?
Joel 2:29-31 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my _____. And I will shew _____ in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

14) What did Peter add to that?
Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the _____ of the Lord shall be saved.

In answer to the accusation of the priests Peter showed that this demonstration was in direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, wherein he foretold that such power would come upon men to fit them for a special work.

15) To Whom did Peter turn their attention?
Acts 2:22-24 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by _____ and _____ and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath _____ _____, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

16) What did Peter quote next?
Psalms 16:10-11 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see _____. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy _____ _____ there are pleasures for evermore.

Peter did not refer to the teachings of Christ to prove his position, because he knew that the prejudice of his hearers was so great that his words on this subject would be of no effect. Instead, he spoke to them of David, who was regarded by the Jews as one of the patriarchs of their nation.

17) What did Peter say David foretold?
Acts 2:29-30 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a _____, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up _____ to sit on his throne;

18) What followed that?
Acts 2:31-32 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in _____, neither his flesh did see _____. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

The scene is one full of interest. Behold the people coming from all directions to hear the disciples witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. They press in, crowding the temple. Priests and rulers are there, the dark scowl of malignity still on their faces, their hearts still filled with abiding hatred against Christ, their hands uncleansed from the blood shed when they crucified the world's Redeemer.

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They had thought to find the apostles cowed with fear under the strong hand of oppression and murder, but they find them lifted above all fear and filled with the Spirit, proclaiming with power the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. They hear them declaring with boldness that the One so recently humiliated, derided, smitten by cruel hands, and crucified, is the Prince of life, now exalted to the right hand of God.

19) What had some present there said just a few days earlier?
Matthew 27:17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I _____ unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?
John 19:6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, _____ him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.
Matthew 27:24-25 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His _____ be on us, and on our children.

20) What did Peter say to everyone?
Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, _____, and be _____ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Peter urged home upon the convicted people the fact that they had rejected Christ because they had been deceived by priests and rulers; and that if they continued to look to these men for counsel and waited for them to acknowledge Christ before they dared to do so, they would never accept Him.

Under the influence of this heavenly illumination the scriptures that Christ had explained to the disciples stood out before them with the luster of perfect truth. The veil that had prevented them from seeing to the end of that which had been abolished, was now removed, and they comprehended with perfect clearness the object of Christ's mission and the nature of His kingdom. They could speak with power of the Saviour; and as they unfolded to their hearers the plan of salvation, many were convicted and convinced. The traditions and superstitions inculcated by the priests were swept away from their minds, and the teachings of the Saviour were accepted.

21) What happened that day?
Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about _____ _____ souls.

The Jewish leaders had supposed that the work of Christ would end with His death; but, instead of this, they witnessed the marvelous scenes of the Day of Pentecost. They heard the disciples, endowed with a power and energy hitherto unknown, preaching Christ, their words confirmed by signs and wonders. In Jerusalem, the stronghold of Judaism, thousands openly declared their faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

22) What was the result of the Holy Spirit resting upon God's Church?
Acts 2:46-47 And they, continuing daily with _____ _____ in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord _____ to the _____ daily such as should be saved.

Under the training of Christ, the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of ***"one accord," "of one heart and of one soul."***

Can you see the necessity of the Holy Ghost? **Do you want the Spirit's presence in your life?**

When is the time let Him lead?

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Lesson 4 – The Gift of the Spirit

1) What did Jesus tell His disciples before He went to Calvary?
John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another _____, that he may abide with you for ever;
2) What did He add to that so the disciples could understand?
John 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he _____ with you, and shall be _____ you.

Before offering Himself as the sacrificial victim, He instructed His disciples regarding a most essential and complete gift which He was to bestow upon His followers, the gift that would bring within their reach the boundless resources of His grace.

The Saviour was pointing forward to the time when the Holy Spirit should come to do a mighty work as His representative. The evil that had been accumulating for centuries was to be resisted by the divine power of the Holy Spirit.

3) What happened in Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost?
Acts 2:1-4 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with _____ _____ in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty _____, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all _____ with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the _____ gave them utterance.
4) What promise had Jesus made earlier to them?
Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive _____, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the _____ part of the earth.

As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace, hearts yielded to the power of this message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price. Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions.

5) What Prophecy was fulfilled?
Zechariah 12:8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is _____ among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.

Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence. One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

6) What was a notable feature of the Early Church?
Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and _____ _____ was upon them all.

Under their labors were added to the church chosen men, who, receiving the word of truth, consecrated their lives to the work of giving to others the hope that filled their hearts with peace and joy. They could not be restrained or intimidated by threatenings. The Lord spoke through them, and as they went from place to place, the poor had the gospel preached to them, and miracles of divine grace were wrought.

So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.

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The promise of the Holy Spirit is not limited to any age or to any race. Christ declared that the divine influence of His Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. From the Day of Pentecost to the present time, the Comforter has been sent to all who have yielded themselves fully to the Lord and to His service. To all who have accepted Christ as a personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit has come as a counselor, sanctifier, guide, and witness. The more closely believers have walked with God, the more clearly and powerfully have they testified of their Redeemer's love and of His saving grace.

7) How willing is God to give good gifts to His people?
Matthew 7:7-11 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall _____; knock, and it shall be _____ unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give _____ _____ unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it?

For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. The presence of the Spirit with God's workers will give the proclamation of truth a power that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.

It is not a conclusive evidence that a man is a Christian because he manifests spiritual ecstasy under extraordinary circumstances. Holiness is not rapture: it is an entire surrender of the will to God; it is living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; it is doing the will of our heavenly Father; it is trusting God in trial, in darkness as well as in the light; it is walking by faith and not by sight; it is relying on God with unquestioning confidence, and resting in His love.

8) What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?
John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the _____, he shall testify of _____:

9) Who does the Holy Spirit NOT speak of?
John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of _____; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

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.

10) What will the Holy Spirit do?
John 16:8 And when he is come, he will _____ the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

It is the Holy Spirit that convicts of sin. If the sinner responds to the quickening influence of the Spirit, he will be brought to repentance and aroused to the importance of obeying the divine requirements.

11) What will the Spirit do for Jesus?
John 16:14 He shall glorify _____: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto _____.

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12) What will He do for you?
John 14:26 But the _____, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall _____ you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Spirit is given as a regenerating agency, to make effectual the salvation wrought by the death of our Redeemer. The Spirit is constantly seeking to draw the attention of men to the great offering that was made on the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God, and to open to the convicted soul the precious things of the Scriptures.

13) What else will the Spirit do?
John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will _____ you things to come.

Having brought conviction of sin, and presented before the mind the standard of righteousness, the Holy Spirit withdraws the affections from the things of this earth and fills the soul with a desire for holiness. If men are willing to be molded, there will be brought about a sanctification of the whole being. The Spirit will take the things of God and stamp them on the soul. By His power the way of life will be made so plain that none need err therein.

14) Was the Holy Spirit present in the Old Testament?
Nehemiah 9:20 Thou gavest also thy _____ _____ to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst

From the beginning, God has been working by His Holy Spirit through human instrumentalities for the accomplishment of His purpose on behalf of the fallen race. This was manifest in the lives of the patriarchs.

And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God's law is being exalted. The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus, the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God.

15) What promises were given about the End Times?
Zechariah 10:1 Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the _____ _____; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.
Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the _____ rain, and the _____ rain in the first month.

Near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man. This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain; and it is for this added power that Christians are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest.

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16) What warning was given by Jesus to the Disciples (and us)?
Matthew 25:10-13 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was _____. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I _____ _____ _____. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Unless the members of God's church today have a living connection with the Source of all spiritual growth, they will not be ready for the time of reaping. Unless they keep their lamps trimmed and burning, they will fail of receiving added grace in times of special need.

17) What is YOUR calling?
1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are _____ together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's _____.

18) How does Jesus claim those who follow His instructions?
Hebrews 2:11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them _____,
Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did _____ to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many _____.
Mark 3:34-35 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the _____ _____ _____, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

As the Elder Brother of our race, He knows the necessities of those who, compassed with infirmity and living in a world of sin and temptation, still desire to serve Him. He knows that the messengers whom He sees fit to send are weak, erring men; but to all who give themselves wholly to His service He promises divine aid. His own example is an assurance that earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith, faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work, will avail to bring to men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against sin.

Can you see your need of the Holy Ghost?

Do you want the Spirit's presence in your life?

When is the time to ask Christ for Him to come into your life?

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Lesson 5 – At the Temple Gate

Based on Acts 3; Acts 4:1-31

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 3:1-2 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the _____ hour. And a certain man _____ from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask _____ of them that entered into the temple;
2) How old was he?
   Acts 4:22 For the man was above _____ years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.
3) What did he ask for from the Disciples?
   Acts 3:3-5 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the _____ asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to _____ something of them.

This unfortunate man had long desired to see Jesus, that he might be healed; but he was almost helpless and was far removed from the scene of the great Physician's labors. His pleadings at last induced some friends to bear him to the gate of the temple, but upon arriving there, he found that the One upon whom his hopes were centered, had been put to a cruel death.

His disappointment excited the sympathy of those who knew for how long he had eagerly hoped to be healed by Jesus, and daily they brought him to the temple, in order that passers-by might be induced by pity to give him a trifle to relieve his wants.

4) Did Peter and John give him money?
   Acts 3:6-7 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I _____; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and _____ him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.
5) What did the lame man do?
   Acts 3:8-9 And he _____ up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and _____ God:
6) How did everyone around react?
   Acts 3:10-11 And they _____ that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with _____ and _____ at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

They were astonished that the disciples could perform miracles similar to those performed by Jesus. Yet here was this man, for forty years a helpless cripple, now rejoicing in the full use of his limbs, free from pain, and happy in believing in Jesus.

7) Did Peter flex and tell everyone how great he was?
   Acts 3:12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our _____ _____ or holiness we had made this man to walk?
8) Whose power did Peter explain that really did the healing?
   Acts 3:16 And _____ name through _____ in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by _____ hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

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9) What else did he add to the statement?
Acts 3:13-15 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the _____ of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the _____ _____ and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are _____.

The apostles spoke plainly of the great sin of the Jews in rejecting and putting to death the Prince of life; but they were careful not to drive their hearers to despair.

10) What offer did he place before them?
Acts 3:17-19 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his _____, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. _____ ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be _____ out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

11) Peter reminded them of the promise. Which one?
Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be _____.

12) What did they say Jesus would do for them?
Acts 3:26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to _____ you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

13) Who were displeased with the happenings of the day?
Acts 4:1-2 And as they spake unto the people, the _____, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being _____ that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

After Christ's resurrection the priests had spread far and near the lying report that His body had been stolen by the disciples while the Roman guard slept. It is not surprising that they were displeased when they hear Peter and John preaching the resurrection of the One they had murdered. The Sadducees especially were greatly aroused. They felt that their most cherished doctrine was in danger, and their reputation at stake.

14) What did the religious leaders do?
Acts 4:3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in _____ unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

15) How many converts were coming to Christ as a result of the Disciples preaching?
Acts 4:4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about _____ _____.

Converts to the new faith were rapidly increasing, and both Pharisees and Sadducees agreed that if these new teachers were suffered to go unchecked, their own influence would be in ***greater danger than when Jesus was upon the earth.*** Accordingly, the captain of the temple, with the help of a number of Sadducees, arrested Peter and John, and put them in prison, as it was too late that day for them to be examined.

16) What had Jesus said to the Disciples during His earthly ministry?
John 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and _____ works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

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The enemies of the disciples could not but be convinced that Christ had risen from the dead. The evidence was too clear to be doubted. Nevertheless, they hardened their hearts, refusing to repent of the terrible deed they had committed in putting Jesus to death. Abundant evidence that the apostles were speaking and acting under divine inspiration had been given the Jewish rulers, but they firmly resisted the message of truth. Christ had not come in the manner that they expected, and though at times they had been convinced that He was the Son of God, yet they had stifled conviction and crucified Him.

In mercy God gave them still further evidence, and now another opportunity was granted them to turn to Him. He sent the disciples to tell them that they had killed the Prince of life, and in this terrible charge He gave them another call to repentance. But feeling secure in their own righteousness, the Jewish teachers refused to admit that the men charging them with crucifying Christ were speaking by the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Their obstinacy became more and more determined. It was not that they could not yield; they could but would not. It was not alone because they were guilty and deserving of death, not alone because they had put to death the Son of God, that they were cut off from salvation; it was because they armed themselves with opposition to God. They persistently rejected light and stifled the convictions of the Spirit. The influence that controls the children of disobedience worked in them, leading them to abuse the men through whom God was working. The malignity of their rebellion was intensified by each successive act of resistance against God and the message He had given His servants to declare.

17) What happened the next day after the lame man was healed?
Acts 4:5-7 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were _____ _____ at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what _____, or by what _____, have ye done this?

18) What was Peter's reply?
Acts 4:8-10 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what _____ he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of _____ _____ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Those present who remembered the part that Peter had acted at the trial of his Master, flattered themselves that he could now be intimidated by the threat of imprisonment and death. But the Peter who denied Christ in the hour of His greatest need was impulsive and self-confident, differing widely from the Peter who was brought before the Sanhedrin for examination. Since his fall he had been converted.

19) What did Peter boldly declare to them?
Acts 4:11-12 This is the stone which was set at nought of you _____, which is become the head of the _____. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be _____.

20) What had Jesus said earlier?
Matthew 21:42-44 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the _____: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to _____.

21) What did the Priests take knowledge of?
Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the _____ of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with _____.

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22) What lesson did the Disciples learn on the Mount of Transfiguration?
Matthew 17:8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save _____ only.

In these words are contained the secret of the life and power that marked the history of the early church. When the disciples first heard the words of Christ, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him. They were with Him in the temple, at the table, on the mountainside, in the field. They were as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from Him lessons of eternal truth.

23) What promise did Jesus give His disciples (and us)?
Matthew 28:20 …and, lo, I am with you _____, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

He had ascended to heaven in the form of humanity. They knew that He was before the throne of God, their Friend and Saviour still; that His sympathies were unchanged; that He would forever be identified with suffering humanity. They knew that He was presenting before God the merit of His blood, showing His wounded hands and feet as a remembrance of the price He had paid for His redeemed ones; and this thought strengthened them to endure reproach for His sake. Their union with Him was stronger now than when He was with them in person. The light and love and power of an indwelling Christ shone out through them, so that men, beholding, marveled.

24) What miracle had Peter done?
Acts 3:7 And he took him by the right hand, and _____ him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

Christ placed His seal on the words that Peter spoke in His defense. Close beside the disciple, as a convincing witness, stood the man who had been so miraculously healed. The appearance of this man, a few hours before a helpless cripple, but now restored to soundness of health, added a weight of testimony to Peter's words. Priests and rulers were silent.

Christ's crowning miracle, the raising of Lazarus, had sealed the determination of the priests to rid the world of Jesus and His wonderful works, which were fast destroying their influence over the people. They had crucified Him; but here was a convincing proof that they had not put a stop to the working of miracles in His name, nor to the proclamation of the truth He taught. Already the healing of the cripple and the preaching of the apostles had filled Jerusalem with excitement.

25) What did the council decide about Peter and John?
Acts 4:16-18 Saying, What shall we _____ to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot _____ it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the _____ of Jesus.

26) What was Peter and John's reply?
Acts 4:19-20 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be _____ in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but _____ the things which we have seen and heard.

27) Why couldn't the council punish them?
Acts 4:21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the _____: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

28) What prayers were being lifted up by the Brethren while they were jailed?
Acts 4:29-30 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all _____ they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that _____ and _____ may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

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29) What was the result?

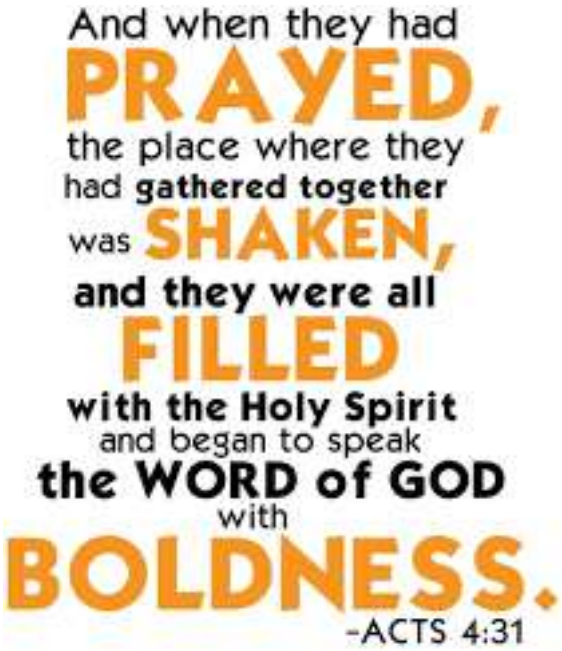
Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was _____ where they were assembled together; and they were all _____ with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God's witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive this word as supreme authority. We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation.

Can you see God is powerful?

Do you want Jesus to embolden you?

When is the time to speak for Him?



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Lesson 6 – A Warning Against Hypocrisy

Based on Acts 4:32 – 5:11

1) What did the Church look like in the earliest days after Christ ascended to Heaven?
   Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one _____ and of one _____: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things _____.
2) What did Luke add to that?
   Acts 4:34 Neither was there any among them that _____: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

One common interest controlled them, the success of the mission entrusted to them; and covetousness had no place in their lives. Their love for their brethren and the cause they had espoused was greater than their love of money and possessions. Their works testified that they accounted the souls of men of higher value than earthly wealth.

Thus, it was in the early church; and when in the church of today it is seen that by the power of the Spirit the members have taken their affections from the things of the world, and that they are willing to make sacrifices in order that their fellow men may hear the gospel, the truths proclaimed will have a powerful influence upon the hearers.

3) What had happened to everyone earlier that marked their lives?
   Acts 4:31 And when they had _____, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.
4) What were God's people doing at the feet of the Disciples?
   Acts 4:34-35 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses _____ them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and _____ was made unto every man according as he had need.
5) What did a couple named Ananias and Sapphira do?
   Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, _____ a _____,

Ananias and Sapphira grieved the Holy Spirit by yielding to feelings of covetousness. They began to regret their promise and soon lost the sweet influence of the blessing that had warmed their hearts with a desire to do large things in behalf of the cause of Christ. They thought they had been too hasty, that they ought to reconsider their decision. They talked the matter over and decided not to fulfill their pledge.

6) What did they do?
   Acts 5:2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a _____ _____, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

They saw that those who parted with their possessions to supply the needs of their poorer brethren, were held in high esteem among the believers; and ashamed to have their brethren know that their selfish souls grudged that which they had solemnly dedicated to God,

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they deliberately decided to sell their property and pretend to give all the proceeds into the general fund, but really to keep a large share for themselves. Thus, they would secure their living from the common store and at the same time gain the high esteem of their brethren.

7) Did they get away with their plan?
Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to _____ to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

God hates hypocrisy and falsehood. Ananias and Sapphira practiced fraud in their dealing with God; they lied to the Holy Spirit.

8) What did Peter ask Ananias?
Acts 5:4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in _____ _____ power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

No undue influence had been brought to bear upon Ananias to compel him to sacrifice his possessions to the general good. He had acted from choice. But in attempting to deceive the disciples, he had lied to the Almighty.

9) What happened to Ananias?
Acts 5:5-6 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the _____: and great _____ came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

10) What followed?
Acts 5:7-8 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his _____, not knowing what was _____, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

11) Did Peter believe her lie?
Acts 5:9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have _____ thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

12) What happened to her?
Acts 5:10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the _____: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

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

13) How did the church react when they heard what happened?
Acts 5:11 And great fear came upon _____ the _____, and upon as many as heard these things.

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Not to the early church only, but to all future generations, this example of God's hatred of covetousness, fraud, and hypocrisy, was given as a danger-signal. It was covetousness that Ananias and Sapphira had first cherished. The desire to retain for themselves a part of that which they had promised to the Lord, led them into fraud and hypocrisy.

14) What had Jesus told us about giving our word?
Matthew 5:37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of _____.

15) What had they all been instructed since their childhood?
Deuteronomy 23:23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt _____ and _____; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

16) What did Solomon tell us?
Ecclesiastes 5:4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in _____: pay that which thou hast vowed.

When the heart is stirred by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and a vow is made to give a certain amount, the one who vows has no longer any right to the consecrated portion. Promises of this kind made to men would be looked upon as binding; are those not more binding that are made to God? Are promises tried in the court of conscience less binding than written agreements of men?

17) What did Paul counsel us?
Romans 13:7-8 Render therefore to all their _____: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. _____ no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

When divine light is shining into the heart with unusual clearness and power, habitual selfishness relaxes its grasp and there is a disposition to give to the cause of God. But none need think that they will be allowed to fulfill the promises then made, without a protest on the part of Satan. He is not pleased to see the Redeemer's kingdom on earth built up. He suggests that the pledge made was too much, that it may cripple them in their efforts to acquire property or gratify the desires of their families.

18) Who will be in Heaven?
Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a _____: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

19) What is part of the Armor of God?
Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with _____…

He who utters untruths sells his soul in a cheap market. His falsehoods may seem to serve in emergencies; he may thus seem to make business advancement that he could not gain by fair dealing; but he finally reaches the place where he can trust no one. Himself a falsifier, he has no confidence in the word of others.

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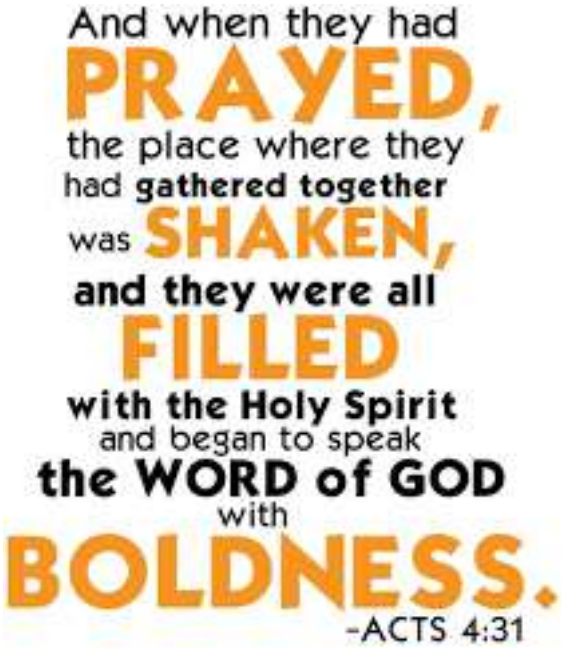
From the stern punishment meted out to those perjurers, God would have us learn also how deep is His hatred and contempt for all hypocrisy and deception. In pretending that they had given all, Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit, and, as a result, they lost this life and the life that is to come.

Can you see you can't lie to God?

Do you want to be genuine?

When is the time to let God lead?



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Lesson 7 – Before the Sanhedrin

Based on Acts 5:12-42

1) What Words did Jesus leave with His Disciples?
Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: _____ them to _____ all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

It was the cross, that instrument of shame and torture, which brought hope and salvation to the world. The disciples were but humble men, without wealth, and with no weapon but the word of God; yet in Christ's strength they went forth to tell the wonderful story of the manger and the cross, and to triumph over all opposition. Without earthly honor or recognition, they were heroes of faith. From their lips came words of divine eloquence that shook the world.

2) What was happening in Jerusalem?
Acts 5:12 And by the hands of the apostles were many _____ and _____ wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

3) Was the Word getting out?
Acts 5:14-16 And believers were the more added to the Lord, _____ both of men and women.) Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were _____ every one.

In Jerusalem, where the deepest prejudice existed, and where the most confused ideas prevailed in regard to Him who had been crucified as a malefactor, the disciples continued to speak with boldness the words of life, setting before the Jews the work and mission of Christ, His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Priests and rulers heard with amazement the clear, bold testimony of the apostles. The power of the risen Saviour had indeed fallen on the disciples, and their work was accompanied by signs and miracles that daily increased the number of believers.

4) What did the leaders do finally to try to stop the Disciples?
Acts 5:17-18 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with _____, And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common _____.

The priests and rulers saw that Christ was extolled above them. As the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection, heard the apostles declaring that Christ had risen from the dead, they were enraged, realizing that if the apostles were allowed to preach a risen Saviour, and to work miracles in His name, the doctrine that there would be no resurrection would be rejected by all, and the sect of the Sadducees would soon become extinct. The Pharisees were angry as they perceived that the tendency of the disciples' teaching was to undermine the Jewish ceremonies and make the sacrificial offerings of no effect.

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5) What had Jesus warned them about in the past?
John 15:20-21 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not _____ than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also _____ you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.
John 16:2-4 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will _____ that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not _____ the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may _____ that I told you of them…

The leaders in the Jewish nation had signally failed of fulfilling God's purpose for His chosen people. Those whom the Lord had made the depositaries of truth had proved unfaithful to their trust, and God chose others to do His work. In their blindness these leaders now gave full sway to what they called righteous indignation against the ones who were setting aside their cherished doctrines.

6) What did the Angel of the Lord do for John and Peter?
Acts 5:19-20 But the angel of the Lord by night _____ the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and _____ in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

The God of heaven, the mighty Ruler of the universe, took the matter of the imprisonment of the disciples into His own hands, for men were warring against His work. By night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and bid them to speak again in the Temple. This command was directly contrary to the order given by the Jewish rulers

7) What did they do?
Acts 5:21 And when they heard that, they entered into the _____ early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

8) What did the Sanhedrin do so they could begin the Disciples trial?
Acts 5:22-23 But when the officers came, and found them not in the _____, they returned, and told, Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all _____, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

9) What word finally came about their whereabouts?
Acts 5:25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and _____ the people.

10) How did the Council feel about all this?
Acts 5:24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they _____ of them whereunto this would grow.

Peter and John appeared among the believers and recounted how the angel had led them directly through the band of soldiers guarding the prison, bidding them resume the work that had been interrupted, the brethren were filled with amazement and joy.

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The priests and rulers had decided to fix upon the disciples the charge of insurrection, to accuse them of murdering Ananias and Sapphira, and of conspiring to deprive the priests of their authority. They hoped so to excite the mob that it would take the matter in hand and deal with the disciples as it had dealt with Jesus. They were aware that many who did not accept the teachings of Christ were weary of the arbitrary rule of the Jewish authorities and anxious for some change. The priests feared that if these dissatisfied ones were to accept the truths proclaimed by the apostles, and were to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, the anger of the entire people would be raised against the religious leaders, who would then be made to answer for the murder of Christ. They decided to take strong measures to prevent this.

11) What did the Council have done?
Act 5:26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them _____ _____: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

12) What Words of Christ came into the Disciples' remembrance?
Mark 13:9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to _____; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

Although the apostles were miraculously delivered from prison, they were not safe from examination and punishment. By sending an angel to deliver them, God had given them a token of His love and an assurance of His presence. It was now their part to suffer for the sake of the One whose gospel they were preaching.

13) What did the Council ask them?
Acts 5:27-28 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly _____ you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's _____ upon us.

14) What was Peter's reply?
Acts 5:29-32 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey _____ rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his _____ of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that _____ him.

The record left by Peter and John is as heroic as any in the gospel dispensation. As they stood for the second time before the men who seemed bent on their destruction, no fear or hesitation could be discerned in their words or attitude.

15) Was the Council happy with what they said?
Acts 5:33 When they heard that, they were cut to the _____, and took counsel to _____ them.

So enraged were the Jews at these words that they decided to take the law into their own hands and without further trial, or without authority from the Roman officers, to put the prisoners to death. Already guilty of the blood of Christ, they were now eager to stain their hands with the blood of His disciples.

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16) What did one of those present do in the Council room?
Acts 5:34-35 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named _____, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take _____ to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

in the council there was one man who recognized the voice of God in the words spoken by the disciples. This was Gamaliel, a Pharisee of good reputation and a man of learning and high position. His clear intellect saw that the violent step contemplated by the priests would lead to terrible consequences.

17) What sage advice did he give them?
Acts 5:38-39 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of _____, it will come to _____: But if it be of _____, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to _____ _____ God.

18) What was the decision of the Council?
Acts 5:40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and _____ them, they commanded that they should not _____ in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

19) Did the Disciples stop preaching Christ?
Acts 5:41-42 And they departed from the presence of the council, _____ that they were counted _____ to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

20) What did Jesus tell the Disciples (and us)?
John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my _____ I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be _____.

The history of truth has ever been the record of a struggle between right and wrong. The proclamation of the gospel has ever been carried forward in this world in the face of opposition, peril, loss, and suffering.

21) What promise should we never forget?
Isaiah 41:10 Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not _____; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will _____ thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Can you see God's watch care?

Do you want to be fearless?

When is the time to step up?

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Lesson 8 – The Seven Deacons

Based on Acts 6:1-7

1) What kind of people made up of the early church in the very early days?
Acts 2:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every _____ under heaven.

Among those of the Hebrew faith who were gathered at Jerusalem were some commonly known as Grecians, between whom and the Jews of Palestine there had long existed distrust and even antagonism.

The hearts of those who had been converted under the labors of the apostles, were softened and united by Christian love. Despite former prejudices, all were in harmony with one another. Satan knew that so long as this union continued to exist, he would be powerless to check the progress of gospel truth; and he sought to take advantage of former habits of thought, in the hope that thereby he might be able to introduce into the church elements of disunion.

2) What problem arose very early on?
Acts 6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a _____ of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

The cause of complaint was an alleged neglect of the Greek widows in the daily distribution of assistance. Any inequality would have been contrary to the spirit of the gospel, yet Satan had succeeded in arousing suspicion. Prompt measures must now be taken to remove all occasion for dissatisfaction, lest the enemy triumph in his effort to bring about a division among the believers.

3) What did the Disciples do?
Acts 6:2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should _____ the word of God, and serve tables.

The disciples of Jesus had reached a crisis in their experience. Under the wise leadership of the apostles, who labored unitedly in the power of the Holy Spirit, the work committed to the gospel messengers was developing rapidly. The church was continually enlarging, and this growth in membership brought increasingly heavy burdens upon those in charge. No one man, or even one set of men, could continue to bear these burdens alone, without imperiling the future prosperity of the church.

4) What conclusion did the Holy Spirit lead them to?
Acts 6:3-4 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you _____ _____ of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and _____, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

Summoning a meeting of the believers, the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit to outline a plan for the better organization of all the working forces of the church. The time had come, the apostles stated, when the spiritual leaders having the oversight of the church should be relieved from the task of distributing to the poor and from similar burdens, so that they might be free to carry forward the work of preaching the gospel.

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5) What did the church do?
Acts 6:5-6 And the saying pleased the whole _____: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had _____, they laid their hands on them.

These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole.

6) What signified that they had done a good thing?
Acts 6:7 And the word of God _____; and the number of the disciples _____ in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons. The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success.

To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work, that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ. The proclamation of the gospel was to be world-wide in its extent, and the messengers of the cross could not hope to fulfill their important mission unless they should remain united in the bonds of Christian unity and thus reveal to the world that they were one with Christ in God.

7) What prayer had Jesus prayed for them (and us)?
John 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be _____, as we are.

8) Whose Word did they have?
John 17:14 I have given them thy _____; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

9) How does one become perfected?
John 17:23 _____ in _____, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

10) What proof was given to the world that they were called of God?
John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be _____ in _____: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

Their spiritual life and power was dependent on a close connection with the One by whom they had been commissioned to preach the gospel.

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Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven. With the help of these divine agencies, they would present before the world a united front and would be victorious in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ.

11) What would God's Church look like?
Song of Solomon 6:10 Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an _____ with banners?

Nothing could withstand her onward progress. The church would advance from victory to victory, gloriously fulfilling her divine mission of proclaiming the gospel to the world.

12) What was Peter's command to the Church?
1 Peter 5:2-3 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by _____, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being _____ over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

13) Who were to be chosen as Deacons?
Acts 6:3 …men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and _____…

These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus, they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock.

14) What additions did God add later to the structure of the Church?
1 Corinthians 12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly _____, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

15) What Gifts of the Spirit are given to individuals to help the group?
1 Corinthians 12:8-10 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of _____ by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of _____ by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another _____; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

16) Why is the Church called the body of Christ?
1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the _____ of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

17) What council did Jethro give to Moses?
Exodus 18:19-20 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the _____ unto God: And thou shalt _____ them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

18) After that, then what?
Exodus 18:21-22 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating _____; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all _____: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

The time and strength of those who in the providence of God have been placed in leading positions of responsibility in the church, should be spent in dealing with the weightier matters demanding special wisdom and largeness of heart. It is not in the order of God that such men

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should be appealed to for the adjustment of minor matters that others are well qualified to handle.

The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God's people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures.

19) What are the qualifications for Leading?
Titus 1:7-9 For a bishop must be blameless, as the _____ of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of _____, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the _____ _____ as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus, the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.

20) What did Paul say that we should never forget?
1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of _____, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old. He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.

Can you see God is a God of order?

Do you want to be unified and blessed?

When is the time to heed the Spirit's call?

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Lesson 9 – The First Christian Martyr

Based on Acts 6:5-17; 7

1) What effect did the early church have in embracing organization?
   Acts 6:7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples _____ in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.
2) Who specifically is mentioned as a Deacon in the Book of Acts?
   Acts 6:8 And _____, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.
3) What incredible testimony did they say about him?
   Acts 6:10 And they were not able to _____ the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.
4) Did those that heard him repent?
   6:11-12 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against _____, and against _____. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and _____ him, and brought him to the council,

Stephen, the foremost of the seven deacons, was a man of deep piety and broad faith. Though a Jew by birth, he spoke the Greek language and was familiar with the customs and manners of the Greeks. He therefore found opportunity to preach the gospel in the synagogues of the Greek Jews. He was very active in the cause of Christ and boldly proclaimed his faith. Learned rabbis and doctors of the law engaged in public discussion with him, confidently expecting an easy victory.

5) What promise of Jesus did he fulfill?
   Luke 21:14-15 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall _____: For I will give you a _____ and _____, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

Not only did he speak in the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was plain that he was a student of the prophecies and learned in all matters of the law. He ably defended the truths that he advocated and utterly defeated his opponents.

As the priests and rulers saw the power that attended the preaching of Stephen, they were filled with bitter hatred. Instead of yielding to the evidence that he presented, they determined to silence his voice by putting him to death.

6) What did they do at his trial?
   Acts 6:13-14 And set up false _____, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall _____ this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.
7) Was Stephen troubled by the events of that day?
   Acts 6:15 And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an _____.

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As Stephen stood face to face with his judges to answer to the charge of blasphemy, a holy radiance shone upon his countenance. Many who beheld this light trembled and veiled their faces, but the stubborn unbelief and prejudice of the rulers did not waver.

8) Stephen gave them a history lesson, where did he begin?
Acts 7:2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father _____, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

9) Who did he speak of next?
Acts 7:9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold _____ into Egypt: but God was with him,

10) And then?
Acts 7:20 In which time _____ was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

11) What REALLY made the Council's blood boil?
Acts 7:37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; _____ shall ye _____.

When Stephen was questioned as to the truth of the charges against him, he began his defense in a clear, thrilling voice, which rang through the council hall. In words that held the assembly spellbound, he proceeded to rehearse the history of the chosen people of God. He showed a thorough knowledge of the Jewish economy and the spiritual interpretation of it now made manifest through Christ.

12) What aggravated them even more?
Acts 7:48-49 Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with _____; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my _____?

When Stephen reached this point, there was a tumult among the people. When he connected Christ with the prophecies and spoke as he did of the temple, the priest, pretending to be horror-stricken, rent his robe. To Stephen this act was a signal that his voice would soon be silenced forever. He saw the resistance that met his words and knew that he was giving his last testimony.

13) What direct rebuke did he give to those evil men?
Acts 7:51-53 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always _____ the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have _____ them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and _____: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

At this, priests and rulers were beside themselves with anger. Acting more like beasts of prey than human beings, they rushed upon Stephen.

14) How does Scripture record it?
Acts 7:54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the _____, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

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In the cruel faces about him the prisoner read his fate; but he did not waver. For him the fear of death was gone. For him the enraged priests and the excited mob had no terror. The scene before him faded from his vision.

15) What did God show him?
Acts 7:55-56 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus _____ on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens _____, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

As he described the glorious scene upon which his eyes were gazing, it was more than his persecutors could endure. He was declaring to them that Jesus was pronouncing judgment upon them. And whether they knew it or not, the 70 Weeks Prophecy of Daniel was coming to it's prophetic end.

16) What did they do with him?
Acts 7:57-58 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And _____ him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their _____ at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

17) What was the final act of Stephen?
Acts 7:59-60 And they stoned Stephen, _____ upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their _____. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The martyrdom of Stephen made a deep impression upon all who witnessed it. The memory of the signet of God upon his face; his words, which touched the very souls of those who heard them, remained in the minds of the beholders, and testified to the truth of that which he had proclaimed.

18) Did Saul convert and become a Christian because of this?
Acts 8:1 And Saul was _____ unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.
Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made _____ of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Stephen's death was a sore trial to the church, but it resulted in the conviction of Saul, who could not efface from his memory the faith and constancy of the martyr, and the glory that had rested on his countenance.

At the scene of Stephen's trial and death, Saul had seemed to be imbued with a frenzied zeal. Afterward he was angered by his own secret conviction that Stephen had been honored by God at the very time when he was dishonored by men. Saul continued to persecute the church of God, hunting them down, seizing them in their houses, and delivering them up to the priests and rulers for imprisonment and death. His zeal in carrying forward this persecution brought terror to the Christians at Jerusalem.

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19) Was God done with Saul?

Acts 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a _____ from heaven:

This relentless persecutor was to be employed in building up the church that he was now tearing down. A Mightier than Satan had chosen Saul to take the place of the martyred Stephen, to preach and suffer for His name, and to spread far and wide the tidings of salvation through His blood.

Can you see you are not stuck where you are?

Do you want to be put on the right course?

When is the time to seek forgiveness and walk in the right direction?

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Lesson 10 – The Gospel in Samaria

Based on Acts 8

1) What was happening with God's Church after the stoning of Stephen?
   Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were _____ abroad went every where preaching the word.
2) Who was instrumental in making this happen?
   Acts 8:3 As for _____, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.
3) What did Paul (Saul) admit to later in his life?
   Acts 26:9-11 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things _____ to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to _____, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I _____ them even unto strange cities.

At this time of peril Nicodemus came forward in fearless avowal of his faith in the crucified Saviour. Nicodemus was a member of the Sanhedrin and with others had been stirred by the teaching of Jesus. As he had witnessed Christ's wonderful works, the conviction had fastened itself upon his mind that this was the Sent of God.

4) What memory finally brought him into full conviction?
   John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be _____ up:

Jesus had unfolded to him the plan of salvation and His mission to the world, yet still Nicodemus had hesitated. He hid the truth in his heart, and for three years there was little apparent fruit. But while Nicodemus had not publicly acknowledged Christ, he had in the Sanhedrin council repeatedly thwarted the schemes of the priests to destroy Him. When at last Christ had been lifted up on the cross, Nicodemus remembered the words that He had spoken to him in the night interview on the Mount of Olives.

5) Who else came to the forefront as a believer?
   John 19:38 And after this _____ of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

With Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus had borne the expense of the burial of Jesus. The disciples had been afraid to show themselves openly as Christ's followers, but Nicodemus and Joseph had come boldly to their aid. The help of these rich and honored men was greatly needed in that hour of darkness. They had been able to do for their dead Master what it would have been impossible for the poor disciples to do; and their wealth and influence had protected them, in a great measure, from the malice of the priests and rulers.

6) What were Jesus' parting Words as he ascended from the Mount of Olives?
   Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach _____ _____, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

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The persecution that came upon the church in Jerusalem resulted in giving a great impetus to the work of the gospel. Success had attended the ministry of the word in that place, and there was danger that the disciples would linger there too long, unmindful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. Forgetting that strength to resist evil is best gained by aggressive service, they began to think that they had no work so important as that of shielding the church in Jerusalem from the attacks of the enemy.

7) What does the Bible record as to what happened to the Church?
Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where _____ the word.

Instead of educating the new converts to carry the gospel to those who had not heard it, they were in danger of taking a course that would lead all to be satisfied with what had been accomplished. To scatter His representatives abroad, where they could work for others, God permitted persecution to come upon them.

When they were scattered by persecution they went forth filled with missionary zeal. They realized the responsibility of their mission. They knew that they held in their hands the bread of life for a famishing world; and they were constrained by the love of Christ to break this bread to all who were in need. The Lord wrought through them. Wherever they went, the sick were healed and the poor had the gospel preached unto them.

8) Where did the Deacon Philip go?
Acts 8:5-7 Then Philip went down to the city of _____, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the _____ which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were _____.

9) What was the result of that?
Acts 8:8 And there was great _____ in that city.

10) Who was an evangelist for Samaria before Philip?
John 4:28-29 The _____ then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the _____?

When Jesus' disciples were driven from Jerusalem, some found in Samaria a safe asylum. The Samaritans welcomed these messengers of the gospel, and the Jewish converts gathered a precious harvest from among those who had once been their bitterest enemies.

11) What Words of Jesus were being fulfilled?
Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in _____, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

12) How did this work of bringing the Gospel to them progress?
Acts 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them _____ and _____:

Philip's work in Samaria was marked with great success, and thus encouraged, he sent to Jerusalem for help.

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13) While Peter and John were helping in this territory, where did God call Philip?
Acts 8:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto _____, which is desert.

He did not question the call, nor did he hesitate to obey; for he had learned the lesson of conformity to God's will.

14) Who did he meet on his journey south?
Acts 8:27-28 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of _____, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to _____, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

This Ethiopian was a man of good standing and of wide influence. God saw that when converted he would give others the light he had received and would exert a strong influence in favor of the gospel. Angels of God were attending this seeker for light, and he was being drawn to the Saviour. By the ministration of the Holy Spirit the Lord brought him into touch with one who could lead him to the light.

15) What did God tell Philip to do?
Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this _____.

16) What did Philip ask him?
Acts 8:30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, _____ thou what thou readest?

17) Did the Eunuch understand?
Acts 8:31 And he said, How can I, except some man should _____ me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

18) What was the Scripture he was wrestling with?
Acts 8:32-34 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a _____ to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his _____ was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of _____, or of some other man?

19) What wonderful thing did Philip do?
Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him _____.

The man's heart thrilled with interest as the Scriptures were explained to him; and when the disciple had finished, he was ready to accept the light given. He did not make his high worldly position an excuse for refusing the gospel.

20) What did he ask of Philip?
Acts 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be _____?

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21) Did Philip refuse his offer?
Acts 8:37-38 And Philip said, If thou _____ with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the _____, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

22) What happened next?
Acts 8:39-40 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord _____ _____ Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he _____ in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

An angel guided Philip to the one who was seeking for light and who was ready to receive the gospel, and today angels will guide the footsteps of those workers who will allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify their tongues and refine and ennoble their hearts. The angel sent to Philip could himself have done the work for the Ethiopian, but this is not God's way of working. It is His plan that men are to work for their fellow men.

23) Who are they who make the call to come to Jesus?
Revelation 22:17 And the _____ and the _____ say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

The Bride is God's Church. It is fatal mistake to suppose that the work of soul-saving depends alone upon the ministry. The humble, consecrated believer upon whom the Master of the vineyard places a burden for souls is to be given encouragement by the men upon whom the Lord has laid larger responsibilities. Those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission is given to all who believe in His name. God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry by the laying on of hands.

24) What did Jesus say in the parable of the vineyard?
Matthew 20:6-7 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day _____? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, _____ _____ also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

Long has God waited for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that everyone shall be working for Him according to his ability. When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned, and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory.

25) What has to happen before Jesus will return to claim His Kingdom?
Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in _____ the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the _____ come.

Can you see God has bigger plans than we do?

Do you want Jesus to Return?

When is the time to do your part?

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Lesson 11 – From Persecutor to Disciple

Based on Acts 9:1-8

1) How did Saul describe himself?
Philippians 3:5-6 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an _____ of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, _____.

Prominent among the Jewish leaders who became thoroughly aroused by the success attending the proclamation of the gospel, was Saul of Tarsus. A Roman citizen by birth, Saul was nevertheless a Jew by descent and had been educated in Jerusalem by the most eminent of the rabbis.

He was regarded by the rabbis as a young man of great promise, and high hopes were cherished concerning him as an able and zealous defender of the ancient faith. His elevation to membership in the Sanhedrin council placed him in a position of power.

2) What did he do with great zeal?
Acts 22:4 And I persecuted this _____ unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

3) What decision against Stephen marked him forever?
Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his _____. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Saul had taken a prominent part in the trial and conviction of Stephen, and the striking evidences of God's presence with the martyr had led Saul to doubt the righteousness of the cause he had espoused against the followers of Jesus. His mind was deeply stirred. In his perplexity he appealed to those in whose wisdom and judgment he had full confidence. The arguments of the priests and rulers finally convinced him that Stephen was a blasphemer, that the Christ whom the martyred disciple had preached was an impostor, and that those ministering in holy office must be right.

4) What did persecution bring to God's Church?
Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went _____ _____ preaching the word.

The priests and rulers had hoped that by vigilant effort and stern persecution the heresy might be suppressed. Now they felt that they must carry forward in other places the decided measures taken in Jerusalem against the new teaching. For the special work that they desired to have done at Damascus, Saul offered his services.

5) What was his plan?
Acts 9:1-2 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the _____ of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them _____ unto Jerusalem.

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6) Were his counterparts in agreement?
Acts 26:12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with _____ and _____ from the chief priests,

Saul of Tarsus, in the strength and vigor of manhood, and fired with mistaken zeal, set out on that memorable journey, the strange occurrences of which were to change the whole current of his life.

7) What did Jesus do?
Acts 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a _____ from _____:
8) How did he describe it later to others?
Acts 26:13 At _____, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the _____, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

While Saul, with his companions, gazed with admiration on the fruitful plain and the fair city below, suddenly as he afterward declared, ***"there shone round about me and them which journeyed with me a light from heaven"***, above the brightness of the sun, too glorious for mortal eyes to bear. Blinded and bewildered, Saul fell prostrate to the ground.

9) Now that God had his attention, what did He ask him?
Acts 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why _____ thou me?
10) How did Saul respond?
Acts 9:5 And he said, _____ _____ _____, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

Filled with fear, and almost blinded by the intensity of the light, the companions of Saul heard a voice, but saw no man. But Saul understood the words that were spoken, and to him was clearly revealed the One who spoke, even the Son of God. In the glorious Being who stood before him he saw the Crucified One. ***Upon the soul of the stricken Jew the image of the Saviour's countenance was imprinted forever.*** The words spoken struck home to his heart with appalling force. Into the darkened chambers of his mind there poured a flood of light, revealing the ignorance and error of his former life and his present need of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.

11) In this encounter, what words of Stephen came to mind?
Acts 7:55-56 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the _____ of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens _____, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

In that hour of heavenly illumination Saul's mind acted with remarkable rapidity. The prophetic records of Holy Writ were opened to his understanding. He saw that the rejection of Jesus by the Jews, His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, had been foretold by the prophets and proved Him to be the promised Messiah. Stephen's sermon at the time of his martyrdom was brought forcibly to Saul's mind, and he realized that the martyr had indeed beheld ***"the glory of God"*** when he said, ***"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."***

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Saul now saw that in persecuting the followers of Jesus he had in reality been doing the work of Satan. He saw that his convictions of right and of his own duty had been based largely on his implicit confidence in the priests and rulers. He had believed them when they told him that the story of the resurrection was an artful fabrication of the disciples. Now that Jesus Himself stood revealed, Saul was convinced of the truthfulness of the claims made by the disciples.

12) What had he witnessed from Stephen?
Acts 6:15 And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an _____.

The Saviour had spoken to Saul through Stephen, whose clear reasoning could not be controverted. The learned Jew had seen the face of the martyr reflecting the light of Christ's glory. He had witnessed Stephen's forbearance toward his enemies and his forgiveness of them. He had also witnessed the fortitude and cheerful resignation of many whom he had caused to be tormented and afflicted. He had seen some yield up even their lives with rejoicing for the sake of their faith.

All these things had appealed loudly to Saul and at times had thrust upon his mind an almost overwhelming conviction that Jesus was the promised Messiah. At such times he had struggled for entire nights against this conviction, and always he had ended the matter by avowing his belief that Jesus was not the Messiah and that His followers were deluded fanatics.

13) Who was Saul REALLY persecuting?
Acts 9:5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am _____ whom thou persecutest…

In falsely accusing and testifying against them, he had falsely accused and testified against the Saviour of the world.

14) Fully convinced, what did Saul ask Jesus?
Acts 9:6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou _____ _____ to _____? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

When the glory was withdrawn, and Saul arose from the ground, he found himself totally deprived of sight. The brightness of Christ's glory had been too intense for his mortal eyes; and when it was removed, the blackness of night settled upon his vision. He believed that this blindness was a punishment from God for his cruel persecution of the followers of Jesus.

15) What did his friends do for him?
Acts 9:8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they _____ him by the hand, and _____ him into Damascus.

Stricken with blindness, helpless, tortured by remorse, knowing not what further judgment might be in store for him, he sought out the home of the disciple Judas, where, in solitude, he had ample opportunity for reflection and prayer.

16) What did he do?
Acts 9:9 And he was _____ days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

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These days of soul agony were to him as years. Again and again, he recalled, with anguish of spirit, the part he had taken in the martyrdom of Stephen. With horror he thought of his guilt in allowing himself to be controlled by the malice and prejudice of the priests and rulers, even when the face of Stephen had been lighted up with the radiance of heaven. In sadness and brokenness of spirit he recounted the many times he had closed his eyes and ears against the most striking evidences and had relentlessly urged on the persecution of the believers in Jesus of Nazareth.

17) Did God know what was happening?
Acts 9:10-12 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a _____, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called _____, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his _____ on him, that he might receive his sight.

18) Was Ananias excited to help him?
Acts 9:13-14 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much _____ he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to _____ all that call on thy name.

The prayers of the penitent Pharisee were not in vain. The inmost thoughts and emotions of his heart were transformed by divine grace; and his nobler faculties were brought into harmony with the eternal purposes of God. Christ and His righteousness became to Saul more than the whole world.

The marvelous light that illumined the darkness of Saul was the work of the Lord; but there was also a work that was to be done for him by the disciples. Christ had performed the work of revelation and conviction; and now the penitent was in a condition to learn from those whom God had ordained to teach His truth.

19) What did God tell Ananias?
Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen _____ unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must _____ for my name's sake.

20) Was Ananias obedient?
Acts 9:17-18 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that _____ unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the _____ _____. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been _____: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.

Saul was placed in direct communication with the church, which is the light of the world. In this case Ananias represents Christ, and also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth, who are appointed to act in His stead. In Christ's stead Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ's stead he places his hands upon him, and, as he prays in Christ's name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the authority of Christ. Christ is the fountain; the church is the channel of communication.

Have you ever "kicked against the goads"? **Do you want an encounter with Jesus?**

When is the time listen to God's pleadings?

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Lesson 12 – Days of Preparation

Based on Acts 9:19-30

1) What did Paul do after his encounter with Jesus and his conversion?
   Acts 9:19 And when he had received meat, he was _____. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.
2) What did he do almost immediately?
   Acts 9:20 And straightway he _____ Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.
3) What was ever at the center of his messages?
   1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the _____; And that he was buried, and that he _____ _____ the third day according to the scriptures:
4) What did he say about seeing Jesus?
   1 Corinthians 15:8 And last of all he was _____ of me also, as of one born out of due time.

His arguments from prophecy were so conclusive, and his efforts were so manifestly attended by the power of God, that the Jews were confounded and unable to answer him.

5) What was the short term effects of his early preaching?
   Acts 9:21 But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that _____ them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them _____ unto the chief priests?

The news of Paul's conversion had come to the Jews as a great surprise. He who had journeyed to Damascus ***"with authority and commission from the chief priests" (Acts 26:12)*** to apprehend and persecute the believers was now preaching the gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour, strengthening the hands of those who were already its disciples, and continually bringing in new converts to the faith he had once so bitterly opposed.

6) How does Scripture record these early days?
   Acts 9:22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and _____ the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

Paul had formerly been known as a zealous defender of the Jewish religion and an untiring persecutor of the followers of Jesus. Courageous, independent, persevering, his talents and training would have enabled him to serve in almost any capacity. He could reason with extraordinary clearness, and by his withering sarcasm could place an opponent in no enviable light. And now the Jews saw this young man of unusual promise united with those whom he formerly persecuted and fearlessly preaching in the name of Jesus.

A general slain in battle is lost to his army, but his death gives no additional strength to the enemy. But when a man of prominence joins the opposing force, not only are his services lost, but those to whom he joins himself gain a decided advantage. Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus, might easily have been struck dead by the Lord, and much strength would have been withdrawn from the persecuting power. But God in His providence not only spared Saul's life, but converted him, thus transferring a champion from the side of the enemy to the side of Christ. An eloquent speaker and a severe critic, Paul, with his stern purpose and undaunted courage, possessed the very qualifications needed in the early church.

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7) What was the notable hallmark of his preaching?
Acts 26:20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should _____ and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

8) What did he add to that?
Acts 26:22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the _____ and _____ did say should come:

9) Where did Paul go to find focus and get right with God?
Galatians 1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Here, in the solitude of the desert, Paul had ample opportunity for quiet study and meditation. He calmly reviewed his past experience and made sure work of repentance. He sought God with all his heart, resting not until he knew for a certainty that his repentance was accepted and his sin pardoned. He longed for the assurance that Jesus would be with him in his coming ministry. He emptied his soul of the prejudices and traditions that had hitherto shaped his life and received instruction from the Source of truth. Jesus communed with him and established him in the faith, bestowing upon him a rich measure of wisdom and grace.

10) How does one get right with God?
Job 22:21 _____ now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.

When the mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite, the effect on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate. In such communion is found the highest education. It is God's own method of development.

11) What did Paul say about his 1st stay in Damascus?
Acts 22:12-13 And one _____, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, _____ thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

12) What did Ananias tell him he would do?
Acts 22:14-16 And he said, The God of our fathers hath _____ thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest _____ the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his _____ unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

13) For what purpose did God spare Paul?
Acts 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a _____ and a _____ both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;
Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from _____ to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by _____ that is in me.

14) What kind of ministry did God call Paul to?
1 Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called to be an _____ of Jesus Christ through the will of God…

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The word apostle is a straight transliteration of the Greek ***apostolos***, literally meaning "one who is sent forth." It implies an ambassador or messenger bearing an official message by the authority of someone more powerful than himself. Jesus called twelve Apostles to be his special messengers to all the world.

15) Was his calling from men?
Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by _____ Christ, and God the _____, who raised him from the dead;)

16) What did he say to the church in Corinth?
1 Corinthians 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with _____ of _____, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.
1 Corinthians 2:4-5 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the _____ and of _____: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of _____.

17) Where did Paul go after his time in the desert?
Galatians 1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto _____.

18) How'd that go?
Acts 9:23-25 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to _____ _____: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a _____.

19) Where did he go from there?
Galatians 1:18 Then after three years I went up to _____ to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.
Acts 9:26 And when Saul was come to _____, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

It was difficult for them to believe that so bigoted a Pharisee, and one who had done so much to destroy the church, could become a sincere follower of Jesus.

20) Who helped him in Jerusalem?
Acts 9:27 But _____ took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Upon hearing this, the disciples received him as one of their number. Soon they had abundant evidence as to the genuineness of his Christian experience. The future apostle to the Gentiles was now in the city where many of his former associates lived, and to these Jewish leaders he longed to make plain the prophecies concerning the Messiah, which had been fulfilled by the advent of the Saviour. Paul felt sure that these teachers in Israel, with whom he had once been so well acquainted, were as sincere and honest as he had been. But he had miscalculated the spirit of his Jewish brethren, and in the hope of their speedy conversion he was doomed to bitter disappointment

21) How was Paul received in Jerusalem?
Acts 9:29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to _____ him.

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Sorrow filled his heart. He would willingly have yielded up his life if by that means he might bring some to a knowledge of the truth. With shame he thought of the active part he had taken in the martyrdom of Stephen, and now in his anxiety to wipe out the stain resting upon one so falsely accused, he sought to vindicate the truth for which Stephen had given his life.

22) What did God do to spare Paul at this time?
Acts 22:18 And saw him saying unto me, Make _____, and get thee _____ out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

Paul was inclined to remain at Jerusalem, where he could face the opposition. To him it seemed an act of cowardice to flee, if by remaining he might be able to convince some of the obstinate Jews of the truth of the gospel message, even if to remain should cost him his life.

23) How did God reply to Paul's plea to stay?
Acts 22:19-21 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, _____: for I will send thee _____ _____ unto the Gentiles.

24) What was the effect of Paul leaving Jerusalem?
Acts 9:30-31 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to _____. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were _____.

The departure of Paul suspended for a time the violent opposition of the Jews, and the church had a period of rest, in which many were added to the number of believers.

Can you see that God is better than us at planning the future?

Do you want to be a vessel of the Holy Spirit?

When is the time listen to God?

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Lesson 13 – A Seeker for Truth

Based on Acts 9:32-11:18

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
Acts 9:32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at _____.
2) What did he do while he was there?
Acts 9:33-34 And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the _____. And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he _____ immediately.
3) What was the result?
Acts 9:35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and _____ to the Lord.

Peter had made quite an impact on the community. God's Spirit was moving in great measure there.

4) What does Scripture mention as happening next?
Acts 9:36-37 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called _____: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and _____: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

At Joppa, which was near Lydda, there lived a woman named Dorcas, whose good deeds had made her greatly beloved. She was a worthy disciple of Jesus, and her life was filled with acts of kindness. She knew who needed comfortable clothing and who needed sympathy, and she freely ministered to the poor and the sorrowful. Her skillful fingers were more active than her tongue.

5) What did her friends do?
Acts 9:38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had _____ that Peter was there, they _____ unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them
6) What did he do when he got there?
Acts 9:40-41 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and _____; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her _____.

The apostle's heart was touched with sympathy as he beheld their sorrow. Then, directing that the weeping friends be sent from the room, he kneeled down and prayed fervently to God to restore Dorcas to life and health. Dorcas had been of great service to the church, and God saw fit to bring her back from the land of the enemy, that her skill and energy might still be a blessing to others, and also that by this manifestation of His power the cause of Christ might be strengthened.

7) How did that aid the spread of the Gospel?
Acts 9:42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many _____ in the Lord.
8) To Whom did God reach out to?
Acts 10:1-3 There was a certain man in Caesarea called _____, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much _____ to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an _____ of _____ coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

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9) How did Cornelius respond?
Acts 10:4-5 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a _____ before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one _____, whose surname is Peter:

Cornelius was a Roman centurion. He was a man of wealth and noble birth, and his position was one of trust and honor. A heathen by birth, training, and education, through contact with the Jews he had gained a knowledge of God, and he worshiped Him with a true heart, showing the sincerity of his faith by compassion to the poor. He was known far and near for his beneficence, and his righteous life made him of good repute among both Jews and Gentiles. His influence was a blessing to all with whom he came in contact.

Believing in God as the Creator of heaven and earth, Cornelius revered Him, acknowledged His authority, and sought His counsel in all the affairs of life. He was faithful to Jehovah in his home life and in his official duties. He had erected the altar of God in his home, for he dared not attempt to carry out his plans or to bear his responsibilities without the help of God.

10) What specific directions did the angel give to Cornelius?
Acts 10:6 He lodgeth with one _____ a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

The explicitness of these directions, in which was named even the occupation of the man with whom Peter was staying, shows that Heaven is acquainted with the history and business of men in every station of life. God is familiar with the experience and work of the humble laborer, as well as with that of the king upon his throne.

11) What did the angel tell Cornelius?
Acts 10:5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is _____:

God gave evidence of His regard for the gospel ministry and for His organized church. The angel was not commissioned to tell Cornelius the story of the cross. A man subject, even as the centurion himself, to human frailties and temptations, was to be the one to tell him of the crucified and risen Saviour.

12) What are humans supposed to do?
Ephesians 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should _____ among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

In His wisdom the Lord brings those who are seeking for truth into touch with fellow beings who know the truth. It is the plan of Heaven that those who have received light shall impart it to those in darkness. Humanity, drawing its efficiency from the great Source of wisdom, is made the instrumentality, the working agency, through which the gospel exercises its transforming power on mind and heart.

13) Where did the angel who spoke with Cornelius go next?
Acts 10:9-11 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, _____ went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a _____, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great _____ knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

The angel, after his interview with Cornelius, went to Peter, in Joppa. At the time, Peter was praying upon the housetop of his lodging. It was not for physical food alone that Peter hungered. As from the housetop he viewed the city of Joppa and the surrounding country he hungered for the salvation of his countrymen.

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He had an intense desire to point out to them from the Scriptures the prophecies relating to the sufferings and death of Christ.

14) How did the vision continue?
Acts 10:12-13 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and _____ things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and _____.

15) Did Peter immediately comply?
Acts 10:14-16 But Peter said, _____ _____, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or _____. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

This vision conveyed to Peter both reproof and instruction. It revealed to him the purpose of God, that by the death of Christ the Gentiles should be made fellow heirs with the Jews to the blessings of salvation. As yet none of the disciples had preached the gospel to the Gentiles. In their minds the middle wall of partition, broken down by the death of Christ, still existed, and their labors had been confined to the Jews, for they had looked upon the Gentiles as excluded from the blessings of the gospel. Now the Lord was seeking to teach Peter the world-wide extent of the divine plan.

How carefully the Lord worked to overcome the prejudice against the Gentiles that had been so firmly fixed in Peter's mind by his Jewish training! By the vision of the sheet and its contents He sought to divest the apostle's mind of this prejudice and to teach the important truth that in heaven there is no respect of persons.

16) Did Peter understand right away?
Acts 10:17-20 Now while Peter _____ in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the _____ which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and _____ _____ _____, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

17) Did Peter obey the Holy Spirit?
Acts 10:21 Then Peter _____ _____ to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

To Peter this was a trying command, and it was with reluctance at every step that he undertook the duty laid upon him; but he dared not disobey. In obedience to the directions just received from God, the apostle promised to go with them. On the following morning, he set out for Caesarea, accompanied by six of his brethren. These were to be witnesses of all that he should say or do while visiting the Gentiles, for Peter knew that he would be called to account for so direct a violation of the Jewish teachings.

18) How was Peter greeted by Cornelius?
Acts 10:25-26 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his _____, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, _____ _____; I myself also am a man.

Cornelius did not salute him as an ordinary visitor, but as one honored of Heaven and sent to him by God. It is an Eastern custom to bow before a prince or other high dignitary and for children to bow before their parents; but Cornelius, overwhelmed with reverence for the one sent by God to teach him, fell at the apostle's feet and worshiped him. Peter was horror-stricken, and he lifted the centurion.

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19) How did Peter ask why he was called?
Acts 10:28-29 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an _____ thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or _____. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

20) What did Cornelius ask of Peter?
Acts 10:33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to _____ all things that are commanded thee of God.

21) Was Peter pleased with his question?
Acts 10:34-35 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no _____ of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Then to that company of attentive hearers the apostle preached Christ: His life, His miracles, His betrayal and crucifixion, His resurrection and ascension, and His work in heaven as man's representative and advocate. As Peter pointed those present to Jesus as the sinner's only hope, he himself understood more fully the meaning of the vision he had seen, and his heart glowed with the spirit of the truth that he was presenting.

22) What interrupted all this?
Acts 10:44-45 While Peter yet spake these words, the _____ _____ fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were _____, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

23) What was done for Cornelius and those present?
Acts 10:47-48 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be _____, which have received the _____ _____ as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord…

Today God is seeking for souls among the high as well as the lowly. There are many like Cornelius, men whom the Lord desires to connect with His work in the world. Their sympathies are with the Lord's people, but the ties that bind them to the world hold them firmly. It requires moral courage for them to take their position for Christ. Special efforts should be made for these souls, who are in so great danger, because of their responsibilities and associations.

There are in our world many who are nearer the kingdom of God than we suppose. In this dark world of sin, the Lord has many precious jewels, to whom He will guide His messengers. Everywhere there are those who will take their stand for Christ. Many will prize the wisdom of God above any earthly advantage and will become faithful light bearers. Constrained by the love of Christ, they will constrain others to come to Him.

24) Word spreads fast, what did those in Jerusalem hear?
Acts 11:1-3 And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea _____ that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision _____ with him, Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst _____ with them.

25) After explaining the events, what did he tell the council?
Acts 11:17-18 Forasmuch then as God gave _____ the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could _____ _____? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Can you see that God doesn't love some more than others? **Do you want to be a part of God's Family?**

When is the time to let go of prejudices?

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Lesson 14 – Delivered From Prison

Based on Acts 12:1-23

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to _____ certain of the church.

The government of Judea was then in the hands of Herod Agrippa, subject to Claudius, the Roman emperor. Herod also held the position of tetrarch of Galilee. He was professedly a proselyte to the Jewish faith, and apparently very zealous in carrying out the ceremonies of the Jewish law. Desirous of obtaining the favor of the Jews, hoping thus to make secure his offices and honors, he proceeded to carry out their desires by persecuting the church of Christ, spoiling the houses and goods of the believers, and imprisoning the leading members of the church.

2) What did he do?
Acts 12:2-3 And he _____ James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it _____ the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

He cast James, the brother of John, into prison, and sent an executioner to kill him with the sword, as another Herod had caused the prophet John to be beheaded. Seeing that the Jews were well pleased with these efforts, he imprisoned Peter also.

It was during the Passover that these cruelties were practiced. While the Jews were celebrating their deliverance from Egypt and pretending great zeal for the law of God, they were at the same time transgressing every principle of that law by persecuting and murdering the believers in Christ.

3) What was God's Church doing at this time?
Acts 12:5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made _____ _____ of the church unto God for him.

Herod's act in putting James to death was applauded by the Jews, though some complained of the private manner in which it was accomplished, maintaining that a public execution would have more thoroughly intimidated the believers and those sympathizing with them. Herod therefore held Peter in custody, meaning still further to gratify the Jews by the public spectacle of his death. But it was suggested that it would not be safe to bring the veteran apostle out for execution before all the people then assembled in Jerusalem. It was feared that the sight of him being led out to die might excite the pity of the multitude.

4) When did they intend to have his "trial"?
Acts 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after _____ to bring him forth to the people.

While, upon various pretexts, the execution of Peter was being delayed until after the Passover, the members of the church had time for deep searching of heart and earnest prayer. They prayed without ceasing for Peter, for they felt that he could not be spared from the cause. They realized that they had reached a place where, without the special help of God, the church of Christ would be destroyed.

5) What had Jesus said previously about the Temple?
Matthew 23:38 Behold, your house is left unto you _____.

Worshipers from every nation sought the temple which had been dedicated to the worship of God. Glittering with gold and precious stones, it was a vision of beauty and grandeur. But Jehovah was no longer to be found in that palace of loveliness. Israel as a nation had divorced herself from God.

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The day of Peter's execution was at last appointed, but still the prayers of the believers ascended to heaven; and while all their energies and sympathies were called out in fervent appeals for help, angels of God were watching over the imprisoned apostle.

6) How many soldiers had watch over Peter?
Acts 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four _____ of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Remembering the former escape of the apostles from prison, Herod on this occasion had taken double precautions. To prevent all possibility of release, Peter had been put under the charge of sixteen soldiers, who, in different watches, guarded him day and night.

7) How was he imprisoned?
Acts 12:6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two _____: and the _____ before the door kept the prison.

In his cell he was placed between two soldiers and was bound by two chains, each chain being fastened to the wrist of one of the soldiers. He was unable to move without their knowledge. With the prison doors securely fastened, and a strong guard before them, all chance of rescue or escape through human means was cut off. ***But man's extremity is God's opportunity.***

8) What did God do for Peter?
Acts 12:7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a _____ _____ in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains _____ off from his hands.

Peter was confined in a rock-hewn cell, the doors of which were strongly bolted and barred; and the soldiers on guard were made answerable for the safekeeping of the prisoner. But the bolts and bars and the Roman guard, which effectually cut off all possibility of human aid, were but to make more complete the triumph of God in the deliverance of Peter. Herod was lifting his hand against Omnipotence, and he was to be utterly defeated.

9) What did the angel tell Peter?
Acts 12:8 And the angel said unto him, _____ thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

10) Did Peter grasp what was happening?
Acts 12:9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was _____ which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

Peter mechanically obeys, keeping his wondering gaze riveted upon his visitor and believing himself to be dreaming or in a vision. The angel moves toward the door, followed by the usually talkative Peter, now dumb from amazement. They step over the guard and reach the heavily bolted door, which of its own accord swings open and closes again immediately, while the guards within and without are motionless at their post.

11) Where did the angel take him?
Acts 12:10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the _____; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and _____ on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

The second door, also guarded within and without, is reached. It opens as did the first, with no creaking of hinges or rattling of iron bolts. They pass through, and it closes again as noiselessly. In the same way they pass through the third gateway and find themselves in the open street.

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No word is spoken; there is no sound of footsteps. The angel glides on in front, encircled by a light of dazzling brightness, and Peter, bewildered, and still believing himself to be in a dream, follows his deliverer. Thus, they pass on through one street, and then, the mission of the angel being accomplished, he suddenly disappears.

12) What did Peter realize?
Acts 12:11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a _____, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

He remembered falling asleep, bound between two soldiers, with his sandals and outer garments removed. He examined his person and found himself fully dressed and girded. His wrists, swollen from wearing the cruel irons, were free from the manacles. He realized that his freedom was no delusion, no dream or vision, but a blessed reality. On the morrow he was to have been led forth to die; but, lo, an angel had delivered him from prison and from death.

13) Where did he go from there?
Acts 12:12-13 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of _____, whose surname was _____; where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

The apostle made his way at once to the house where his brethren were assembled and where they were at that moment engaged in earnest prayer for him.

14) Did Rhoda let him in?
Acts 12:14-16 And when she knew Peter's voice, she _____ _____ the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. But Peter _____ _____: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

15) Did Peter hang around?
Acts 12:17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their _____, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go _____ these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

In the morning a large concourse of people gathered to witness the execution of the apostle. Herod sent officers to the prison for Peter, who was to be brought with a great display of arms and guards in order not only to ensure against his escape, but to intimidate all sympathizers and to show the power of the king.

16) What happened?
Acts 12:18-19 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the _____, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to _____. And he went down from Judaea to Caesarea, and there abode.

When the keepers before the door found that Peter had escaped, they were seized with terror. It had been expressly stated that their lives would be required for the life of their charge, and because of this they had been especially vigilant. When the officers came for Peter, the soldiers were still at the door of the prison, the bolts and bars were still fast, the chains were still secured to the wrists of the two soldiers; but the prisoner was gone.

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When the report of Peter's escape was brought to Herod, he was exasperated and enraged. Charging the prison guard with unfaithfulness, he ordered them to be put to death***. Herod knew that no human power had rescued Peter, but he was determined not to acknowledge that a divine power had frustrated his design,*** and he set himself in bold defiance against God.

Not long after Peter's deliverance from prison, Herod went to Caesarea. While there he made a great festival designed to excite the admiration and gain the applause of the people. This festival was attended by pleasure lovers from all quarters, and there was much feasting and wine drinking.

17) How does the Bible describe it?
Acts 12:21-22 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an _____ unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a _____, and not of a man.

With great pomp and ceremony Herod appeared before the people and addressed them in an eloquent oration. Clad in a robe sparkling with silver and gold, which caught the rays of the sun in its glittering folds and dazzled the eyes of the beholders, he was a gorgeous figure. The majesty of his appearance and the force of his well-chosen language swayed the assembly with a mighty power. Their senses already perverted by feasting and wine drinking, they were dazzled by Herod's decorations and charmed by his deportment and oratory; and wild with enthusiasm they showered adulation upon him, declaring that no mortal could present such an appearance or command such startling eloquence. They further declared that while they had ever respected him as a ruler, henceforth they should worship him as a god.

18) What had many of those same voices cried out earlier?
John 19:6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, _____ him, _____ him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

The Jews had refused to receive Christ, whose garments, coarse and often travel-stained, covered a heart of divine love. Their eyes could not discern, under the humble exterior, the Lord of life and glory, even though Christ's power was revealed before them in works that no mere man could do. But they were ready to worship as a god the haughty king whose splendid garments of silver and gold covered a corrupt, cruel heart.

19) What happened as they worshipped Herod?
Acts 12:23 And immediately the angel of the Lord _____ him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of _____, and gave up the ghost.

Suddenly a terrible change came over him. His face became pallid as death and distorted with agony. Great drops of sweat started from his pores. He stood for a moment as if transfixed with pain and terror; then turning his blanched and livid face to his horror-stricken friends, he cried in hollow, despairing tones, He whom you have exalted as a god is stricken with death.

Suffering the most excruciating anguish, he was borne from the scene of revelry and display. A moment before he had been the proud recipient of the praise and worship of that vast throng; now he realized that he was in the hands of a Ruler mightier than himself. Remorse seized him; he remembered his relentless persecution of the followers of Christ; he remembered his cruel command to slay the innocent James, and his design to put to death the apostle Peter; he remembered how in his mortification and disappointed rage he had wreaked an unreasoning vengeance upon the prison guards. He felt that God was now dealing with him, the relentless persecutor. He found no relief from pain of body or anguish of mind, and he expected none.

20) What commandment had Herod violated?
Exodus 20:3 Thou shalt have no other _____ before me.

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The same angel who had come from the royal courts to rescue Peter, had been the messenger of wrath and judgment to Herod. The angel smote Peter to arouse him from slumber; it was with a different stroke that he smote the wicked king, laying low his pride and bringing upon him the punishment of the Almighty. Herod died in great agony of mind and body, under the retributive judgment of God.

21) What promise do God's workmen have?
Psalm 34:7 The angel of the LORD _____ round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

To the worker for God the record of these angel visits should bring strength and courage. Today, as verily as in the days of the apostles, heavenly messengers are passing through the length and breadth of the land, seeking to comfort the sorrowing, to protect the impenitent, to win the hearts of men to Christ. We cannot see them personally; nevertheless, they are with us, guiding, directing, and protecting.

22) How do the heavenly beings react when we turn to God?
Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise _____ shall be in _____ over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

A report is borne to heaven of every successful effort on our part to dispel the darkness and to spread abroad the knowledge of Christ. As the deed is recounted before the Father, joy thrills through all the heavenly host.

Can you see that God sees our trials?

Do you want to be under His care?

When is the time to go forward fearlessly?

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Lesson 15 – The Gospel Message in Antioch

Based on Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-3.

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
Acts 11:19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and _____, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

After the disciples had been driven from Jerusalem by persecution, the gospel message spread rapidly through the regions lying beyond the limits of Palestine; and many small companies of believers were formed in important centers. Their labors were usually confined to the Hebrew and Greek Jews, large colonies of whom were at this time to be found in nearly all the cities of the world.

2) What happened in Antioch?
Acts 11:20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, _____ the Lord Jesus.

Among the places mentioned where the gospel was gladly received is Antioch, at that time the metropolis of Syria. The extensive commerce carried on from that populous center brought to the city many people of various nationalities. Besides, Antioch was favorably known as a resort for lovers of ease and pleasure, because of its healthful situation, its beautiful surroundings, and the wealth, culture, and refinement to be found there. In the days of the apostles, it had become a city of luxury and vice.

3) What was the result of their efforts?
Acts 11:21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number _____, and _____ unto the Lord.

4) Who came to help?
Acts 11:22-24 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth _____, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and _____ them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a _____ man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Upon arrival in his new field of labor, Barnabas saw the work that had already been accomplished by divine grace.

5) Where was Paul at this time?
Galatians 1:21 Afterwards I came into the regions of _____ and Cilicia;

The labors of Barnabas in Antioch were richly blessed, and many were added to the number of believers there. As the work developed, Barnabas felt the need of suitable help in order to advance in the opening providences of God, and he went to Tarsus to seek for Paul, who, after his departure from Jerusalem some time before, had been laboring in ***"the regions of Syria and Cilicia,"*** proclaiming ***"the faith which once he destroyed." Galatians 1:21, 23***.

6) Did Barnabas find him?
Acts 11:25-26 Then departed Barnabas to _____, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called _____ first in Antioch.

It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. The name was given them because Christ was the main theme of their preaching, their teaching, and their conversation. Continually they were recounting the incidents that had occurred during the days of His earthly ministry, when His disciples were blessed with His personal presence. Untiringly they dwelt upon His teachings and His miracles of

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healing. With quivering lips and tearful eyes they spoke of His agony in the garden, His betrayal, trial, and execution, the forbearance and humility with which He had endured the contumely and torture imposed upon Him by His enemies, and the Godlike pity with which He had prayed for those who persecuted Him. His resurrection and ascension, and His work in heaven as the Mediator for fallen man, were topics on which they rejoiced to dwell.

7) What Did Peter say about being Christian?
   1 Peter 4:16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him _____ God on this behalf.
   1 Peter 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, _____ are _____; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.
8) What did James have to say about it?
   James 2:7 Do not they blaspheme that _____ name by the which ye are called?

It was God who gave to them the name of Christian. This is a royal name, given to all who join themselves to Christ.

9) What is God willing to do for you?
   Philippians 2:13 For it is God which _____ in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

The believers at Antioch realized that God was willing to work in their lives. Living, as they were, in the midst of a people who seemed to care but little for the things of eternal value, they sought to arrest the attention of the honest in heart, and to bear positive testimony concerning Him whom they loved and served. In their humble ministry they learned to depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit to make effective the word of life. And so, in the various walks of life, they daily bore testimony of their faith in Christ.

10) To what ministry was Paul called?
    Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from _____ to _____, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive _____ of _____, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.
11) What had the angel told Ananias about Paul?
    Acts 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen _____ unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:
12) What did the angel tell Paul while he was in the Temple?
    Acts 22:21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the _____.

the Lord had given Paul his commission to enter the broad missionary field of the Gentile world. To prepare him for this extensive and difficult work, God had brought him into close connection with Himself and had opened before his enraptured vision views of the beauty and glory of heaven.

13) What was Paul to reveal?
    Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the _____, which was kept secret since the world began,
    Ephesians 1:9 Having made known unto us the _____ of his _____, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

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14) What was Paul's calling?
Ephesians 3:7-9 Whereof I was made a _____, according to the gift of the _____ of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men _____ what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

God had abundantly blessed the labors of Paul and Barnabas during the year they remained with the believers in Antioch. But neither of them had as yet been formally ordained to the gospel ministry. They had now reached a point in their Christian experience when God was about to entrust them with the carrying forward of a difficult missionary enterprise, in the prosecution of which they would need every advantage that could be obtained through the agency of the church.

15) What happened in Antioch that launched Paul and Barnabas into new ground?
Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain _____ and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and _____, the Holy Ghost said, _____ me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus, they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority.

16) What did Paul call the barrier between Jews and Gentiles?
Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of _____ between us;

God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel.

Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification. It was an acknowledged form of designation to an appointed office and a recognition of one's authority in that office. By it the seal of the church was set upon the work of God.

17) How were they called?
Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and _____, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church, Christ's body, is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work.

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While the light of the gospel was shining brightly at Antioch, an important work was continued by the apostles who had remained in Jerusalem. Every year, at the time of the festivals, many Jews from all lands came to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Some of these pilgrims were men of fervent piety and earnest students of the prophecies. They were looking and longing for the advent of the promised Messiah, the hope of Israel. While Jerusalem was filled with these strangers, the apostles preached Christ with unflinching courage, though they knew that in so doing they were placing their lives in constant jeopardy. The Spirit of God set its seal upon their labors; many converts to the faith were made; and these, returning to their homes in different parts of the world, scattered the seeds of truth through all nations and among all classes of society.

18) While Paul and Barnabas were in Antioch, what were the Disciples preaching in Jerusalem?
2 Peter 1:3-4 According as his _____ _____ hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be _____ of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Can you see that the Gospel is for everyone?

Do you want to be a vessel of the Holy Spirit?

When is the time to share what you have?

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

2 Peter 1:19

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Lesson 16 – Heralds of the Gospel

Based on Acts 13:4-52

1) What happened after Paul and Barnabas had taught in Antioch for a time?
Acts 13:1-3 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain _____ and _____; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and _____, the Holy Ghost said, _____ me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Thus, the apostles began their first missionary journey.

2) Where did they go?
Acts 13:4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to _____.

Cyprus was one of the places to which the believers had fled from Jerusalem because of the persecution following the death of Stephen. It was from Cyprus that certain men had journeyed to Antioch, ***"preaching the Lord Jesus." Acts 11:20***. Barnabas himself was **"of the country of Cyprus" (Acts 4:36)**; and now he and Paul, accompanied by John Mark, a kinsman of Barnabas, visited this island field.

3) Who was with them?
Acts 13:5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the _____: and they had also John to their minister.

Mark's mother was a convert to the Christian religion, and her home at Jerusalem was an asylum for the disciples. There they were always sure of a welcome and a season of rest. It was during one of these visits of the apostles to his mother's home, that Mark proposed to Paul and Barnabas that he should accompany them on their missionary tour. He felt the favor of God in his heart and longed to devote himself entirely to the work of the gospel ministry.

4) What resistance did they meet along the way?
Acts 13:6-7 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was _____: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) _____ them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

Not without a struggle does Satan allow the kingdom of God to be built up in the earth. The forces of evil are engaged in unceasing warfare against the agencies appointed for the spread of the gospel, and these powers of darkness are especially active when the truth is proclaimed before men of repute and sterling integrity. Thus, it was when Sergius Paulus, the deputy of Cyprus, was listening to the gospel message. The deputy had sent for the apostles, that he might be instructed in the message they had come to bear, and now the forces of evil, working through the sorcerer Elymas, sought with their baleful suggestions to turn him from the faith and so thwart the purpose of God.

5) How did Paul react?
Acts 13:9-10 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the _____ _____, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not _____ to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

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6) What did God do through Paul?
Acts 13:11-12 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be _____, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, _____, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord

The sorcerer had closed his eyes to the evidences of gospel truth, and the Lord, in righteous anger, caused his natural eyes to be closed, shutting out from him the light of day. This blindness was not permanent, but only for a season, that he might be warned to repent and seek pardon of the God whom he had so grievously offended. The confusion into which he was thus brought made of no effect his subtle arts against the doctrine of Christ. The fact that he was obliged to grope about in blindness proved to all that the miracles which the apostles had performed, and which Elymas had denounced as sleight of hand, were wrought by the power of God. The deputy, convinced of the truth of the doctrine taught by the apostles, accepted the gospel.

It is the duty of the minister of Christ to stand faithful at his post, in the fear of God and in the power of His might. Thus, he may put to confusion the hosts of Satan and may triumph in the name of the Lord.

7) Where did they head next?
Acts 13:13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to _____ in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

Their way was toilsome; they encountered hardships and privations and were beset with dangers on every side. In the towns and cities through which they passed, and along the lonely highways, they were surrounded by dangers seen and unseen. But Paul and Barnabas had learned to trust God's power to deliver. Their hearts were filled with fervent love for perishing souls. As faithful shepherds in search of the lost sheep, they gave no thought to their own ease and convenience.

It was here that Mark, overwhelmed with fear and discouragement, wavered for a time in his purpose to give himself wholeheartedly to the Lord's work. Unused to hardships, he was disheartened by the perils and privations of the way. He had labored with success under favorable circumstances; but now, amidst the opposition and perils that so often beset the pioneer worker, he failed to endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross. He had yet to learn to face danger and persecution and adversity with a brave heart. As the apostles advanced, and still greater difficulties were apprehended, Mark was intimidated and losing all courage, refused to go farther and returned to Jerusalem.

8) Where did Paul and Barnabas go next?
Acts 13:14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to _____ in _____, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

Mark's desertion caused Paul to judge him unfavorably, and even severely, for a time. Barnabas, on the other hand, was inclined to excuse him because of his inexperience. He felt anxious that Mark should not abandon the ministry, for he saw in him qualifications that would fit him to be a useful worker for Christ. In after years his solicitude in Mark's behalf was richly rewarded, for the young man gave himself unreservedly to the Lord and to the work of proclaiming the gospel message in difficult fields. Under the blessing of God, and the wise training of Barnabas, he developed into a valuable worker.

9) At the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia, what happened?
Acts 13:15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of _____ for the people, say on.
10) What did Paul have to say?
Acts 13:16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that _____ God, give audience.

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11) What was at the heart of Paul's message?
Acts 13:23-25 Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a _____, Jesus: When John had first preached before his coming the _____ of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not _____ to loose.

Thus, with power he preached Jesus as the Saviour of men, the Messiah of prophecy.

12) What did he say next?
Acts 13:26-27 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you _____ God, to you is the word of this _____ sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in _____ him.
13) What followed?
Acts 13:28-30 And though they found no _____ of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be _____. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God _____ him from the dead:
14) What Psalms does Paul quote to them?
Psalm 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my _____; this day have I begotten thee.
Psalms 16:10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see _____.
15) And about David?
Acts 13:36-37 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw _____ _____.
16) And finally?
Acts 13:38-40 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the _____ of _____: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. _____ therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets;

The Spirit of God accompanied the words that were spoken, and hearts were touched. The apostle's appeal to Old Testament prophecies, and his declaration that these had been fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, carried conviction to many a soul longing for the advent of the promised Messiah. And the speaker's words of assurance that the "glad tidings" of salvation were for Jew and Gentile alike, brought hope and joy to those who had not been numbered among the children of Abraham according to the flesh.

17) What did they ask Paul and Barnabas?
Acts 13:42-43 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the _____ besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious _____ followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.
18) Did they make good on their invitation?
Acts 13:44-45 And the next sabbath day came almost the _____ _____ together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake _____ those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.
19) What followed?
Acts 13:46-47 Then Paul and Barnabas _____ _____, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves _____ of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

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20) How did Gentile converts react to this news?
Acts 13:48-49 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the _____ of the _____: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

21) How did the Jews react to this news?
Acts 13:50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised _____ against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

22) What had Hosea predicted centuries before?
Hosea 1:10 Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor _____; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the _____ of the living God.
Hosea 2:23 And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had _____ _____ mercy; and I will say to them which were not _____ _____, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

23) What did Jesus tell the Jews?
Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be _____ from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

24) What did Jesus tell the crowd who watched Him ascend to the Throne of God?
Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach _____ _____, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

25) What was the message for EVERYONE that Paul met?
Ephesians 2:12-13 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and _____ from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made _____ by the blood of Christ.
Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the _____, and of the household of God;

To those who believe, Christ is a sure foundation. Upon this living stone, Jews and Gentiles alike may build. It is broad enough for all and strong enough to sustain the weight and burden of the whole world.

26) When Barnabas and Paul were evicted from Antioch, how did they react?
Acts 13:51-52 But they shook off the _____ of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with _____, and with the Holy Ghost.

27) What Words of Christ are just as relevant today?
Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of _____ against you falsely, for my sake. _____, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

The gospel message was advancing, and the apostles had every reason for feeling encouraged. Their labors had been richly blessed among the Pisidians at Antioch, and the believers whom they left to carry forward the work alone for a time, ***"were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."***

Can you see that God the Gospel is for everyone?

Do you want to be a bold witness?

When is the time to share Jesus with other

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Lesson 17 – Preaching among the Heathen

Based on Acts 14:1-26

Our Lesson today is in the middle of Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey.

1) Where does our lesson begin today
   Acts 14:1 And it came to pass in _____, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

From Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium. In this place, as at Antioch, they began their labors in the synagogue of their own people.

2) How well did that go?
   Acts 14:2 But the unbelieving _____ stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds _____ affected against the brethren.
3) Did that deter Barnabas and Paul?
   Acts 14:3-4 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the _____ of his _____, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was _____: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

The increasing popularity of the message borne by the apostles, filled the unbelieving Jews with envy and hatred, and they determined to stop the labors of Paul and Barnabas at once. By means of false and exaggerated reports they led the authorities to fear that the entire city was in danger of being incited to insurrection. They declared that large numbers were attaching themselves to the apostles and suggested that it was for secret and dangerous designs.

So enraged were the leaders among the Jews by the turn that matters were taking, that they determined to gain their ends by violence. Arousing the worst passions of the ignorant, noisy mob, they succeeded in creating a tumult, which they attributed to the teaching of the disciples. By this false charge they hoped to gain the help of the magistrates in carrying out their purpose. They determined that the apostles should have no opportunity to vindicate themselves and that the mob should interfere by stoning Paul and Barnabas, thus putting an end to their labors.

4) What became of it?
   Acts 14:5-7 And when there was an _____ made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to _____ them, They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: And there they _____ the gospel.

Friends of the apostles, though unbelievers, warned them of the malicious designs of the Jews and urged them not to expose themselves needlessly to the fury of the mob, but to escape for their lives. Paul and Barnabas accordingly departed in secret from Iconium, leaving the believers to carry on the work alone for a time. But they by no means took final leave; they purposed to return after the excitement had abated, and complete the work begun.

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Driven by persecution from Iconium, the apostles went to Lystra and Derbe, in Lycaonia. These towns were inhabited largely by a heathen, superstitious people, but among them were some who were willing to hear and accept the gospel message. In these places and in the surrounding country the apostles decided to labor, hoping to avoid Jewish prejudice and persecution.

In Lystra there was no Jewish synagogue, though a few Jews were living in the town. Many of the inhabitants of Lystra worshiped at a temple dedicated to Jupiter. When Paul and Barnabas appeared in the town and, gathering the Lystrians about them, explained the simple truths of the gospel, many sought to connect these doctrines with their own superstitious belief in the worship of Jupiter.

5) Whom did they meet in Lystra?
Acts 14:8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a _____ from his mother's womb, who never had walked:
6) What does Scripture record about him?
Acts 14:9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had _____ to be _____,
7) What did Paul tell him to do?
Acts 14:10 Said with a loud voice, _____ upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

Heretofore the sufferer had been able to take a sitting posture only, but now he instantly obeyed Paul's command and for the first time in his life stood on his feet. Strength came with this effort of faith.

8) Did the onlooking crowd give God the glory?
Acts 14:11-13 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The _____ are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief _____. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done _____ with the people.

The Lystrians, eager to show their gratitude, prevailed upon the priest of Jupiter to do the apostles honor. Paul and Barnabas, who had sought retirement and rest, were not aware of these preparations. Soon, however, their attention was attracted by the sound of music and the enthusiastic shouting of a large crowd who had come to the house where they were staying.

9) Were Barnabas and Paul thrilled?
Acts 14:14-15 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they _____ their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of _____ _____ with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:
Acts14:16-17 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without _____, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our _____ with food and gladness.

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10) How successful were they in stopping them?
Acts 14:18 And with these sayings scarce _____ they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

Notwithstanding the positive denial of the apostles that they were divine, and notwithstanding Paul's endeavors to direct the minds of the people to the true God as the only object worthy of adoration, it was almost impossible to turn the heathen from their intention to offer sacrifice. So, firm had been their belief that these men were indeed gods, and so great their enthusiasm, that they were loath to acknowledge their error.

11) What happened shortly thereafter?
Acts 14:19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who _____ the people…

On arriving at Lystra, these Jews soon succeeded in inspiring the people with the same bitterness of spirit that actuated their own minds. By words of misrepresentation and calumny those who had recently regarded Paul and Barnabas as divine beings were persuaded that in reality the apostles were worse than murderers and were deserving of death.

12) What did they incite the Lystrians to do?
Acts 14:19 … and, having _____ Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

Soon the murderous designs of the enemies of the gospel were carried out. Yielding to the influence of evil, the Lystrians became possessed with a satanic fury and, seizing Paul, mercilessly stoned him. The apostle thought that his end had come. The martyrdom of Stephen, and the cruel part that he himself had acted upon that occasion, came vividly to his mind. Covered with bruises and faint with pain, he fell to the ground.

In this dark and trying hour the company of Lystrian believers, who through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas had been converted to the faith of Jesus, remained loyal and true. The unreasoning opposition and cruel persecution by their enemies served only to confirm the faith of these devoted brethren; and now, in the face of danger and scorn, they showed their loyalty by gathering sorrowfully about the form of him whom they believed to be dead.

13) What happened?
Acts:14:20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he _____ _____, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

What was their surprise when in the midst of their lamentations the apostle suddenly lifted up his head and rose to his feet with the praise of God upon his lips. To the believers this unexpected restoration of God's servant was regarded as a miracle of divine power and seemed to set the signet of Heaven upon their change of belief. They rejoiced with inexpressible gladness and praised God with renewed faith.

Among those who had been converted at Lystra, and who were eyewitnesses of the sufferings of Paul, was one who was afterward to become a prominent worker for Christ and who was to share with the apostle the trials and the joys of pioneer service in difficult fields. This was a young man named Timothy (Acts 16:1). When Paul was dragged out of the city, this youthful disciple was among the number who took their stand beside his apparently lifeless body and

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who saw him arise, bruised and covered with blood, but with praises upon his lips because he had been permitted to suffer for the sake of Christ.

14) Did Paul give up and go home?
Acts 14:21-22 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to _____, and to Iconium, and Antioch, Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much _____ enter into the kingdom of God.

15) What legacy and order did Barnabas and Paul leave behind?
Acts 14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they _____ them to the _____, on whom they believed.

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.

16) Who abides with those who believe?
Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am _____ in the midst of them.

In all their missionary endeavors Paul and Barnabas sought to follow Christ's example of willing sacrifice and faithful, earnest labor for souls. Wide-awake, zealous, untiring, they did not consult inclination or personal ease, but with prayerful anxiety and unceasing activity they sowed the seed of truth. And with the sowing of the seed, the apostles were careful to give to all who took their stand for the gospel, practical instruction that was of untold value. This spirit of earnestness and godly fear made upon the minds of the new disciples a lasting impression regarding the importance of the gospel message.

17) How did Barnabas' and Paul's first missionary Journey end?
Acts 14:26-27 And thence sailed to _____, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they _____ all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

Can you see that God blesses the courageous?

Do you want to be a bold witness?

When is the time to share Jesus with others?

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Lesson 18 – Jew and Gentile

Based on Acts 15:1-35

Our Lesson today begins at the end of Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey. They have just returned to Antioch where they began.

1) Where does our lesson begin today
   Acts 14:27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the _____ of _____ unto the Gentiles.

The church at Antioch was a large and growing one. A center of missionary activity, it was one of the most important of the groups of Christian believers. Its membership was made up of many classes of people from among both Jews and Gentiles.

2) Who came to visit the Church there while Paul and Barnabas were teaching?
   Acts 15:1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be _____ after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

While the apostles united with the ministers and lay members at Antioch in an earnest effort to win many souls to Christ, certain Jewish believers from Judea succeeded in introducing a question that soon led to wide-spread controversy in the church and brought consternation to the believing Gentiles. With great assurance these Judaizing teachers asserted that in order to be saved, one must be circumcised and must keep the entire ceremonial law.

3) Did Paul and Barnabas accept them quietly?
   Acts 15:2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small _____ and _____ with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

The Jewish converts generally were not inclined to move as rapidly as the providence of God opened the way. From the result of the apostles' labors among the Gentiles, it was evident that the converts among the latter people would far exceed the Jewish converts in number. The Jews feared that if the restrictions and ceremonies of their law were not made obligatory upon the Gentiles as a condition of church fellowship, the national peculiarities of the Jews, which had hitherto kept them distinct from all other people, would finally disappear from among those who received the gospel message.

They were slow to discern that all the sacrificial offerings had but prefigured the death of the Son of God, in which type met antitype, and after which the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic dispensation were no longer binding.

4) How did Paul describe himself before his conversion?
   Philippians 3:6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, _____.

since his change of heart, he had gained a clear conception of the mission of the Saviour as the Redeemer of the entire race, Gentile as well as Jew, and had learned the difference between a living faith and a dead formalism. In the light of the gospel the ancient rites and ceremonies committed to Israel had gained a new and deeper significance.

God's unchangeable law of Ten Commandments, however, Paul still kept in spirit as well as in letter.

5) What did the Believers in Antioch recommend?
   Acts 15:2 … they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to _____ unto the apostles and elders about this question.

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The members of the church, fearing that a division among them would be the outcome of continued discussion, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, with some responsible men from the church, to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches and those who had come to Jerusalem to attend the approaching festivals. Meanwhile all controversy was to cease until a final decision should be given in general council. This decision was then to be universally accepted by the different churches throughout the country.

6) How did the Council Meeting go?
Acts 15:7-8 And when there had been much _____, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the _____ _____, even as he did unto us;
7) What did he add to that?
Acts 15:9-10 And put no _____ between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor _____ were able to bear?

This question was warmly discussed in the assembly. Intimately connected with the question of circumcision were several others demanding careful study. One was the problem as to what attitude should be taken toward the use of meats offered to idols. Many of the Gentile converts were living among ignorant and superstitious people who made frequent sacrifices and offerings to idols.

The Gentiles were accustomed to eat the flesh of animals that had been strangled, while the Jews had been divinely instructed that when beasts were killed for food, particular care was to be taken that the blood should flow from the body; otherwise, the meat would not be regarded as wholesome. God had given these injunctions to the Jews for the purpose of preserving their health. The Jews regarded it as sinful to use blood as an article of diet. They held that the blood was the life, and that the shedding of blood was in consequence of sin.

8) What did Peter remind them of?
Acts10:15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou _____.

Peter related the plain interpretation of these words, which was given him almost immediately in his summons to go to the centurion and instruct him in the faith of Christ. This message showed that God was no respecter of persons but accepted and acknowledged all who feared Him.

The various points involved in the settlement of the main question at issue seemed to present before the council insurmountable difficulties. But the Holy Spirit had, in reality, already settled this question, upon the decision of which seemed to depend the prosperity, if not the very existence, of the Christian church.

9) What else did Peter tell the Council about?
Acts 11:17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could _____ God?

Peter's address brought the assembly to a point where they could listen with patience to Paul and Barnabas, who related their experience in working for the Gentiles.

10) What did they do?
Acts 15:12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave _____ to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

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11) What was the decision of the Council?
Acts 15:19-20 *(James speaking here)* wherefore my sentence is, that we _____ not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from _____ of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.
12) What was the reason?
Acts 15:17-18 That the residue of men might _____ after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. _____ unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

The Holy Spirit saw good not to impose the ceremonial law on the Gentile converts, and the mind of the apostles regarding this matter was as the mind of the Spirit of God. James presided at the council, and his final decision was,

13) What was James final word about it?
Acts 15:19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are _____ to God.

In this instance we have a refutation of the doctrine held by the Roman Catholic Church that Peter was the head of the church. Those who, as popes, have claimed to be his successors, have no Scriptural foundation for their pretensions. Nothing in the life of Peter gives sanction to the claim that he was elevated above his brethren as the vicegerent of the Most High. If those who are declared to be the successors of Peter had followed his example, they would always have been content to remain on an equality with their brethren.

James sought to impress the minds of his brethren with the fact that, in turning to God, the Gentiles had made a great change in their lives and that much caution should be used not to trouble them with perplexing and doubtful questions of minor importance, lest they be discouraged in following Christ.

14) What were the Gentile converts encouraged to do?
Acts 15:20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things _____, and from _____.

The apostles and elders therefore agreed to instruct the Gentiles by letter to abstain from meats offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. They were to be urged to keep the commandments and to lead holy lives. They were also to be assured that the men who had declared circumcision to be binding were not authorized to do so by the apostles.

15) What did the Council decide next?
Acts 15:22-23 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to _____ with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: And they wrote _____ by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:
16) What was the word to the Gentiles?
Acts 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater _____ than these necessary things;

The council which decided this case was composed of apostles and teachers who had been prominent in raising up the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches, with chosen delegates from various places. Elders from Jerusalem and deputies from Antioch were present, and the most influential churches were represented. The council moved in accordance with the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. As a result of their deliberations, they all saw that God Himself had answered the question at issue by bestowing upon the Gentiles the Holy Ghost; and they realized that it was their part to follow the guidance of the Spirit.

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17) Where did Paul and the others go?
Acts 15:30-32 So when they were dismissed, they came to _____: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the _____: Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and _____ them.

The Jewish Christians living within sight of the temple naturally allowed their minds to revert to the peculiar privileges of the Jews as a nation. When they saw the Christian church departing from the ceremonies and traditions of Judaism, and perceived that the peculiar sacredness with which the Jewish customs had been invested would soon be lost sight of in the light of the new faith, many grew indignant with Paul as the one who had, in a large measure, caused this change. Even the disciples were not all prepared to accept willingly the decision of the council. Some were zealous for the ceremonial law, and they regarded Paul with disfavor because they thought that his principles in regard to the obligations of the Jewish law were lax.

18) What did Paul scold Peter and Barnabas for?
Galatians 2:11-13 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the _____, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that _____ also was carried away with their dissimulation.

This revelation of weakness on the part of those who had been respected and loved as leaders, left a most painful impression on the minds of the Gentile believers. The church was threatened with division. But Paul, who saw the subverting influence of the wrong done to the church through the double part acted by Peter, openly rebuked him for thus disguising his true sentiments.

19) In the presence of everyone, what did Paul tell them?
Galatians 2:14 But when I saw that they walked not _____ according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why _____ thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

Peter saw the error into which he had fallen and immediately set about repairing the evil that had been wrought, so far as was in his power. God, who knows the end from the beginning, permitted Peter to reveal this weakness of character in order that the tried apostle might see that there was nothing in himself whereof he might boast. Even the best of men, if left to themselves, will err in judgment.

Paul was often compelled to stand alone. He was specially taught of God and dared make no concessions that would involve principle. At times the burden was heavy, but Paul stood firm for the right. He realized that the church must never be brought under the control of human power.

20) What were Paul's thoughts about an organized church?
1 Corinthians 14:32-33 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of _____, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel, and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions.

Can you see that God's Message is for All?

Do you want to live life to the fullest?

When is the time to work together in an orderly fashion?

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Lesson 19 – Exalting the Cross

Based on Acts 15:36-16:6

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 15:36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in _____ _____ where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

Our Lesson today begins at the beginning of Paul and Barnabas discussing a second missionary journey. They had finished their first and were continuing on at Antioch teaching the people.

2) What were Paul's goals for the churches he served?
   2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all _____ of the flesh and spirit, perfecting _____ in the fear of God.

Both Paul and Barnabas had a tender regard for those who had recently accepted the gospel message under their ministry, and they longed to see them once more. This solicitude Paul never lost. Even when in distant mission fields, far from the scene of his earlier labors, he continued to bear upon his heart the burden of urging these converts to remain faithful.

Constantly, he tried to help them to become self-reliant, growing Christians, strong in faith, ardent in zeal, and wholehearted in their consecration to God and to the work of advancing His kingdom.

3) What did Barnabas suggest to Paul?
   Acts 15:37-38 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was _____. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who _____ from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

Paul was not inclined to excuse Mark's weakness in deserting the work for the safety and comforts of home. He urged that one with so little stamina was unfitted for a work requiring patience, self-denial, bravery, devotion, faith, and a willingness to sacrifice, if need be, even life itself.

4) How did that end up?
   Acts 15:39-41 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they _____ _____ one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.
5) Where did they end up after that?
   Acts 16:1-2 Then came he to Derbe and _____: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named _____, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

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Paul and Silas at length reached Derbe and Lystra in the province of Lycaonia. It was at Lystra that Paul had been stoned, yet we find him again on the scene of his former danger. He was anxious to see how those who through his labors had accepted the gospel were enduring the test of trial. He was not disappointed, for he found that the Lystrian believers had remained firm in the face of violent opposition.

6) Who joined Paul and Silas?
Acts 16:3 Him (Timothy) would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the _____ which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Here Paul again met Timothy, who had witnessed his sufferings at the close of his first visit to Lystra and upon whose mind the impression then made had deepened with the passing of time until he was convinced that it was his duty to give himself fully to the work of the ministry. His heart was knit with the heart of Paul, and he longed to share the apostle's labors by assisting as the way might open.

7) Who were Timothy's first Bible teachers?
2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother _____, and thy mother _____; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Timothy's father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. From a child he had known the Scriptures. The piety that he saw in his home life was sound and sensible. The faith of his mother and his grandmother in the sacred oracles was to him a constant reminder of the blessing in doing God's will. The word of God was the rule by which these two godly women had guided Timothy. The spiritual power of the lessons that he had received from them kept him pure in speech and unsullied by the evil influences with which he was surrounded. Thus, his home instructors had co-operated with God in preparing him to bear burdens.

Those who had taught Timothy in his childhood were rewarded by seeing the son of their care linked in close fellowship with the great apostle. Timothy was a mere youth when he was chosen by God to be a teacher, but his principles had been so established by his early education that he was fitted to take his place as Paul's helper. And though young, he bore his responsibilities with Christian meekness.

8) What did Paul suggest for Timothy's safety?
Acts 16:3 …and took and _____ him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

As a precautionary measure, Paul wisely advised Timothy to be circumcised—not that God required it, but in order to remove from the minds of the Jews that which might be an objection to Timothy's ministration. In his work Paul was to journey from city to city, in many lands, and often he would have opportunity to preach Christ in Jewish synagogues, as well as in other places of assembly. If it should be known that one of his companions in labor was uncircumcised, his work might be greatly hindered by the prejudice and bigotry of the Jews.

Yet while he conceded this much to Jewish prejudice, he believed and taught circumcision or uncircumcision to be nothing and the gospel of Christ everything.

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9) How did Paul view Timothy?
1 Timothy 1:2 Unto Timothy, my _____ _____ in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

The great apostle often drew the younger disciple out, questioning him in regard to Scripture history, and as they traveled from place to place, he carefully taught him how to do successful work. Both Paul and Silas, in all their association with Timothy, sought to deepen the impression that had already been made upon his mind, of the sacred, serious nature of the work of the gospel minister.

10) What should we set our eyes on?
Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and _____ lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and _____, in this present world; Looking for that _____ _____, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might _____ us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

11) What were Paul, Silas, and Timothy doing?
Acts 16:4-5 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the _____ for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches _____ in the faith, and increased in number daily.

The apostle Paul felt a deep responsibility for those converted under his labors. Above all things, he longed that they should be faithful.

12) What did he say about it later?
Philippians 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of _____, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

He trembled for the result of his ministry. He felt that even his own salvation might be imperiled if he should fail of fulfilling his duty and the church should fail of co-operating with him in the work of saving souls. He knew that preaching alone would not suffice to educate the believers to hold forth the word of life.

13) What Old Testament verse was foundational to his ministry?
Isaiah 28:10 For precept must be upon precept, _____ upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

It is a universal principle that whenever one refuses to use his God-given powers, these powers decay and perish. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Hence the apostle's fear that he might fail of presenting every man perfect in Christ. Paul's hope of heaven grew dim when he contemplated any failure on his part that would result in giving the church the mold of the human instead of the divine.

14) What was Paul's desire for the churches he went to (and you)?
Philippians 2:15-16 That ye may be _____ and _____, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the _____ of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

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Every true minister feels a heavy responsibility for the spiritual advancement of the believers entrusted to his care, a longing desire that they shall be laborers together with God. He realizes that upon the faithful performance of his God-given work depends in a large degree the well-being of the church. Earnestly and untiringly, he seeks to inspire the believers with a desire to win souls for Christ, remembering that every addition to the church should be one more agency for the carrying out of the plan of redemption.

15) Where did they go next?
Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of _____, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

16) What did Paul teach the Galatians?
Galatians 1:3-4 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our _____, that he might deliver us from this present _____ world, according to the will of God and our Father:
Galatians 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the _____ by the works of the law, or by the hearing of _____?
Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by _____ in Christ Jesus.

Paul's lips had been touched with a live coal from off the altar, and he was enabled to rise above bodily infirmities and to present Jesus as the sinner's only hope. Those who heard him knew that he had been with Jesus. Endued with power from on high, he was able to compare spiritual things with spiritual and to tear down the strongholds of Satan. Hearts were broken by his presentation of the love of God, as revealed in the sacrifice of His only-begotten Son, and many were led to inquire, What must I do to be saved?

17) What must every minister do?
2 Corinthians 4:5-6 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the _____; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our _____, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin.

18) What did Paul say to the Galatians?
Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should _____, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death and accepts us in the Beloved.

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour's love, and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy, for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.

Can you see the necessity of the Cross?

Do you want to glow with God's presence?

When is the time to work together in an orderly fashion?

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Lesson 20 – In the Regions Beyond

Based on Acts 16:7-40

Paul, Silas and Timothy were out on Paul's second missionary journey. They receive a call…

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 16:7-8 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit _____ _____ _____. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

The men were inclined to travel north, but the Holy Spirit dictated otherwise.

2) What did God do for them?
   Acts 16:9-10 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into _____, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had _____ us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Luke joined the group in Troas.

3) Where did they go?
   Acts 16:11-12 Therefore loosing from Troas, _____ came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to _____, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.
4) Where did they go to break new ground?
   Acts 16:13 And on the _____ we went out of the city by a river side, where _____ was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.
5) Whom did they meet?
   Acts 16:14-15 And a certain woman named _____, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was _____, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.
6) While staying there in Philippi, what happened?
   Acts 16:16-17 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel _____ with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of _____.

This woman was a special agent of Satan and had brought to her masters much gain by soothsaying. Her influence had helped to strengthen idolatry. Satan knew that his kingdom was being invaded, and he resorted to this means of opposing the work of God, hoping to mingle his sophistry with the truths taught by those who were proclaiming the gospel message. The words of recommendation uttered by this woman were an injury to the cause of truth, distracting the minds of the people from the teachings of the apostles and bringing disrepute upon the gospel, and by them many were led to believe that the men who spoke with the Spirit and power of God were actuated by the same spirit as this emissary of Satan.

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7) What did Paul finally do?
Acts 16:18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I _____ thee in the name of Jesus Christ to _____ _____ of her. And he came out the same hour.

Her immediate silence testified that the apostles were the servants of God and that the demon had acknowledged them to be such and had obeyed their command.

8) Everybody rejoiced, Right?
Acts 16:19-21 And when her masters saw that the hope of their _____ was gone, they _____ Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly _____ our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

Dispossessed of the evil spirit and restored to her right mind, the woman chose to become a follower of Christ. Then her masters were alarmed for their craft. They saw that all hope of receiving money from her divinations and soothsayings was at an end and that their source of income would soon be entirely cut off if the apostles were allowed to continue the work of the gospel.

Many others in the city were interested in gaining money through satanic delusions, and these, fearing the influence of a power that could so effectually stop their work, raised a mighty cry against the servants of God.

9) What did they do to Paul and Silas?
Acts 16:23-24 And when they had laid many _____ upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the _____.
10) Were they discouraged?
Acts 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas _____, and _____ _____ unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

With astonishment the other prisoners heard the sound of prayer and singing issuing from the inner prison. They had been accustomed to hear shrieks and moans, cursing and swearing, breaking the silence of the night; but never before had they heard words of prayer and praise ascending from that gloomy cell. Guards and prisoners marveled and asked themselves who these men could be, who, cold, hungry, and tortured, could yet rejoice.

The keeper of the jail had heard with amazement the prayers and songs of the imprisoned apostles. When they were led in, he had seen their swollen and bleeding wounds and had himself caused their feet to be fastened in the stocks. He had expected to hear from them bitter groans and imprecations, but he heard instead songs of joy and praise. With these sounds in his ears the jailer had fallen into a sleep.

11) Sometime in the night, what happened?
Acts 16:26-27 And suddenly there was a great _____, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were _____. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

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Starting up in alarm, he saw with dismay that all the prison doors were open, and the fear flashed upon him that the prisoners had escaped. He remembered with what explicit charge Paul and Silas had been entrusted to his care the night before, and he was certain that death would be the penalty of his apparent unfaithfulness. In the bitterness of his spirit he felt that it was better for him to die by his own hand than to submit to a disgraceful execution.

12) What did Paul yell out?
Acts 16:28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no _____: for we are all here.

The severity with which the jailer had treated the apostles had not aroused their resentment. Paul and Silas had the spirit of Christ, not the spirit of revenge. Their hearts, filled with the love of the Saviour, had no room for malice against their persecutors.

13) How did he react to Paul and Silas?
Acts 16:29-30 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came _____, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be _____?

The jailer had trembled as he beheld the wrath of God manifested in the earthquake; when he thought that the prisoners had escaped he had been ready to die by his own hand; but now all these things seemed of little consequence compared with the new, strange dread that agitated his mind, and his desire to possess the tranquility and cheerfulness shown by the apostles under suffering and abuse. He saw in their countenances the light of heaven; he knew that God had interposed in a miraculous manner to save their lives.

14) What words came back to his mind?
Acts 16:17 …These men are the _____ of the most high God..
15) What did they tell the Jailer?
Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be _____, and thy house.
16) What happened next?
Acts 16:32-34 And they spake unto him the _____ of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was _____, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his _____, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.
17) What happened the next day?
Acts 16:35-36 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men _____. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore _____, and go in peace.

The citizens of Philippi had been greatly terrified by the earthquake, and when in the morning the officers of the prison told the magistrates of what had occurred during the night, they were alarmed and sent the sergeants to liberate the apostles.

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18) Did Paul and Silas run away?
Acts 16:37-38 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being _____, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and _____ us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

The apostles were Roman citizens, and it was unlawful to scourge a Roman, save for the most flagrant crime, or to deprive him of his liberty without a fair trial. Paul and Silas had been publicly imprisoned, and they now refused to be privately released without the proper explanation on the part of the magistrates.

19) What did they do?
Acts 16:39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and _____ them to depart out of the city.

When this word was brought to the authorities, they were alarmed for fear that the apostles would complain to the emperor, and going at once to the prison, they apologized to Paul and Silas for the injustice and cruelty done them and personally conducted them out of the prison, entreating them to depart from the city. The magistrates feared the apostles' influence over the people, and they also feared the Power that had interposed in behalf of these innocent men.

20) Where did they go?
Acts 16:40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of _____: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

The apostles did not regard as in vain their labors in Philippi. They had met much opposition and persecution; but the intervention of Providence in their behalf, and the conversion of the jailer and his household, more than atoned for the disgrace and suffering they had endured. The news of their unjust imprisonment and miraculous deliverance became known through all that region, and this brought the work of the apostles to the notice of a large number who otherwise would not have been reached.

21) Who is our warfare really against?
Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against _____, against the rulers of the _____ of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The early Christians were often called to meet the powers of darkness face to face. By sophistry and by persecution the enemy endeavored to turn them from the true faith. At the present time, when the end of all things earthly is rapidly approaching, Satan is putting forth desperate efforts to ensnare the world. He is devising many plans to occupy minds and to divert attention from the truths essential to salvation. In every city his agencies are busily organizing into parties those who are opposed to the law of God. The archdeceiver is at work to introduce elements of confusion and rebellion, and men are being fired with a zeal that is not according to knowledge.

22) What will even the religious be proclaiming as the world ends?
1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, _____ and _____; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Wickedness is reaching a height never before attained, and yet many ministers of the gospel are crying, ***"Peace and safety."*** But God's faithful messengers are to go steadily forward with their work. Clothed with the panoply of heaven, they are to advance fearlessly and victoriously, never ceasing their warfare until every soul within their reach shall have received the message of truth for this time.

Can you see that persistence is necessary? **Do you want to help others see the truth?**

When is the time to proclaim the truth?

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Lesson 21 - Thessalonica

Based on Acts 17:1-10.

Paul, Silas, Timothy, and now Luke were out on Paul's second missionary journey about mid-way. They landed in Greece, at Philippi, we pick up the journey here on their way to Thessalonica.

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to _____, where was a synagogue of the Jews:
2) Where had they just happened recently at Philippi?
   Acts 16:22-24 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to _____ them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into _____, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the _____.

After leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas made their way to Thessalonica. Here they were given the privilege of addressing large congregations in the Jewish synagogue. Their appearance bore evidence of the shameful treatment they had recently received and necessitated an explanation of what had taken place. This they made without exalting themselves but magnified the One who had wrought their deliverance.

3) What was the core of his preaching to the Jews in Thessalonica?
   Luke 24:27 (Jesus speaking here) And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the _____ the things concerning himself.
   Acts 17:2-3 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three _____ days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and _____ again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

In preaching to the Thessalonians, Paul appealed to the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah.

4) What promise was given to Adam after the fall?
   Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy _____, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Plain and specific prophecies had been given regarding the appearance of the Promised One. Adam was given an assurance of the coming of the Redeemer.

5) What promise was given to Abraham?
   Genesis 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be _____; because thou hast obeyed my voice.
6) What reminder did Paul give to the believers is Galatia?
   Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of _____, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

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7) What promise did God give to Moses?
Deuteronomy 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a _____ from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;
Deuteronomy 18:18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall _____ unto them all that I shall command him.
8) What promise did God give Jacob?
Genesis 49:10 The _____ shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

The Messiah was to be of the royal line.

9) What did Isaiah tell us?
Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a _____ shall grow out of his roots:
Isaiah 55:3-5 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting _____ with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and _____ to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall _____ unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.
10) What did Jeremiah tell us?
Jeremiah 23:5-6 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute _____ and _____ in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR _____.
Jeremiah 33:17-18 For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the _____ of the house of Israel; Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do _____ continually.
11) Where was Messiah to be born?
Micah 5:2 But thou, _____ Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.
12) What was Messiah to do?
Isaiah 11:2-3 And the _____ of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his _____, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:
Isaiah 61:1-3 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath _____ me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim _____ to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

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To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them _____ for ashes, the _____ of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

13) What did Paul teach the believers there?

Acts 17:3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and _____ again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

Micah 5:1 Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the _____.

Isaiah 50:6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the _____: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

Psalm 22:6-8 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and _____ of the people. All they that see me laugh me to _____: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He _____ on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

Psalm 22:17-18 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast _____ upon my vesture.

Psalm 69:8-9 I am become a _____ unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the _____ of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

Psalm 69:20 Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take _____, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.

How unmistakably plain were Isaiah's prophecies of Christ's sufferings and death!

14) What did Isaiah have to say?

Isaiah 53:1-3 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the _____ of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor _____; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and _____ of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Isaiah 53:4-5 Surely he hath _____ our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was _____ for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Isaiah 53:6-8 All we like sheep have gone _____; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the _____, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the _____: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

15) What did Paul go on to preach?

Zechariah 13:6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my _____.

Isaiah 53:9-10 And he made his _____ with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an _____ for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Psalm 16:9-10 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in _____; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see _____.

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The Saviour of prophecy was to come, not as a temporal king, to deliver the Jewish nation from earthly oppressors, but as a man among men, to live a life of poverty and humility, and at last to be despised, rejected, and slain. The Saviour foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures was to offer Himself as a sacrifice in behalf of the fallen race, thus fulfilling every requirement of the broken law. In Him the sacrificial types were to meet their antitype.

Paul told the Thessalonian Jews of his former zeal for the ceremonial law and of his wonderful experience at the gate of Damascus. Before his conversion he had been confident in a hereditary piety, a false hope. His faith had not been anchored in Christ; he had trusted instead in forms and ceremonies. His zeal for the law had been disconnected from faith in Christ and was of no avail. While boasting that he was blameless in the performance of the deeds of the law, he had refused the One who made the law of value.

But at the time of his conversion all had been changed. Jesus of Nazareth, whom he had been persecuting in the person of His saints, appeared before him as the promised Messiah. The persecutor saw Him as the Son of God, the one who had come to the earth in fulfillment of the prophecies and who in His life had met every specification of the Sacred Writings.

16) What effect did this Word have in the Thessalonica?
Acts 17:4 And some of them _____, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.
17) Was everyone impressed with the Message?
Acts 17:5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain _____ _____ of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an _____, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

These Jews were not then in favor with the Roman power, because, not long before, they had raised an insurrection in Rome. They were looked upon with suspicion, and their liberty was in a measure, restricted. They now saw an opportunity to take advantage of circumstances to re-establish themselves in favor and at the same time to throw reproach upon the apostles and the converts to Christianity.

18) Did they find Paul and Silas?
Acts 17:6-7 And when they found them _____, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one _____.
19) What became of Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy?
Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto _____: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

Those who today teach unpopular truths need not be discouraged if at times they meet with no more favorable reception, even from those who claim to be Christians, than did Paul and his fellow workers from the people among whom they labored. The messengers of the cross must arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer, and move forward with faith and courage, working always in the name of Jesus. They must exalt Christ as man's mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, the One in whom all the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation centered, and through whose atoning sacrifice the transgressors of God's law may find peace and pardon.

Can you see that opposition sometimes comes?

Do you want to help others see the truth?

When is the time to proclaim the truth?

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Lesson 22 – Berea and Athens

Based on Acts 17:11-34

Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were out on Paul's second missionary journey about mid-way. They landed in Greece, at Philippi, we pick up the journey here on their way to Berea. They had been jailed in Philippi, would have been beaten in Thessalonica, but they couldn't be found, and now were secreted out to Berea.

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 17:10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto _____: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.
2) What did Paul have to say about them?
   Acts 17:11-12 These were more _____ than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures _____, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

The minds of the Bereans were not narrowed by prejudice. They were willing to investigate the truthfulness of the doctrines preached by the apostles. They studied the Bible, not from curiosity, but in order that they might learn what had been written concerning the promised Messiah. Daily they searched the inspired records, and as they compared scripture with scripture, heavenly angels were beside them, enlightening their minds and impressing their hearts.

3) What did Paul teach about having the light?
   Romans 2:15-16 Which shew the work of the law written in their _____, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall _____ the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

All will be judged according to the light that has been given. The Lord sends forth His ambassadors with a message of salvation, and those who hear He will hold responsible for the way in which they treat the words of His servants. Those who are sincerely seeking for truth will make a careful investigation, in the light of God's word, of the doctrines presented to them.

4) Was everything peace and joy for the four men at Berea?
   Acts 17:13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and _____ _____ the people.

The unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica, filled with jealousy and hatred of the apostles, and not content with having driven them from their own city, followed them to Berea and aroused against them the excitable passions of the lower class.

5) What did they recommend to Paul?
   Acts 17:14 And then immediately the brethren sent _____ Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

Paul's hasty departure from Berea deprived him of the opportunity he had anticipated of visiting the brethren at Thessalonica.

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6) What had God promised Paul earlier?
Acts 22:21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee _____ _____ unto the Gentiles.

Persecution followed the teachers of truth from city to city. The enemies of Christ could not prevent the advancement of the gospel, but they succeeded in making the work of the apostles exceedingly hard. Yet in the face of opposition and conflict, Paul pressed steadily forward, determined to carry out the purpose of God as revealed to him in the vision at Jerusalem.

7) What happened with Paul?
Acts 17:15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto _____: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

On arriving at Athens, the apostle sent the Berean brethren back with a message to Silas and Timothy to join him immediately. Timothy had come to Berea prior to Paul's departure, and with Silas had remained to carry on the work so well begun there, and to instruct the new converts in the principles of the faith.

8) Was Paul impressed with Athens?
Acts 17:16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to _____.

The city of Athens was the metropolis of heathendom. Here Paul did not meet with an ignorant, credulous populace, as at Lystra, but with a people famous for their intelligence and culture. Everywhere statues of their gods and of the deified heroes of history and poetry met the eye, while magnificent architecture and paintings represented the national glory and the popular worship of heathen deities. The senses of the people were entranced by the beauty and splendor of art. On every hand sanctuaries and temples, involving untold expense, reared their massive forms. Victories of arms and deeds of celebrated men were commemorated by sculpture, shrines, and tablets. All these made Athens a vast gallery of art.

As Paul looked upon the beauty and grandeur surrounding him, and saw the city wholly given to idolatry, his spirit was stirred with jealousy for God, whom he saw dishonored on every side, and his heart was drawn out in pity for the people of Athens, who, notwithstanding their intellectual culture, were ignorant of the true God.

9) What did Paul say about his first few days there later on?
1 Thessalonians 3:1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens _____;

In this great city, where God was not worshiped, Paul was oppressed by a feeling of solitude, and he longed for the sympathy and aid of his fellow laborers. So far as human friendship was concerned, he felt himself to be utterly alone. Obstacles that were apparently insurmountable presented themselves before him, making it seem almost hopeless for him to attempt to reach the hearts of the people.

10) Did he give up?
Acts 17:17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market _____ with them that met with him.

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His principal work in Athens was to bear the tidings of salvation to those who had no intelligent conception of God and of His purpose in behalf of the fallen race. The apostle was soon to meet paganism in its most subtle, alluring form.

11) Hearing of him, who sought him out?
Acts 17:18-19 Then certain philosophers of the _____, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of _____ _____: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto _____, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

The great men of Athens were not long in learning of the presence in their city of a singular teacher who was setting before the people doctrines new and strange. Some of these men sought Paul out and entered into conversation with him. Soon a crowd of listeners gathered about them. Some were prepared to ridicule the apostle as one who was far beneath them both socially and intellectually.

They, and all others who came in contact with him, soon saw that he had a store of knowledge even greater than their own. His intellectual power commanded the respect of the learned; while his earnest, logical reasoning and the power of his oratory held the attention of all in the audience. His hearers recognized the fact that he was no novice but was able to meet all classes with convincing arguments in support of the doctrines he taught. Thus, the apostle stood undaunted, meeting his opposers on their own ground, matching logic with logic, philosophy with philosophy, eloquence with eloquence.

12) At the Areopagus, What did they ask him?
Acts 17:20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our _____: we would know therefore what these things mean.

In that hour of solemn responsibility, the apostle was calm and self-possessed. His heart was burdened with an important message, and the words that fell from his lips convinced his hearers that he was no idle babbler.

13) What did He tell them?
Acts 17:22-23 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE _____ _____. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

The people were carried away with admiration for Paul's earnest and logical presentation of the attributes of the true God, of His creative power and the existence of His overruling providence.

14) What followed?
Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, _____ not in temples made with hands;
15) What did he add to that?
Acts 17:26-27 And hath made of one blood all _____ of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be _____ _____ from every one of us:

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Pointing to the noble specimens of manhood about him, with words borrowed from a poet of their own he pictured the infinite God as a Father, whose children they were.

16) What did he tell them about the Almighty?
Acts 17:28-29 For in him we _____, and _____, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his _____. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.
17) What does God do in our ignorance?
Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God _____ at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

In the ages of darkness that had preceded the advent of Christ, the divine Ruler had passed lightly over the idolatry of the heathen; but now, through His Son, He had sent men the light of truth; and He expected from all repentance unto salvation, not only from the poor and humble, but from the proud philosopher and the princes of the earth.

18) What did Paul add to that?
Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will _____ the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given _____ unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
19) How well was he received?
Acts 17:32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some _____: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

Among those who listened to the words of Paul were some to whose minds the truths presented brought conviction, but they would not humble themselves to acknowledge God and to accept the plan of salvation. No eloquence of words, no force of argument, can convert the sinner. The power of God alone can apply the truth to the heart. He who persistently turns from this power cannot be reached.

20) Were Paul's efforts fruitless?
Acts 17:34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and _____: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

The words of the apostle, and the description of his attitude and surroundings, as traced by the pen of inspiration, were to be handed down to all coming generations, bearing witness of his unshaken confidence, his courage in loneliness and adversity, and the victory he gained for Christianity in the very heart of paganism.

21) How will the Gospel be received?
1 Corinthians 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish _____; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
1 Corinthians 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are _____;

The strength of those who love and serve God will be renewed day by day. The understanding of the Infinite is placed at their service, that in carrying out His purposes they may not err. Let these workers hold the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end, remembering that the light of God's truth is to shine amid the darkness that enshrouds our world.

Can you see that service needs fortitude?

Do you want to be able to stand when things are tough?

When is the time to let go of the chains that hold us?

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Lesson 23 - Corinth

Based on Acts 18:1-8

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to _____;

Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were out on Paul's second missionary journey about two-thirds through, we pick up the journey here on Paul's way to Corinth. Paul had limited success in Athens and headed southwest to Corinth.

During the first century of the Christian Era, Corinth was one of the leading cities, not only of Greece, but of the world. Greeks, Jews, and Romans, with travelers from every land, thronged its streets, eagerly intent on business and pleasure. A great commercial center, situated within easy access of all parts of the Roman Empire, it was an important place in which to establish memorials for God and His truth.

2) Whom did Paul meet in Corinth?
   Acts 18:2-3 And found a certain Jew named _____, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were _____.

Among the Jews who had taken up their residence in Corinth were Aquila and Priscilla, who afterward became distinguished as earnest workers for Christ.

3) How did Paul speak in Corinth?
   1 Corinthinas 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him _____.
   1 Corinthians 2:4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of _____ _____, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

In preaching the gospel in Corinth, the apostle followed a course different from that which had marked his labors at Athens. While in the latter place, he had sought to adapt his style to the character of his audience; he had met logic with logic, science with science, philosophy with philosophy. As he thought of the time thus spent and realized that his teaching in Athens had been productive of but little fruit, he decided to follow another plan of labor in Corinth in his efforts to arrest the attention of the careless and the indifferent.

4) Where did Paul begin his preaching in Corinth?
   Acts 18:4 And he reasoned in the _____ every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.
5) How well was his preaching received?
   1 Corinthians 1:23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks _____;

To the minds of multitudes living at the present time, the cross of Calvary is surrounded by sacred memories. Hallowed associations are connected with the scenes of the crucifixion. But in Paul's day the cross was regarded with feelings of repulsion and horror. To uphold as the Saviour of mankind one who had met death on the cross, would naturally call forth ridicule and opposition.

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6) What did Paul preach in the Synagogues?
Acts 18:5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was _____.

From the Old Testament Scriptures, he showed that according to the prophecies and the universal expectation of the Jews, the Messiah would be of the lineage of Abraham and of David; then he traced the descent of Jesus from the patriarch Abraham through the royal psalmist. He read the testimony of the prophets regarding the character and work of the promised Messiah, and His reception and treatment on the earth; then he showed that all these predictions had been fulfilled in the life, ministry, and death of Jesus of Nazareth.

In the power of the Spirit, Paul related the story of his own miraculous conversion and of his confidence in the Old Testament Scriptures, which had been so completely fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His words were spoken with solemn earnestness, and his hearers could not but discern that he loved with all his heart the crucified and risen Saviour. They saw that his mind was centered in Christ, that his whole life was bound up with his Lord. So impressive were his words, that only those who were filled with the bitterest hatred against the Christian religion could stand unmoved by them.

7) Did they all convert?
Acts 18:6 And when they opposed themselves, and _____, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the _____.

the Jews of Corinth closed their eyes to the evidence so clearly presented by the apostle and refused to listen to his appeals. The same spirit that had led them to reject Christ, filled them with wrath and fury against His servant; and had not God especially protected him, that he might continue to bear the gospel message to the Gentiles, they would have put an end to his life.

8) What has Jesus promised to His Disciples (and us)?
John 12:32 And I, if I be _____ _____ from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Silas and Timothy had ***"come from Macedonia"*** to help Paul, and together they labored for the Gentiles. To the heathen, as well as to the Jews, Paul and his companions preached Christ as the Saviour of the fallen race.

9) Were their efforts fruitless?
Acts 18:7-8 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And _____, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were _____.

The gospel workers in Corinth realized the terrible dangers threatening the souls of those for whom they were laboring; and it was with a sense of the responsibility resting on them that they presented the truth as it is in Jesus. Clear, plain, and decided was their message, a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. And not only in their words, but in the daily life, was the gospel revealed. Angels co-operated with them, and the grace and power of God was shown in the conversion of many.

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The hatred with which the Jews had always regarded the apostles was now intensified. The conversion and baptism of Crispus had the effect of exasperating instead of convincing these stubborn opposers. They could not bring arguments to disprove Paul's preaching, and for lack of such evidence they resorted to deception and malignant attack.

10) What did Jesus do for Paul?
Acts 18:9-10 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a _____, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to _____ thee: for I have much people in this city.

He was planning to leave the city for a more promising field, and seeking earnestly to understand his duty, the Lord appeared to him in a vision. Paul understood this to be a command to remain in Corinth and a guarantee that the Lord would give increase to the seed sown. Strengthened and encouraged, he continued to labor there with zeal and perseverance.

11) How did Paul describe his ministry there?
1 Corinthians 2:3 And I was with you in _____, and in fear, and in much trembling.

He spent much time in house-to-house labor, thus availing himself of the familiar intercourse of the home circle. He visited the sick and the sorrowing, comforted the afflicted, and lifted up the oppressed. And in all that he said and did he magnified the name of Jesus. He trembled lest his teaching should reveal the impress of the human rather than the divine.

12) What did he tell the Corinthians?
1 Corinthians 2:6-7 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this _____, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of _____ in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
1 Corinthians 2:8-9 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have _____ the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not _____, nor ear _____, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
1 Corinthians 2:10-11 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit _____ all things, yea, the deep things 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 _____ no man, but the Spirit of God.
1 Corinthians 2:12-13 Now we have received, not the spirit of the _____, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the _____ _____ teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Paul realized that his sufficiency was not in himself, but in the presence of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influence filled his heart, bringing every thought into subjection to Christ.

13) What must be at the center of our thoughts?
2 Corinthians 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made _____ in our body.

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14) What did he tell the Galatians?
Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I _____; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the _____ of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Self was hidden; Christ was revealed and exalted.

Paul's efforts in Corinth were not without fruit. Many turned from the worship of idols to serve the living God, and a large church was enrolled under the banner of Christ. Some were rescued from among the most dissipated of the Gentiles and became monuments of the mercy of God and the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin.

15) How did his time in Corinth end?
Acts 18:12-13 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made _____ with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God _____ to the law.

The Jewish religion was under the protection of the Roman power, and the accusers of Paul thought that if they could fasten upon him the charge of violating the laws of their religion, he would probably be delivered to them for trial and sentence. They hoped thus to compass his death.

16) What happened at court?
Acts 18:14-16 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of _____ or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. And he _____ them from the judgment seat.

Gallio was a man of integrity, and he refused to become the dupe of the jealous, intriguing Jews. Disgusted with their bigotry and self-righteousness, he would take no notice of the charge. As Paul prepared to speak in self-defense, Gallio told him that it was not necessary.

17) How did the mob react?
Acts 18:17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and _____ him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

The proconsul's decided course opened the eyes of the clamorous crowd who had been abetting the Jews. For the first time during Paul's labors in Europe, the mob turned to his side; under the very eye of the proconsul, and without interference from him, they violently beset the most prominent accusers of the apostle.

18) Did Paul leave right away?
Acts 18:18 And Paul after this _____ there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

If the apostle had at this time been compelled to leave Corinth, the converts to the faith of Jesus would have been placed in a perilous position. The Jews would have endeavored to follow up the advantage gained, even to the extermination of Christianity in that region.

Can you see that God protects his messengers?

Do you want to be able to stand when things are tough?

When is the time to let go of the chains that hold us?

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Lesson 24 – The Thessalonian Letters

Based on the Epistles to the Thessalonians

The Apostle Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians while in Corinth, likely around A.D. 50–51 during his second missionary journey. He had recently left Thessalonica due to persecution and, while staying in Corinth for 18 months, received a report from Timothy that prompted him to write this encouraging letter.

1) How does 1 Thessalonians begin?
   1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and _____, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Silvanus here is Silas. Silas is the Greek or Aramaic name used primarily in the Book of Acts, while Silvanus is the Latin form used by Paul in his letters.

2) What news had Timothy and Silas brought Paul?
   1 Thessalonians 3:6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your _____ and _____, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

They brought him ***"good tidings"*** of the ***"faith and charity"*** of those who had accepted the truth during the first visit of the gospel messengers to Thessalonica. Paul's heart went out in tender sympathy toward these believers, who, in the midst of trial and adversity, had remained true to God. He longed to visit them in person, but as this was not then possible, he wrote to them.

3) What joy did Paul express to the believers in Thessalonica?
   1 Thessalonians 3:7 Therefore, brethren, we were _____ over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:
4) What was Paul doing for them?
   1 Thessalonians 3:10 Night and day _____ exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?
   1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 We give _____ to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; _____ without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;
5) What had they done?
   1 Thessalonians 1:6-7 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having _____ the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: So that ye were _____ to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.
6) What effect did this have?
   1 Thessalonians 1:8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in _____ _____ your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

The Thessalonian believers were true missionaries. Their hearts burned with zeal for their Saviour, who had delivered them from fear of "the wrath to come." Through the grace of Christ, a marvelous transformation had taken place in their lives, and the word of the Lord, as spoken through them, was accompanied with power. Hearts were won by the truths presented, and souls were added to the number of believers.

7) What manner of teaching did Paul use while he was there?
   1 Thessalonians 2:4-5 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing _____, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we _____ words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:

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1 Thessalonians 2:6-7 Nor of men sought we _____, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were _____ among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:
1 Thessalonians 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were _____ unto us.

8) What did he add to that?
1 Thessalonians 2:10-11 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that _____: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a _____ doth his children,

9) Why?
1 Thessalonians 2:12 That ye would _____ worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

10) What was Paul's hope (and ours)?
1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

The Apostle needed to correct some errant beliefs in the people that he loved so much.

11) What was one of those beliefs?
1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye _____ _____, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which _____ in Jesus will God bring with him.
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 For the Lord himself shall _____ from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we _____ be with the Lord.

The Thessalonians had eagerly grasped the idea that Christ was coming to change the faithful who were alive, and to take them to Himself. They had carefully guarded the lives of their friends, lest they should die and lose the blessing which they looked forward to receiving at the coming of their Lord. But one after another their loved ones had been taken from them, and with anguish the Thessalonians had looked for the last time upon the faces of their dead, hardly daring to hope to meet them in a future life.

The hope and joy that this assurance brought to the young church at Thessalonica can scarcely be appreciated by us. They believed and cherished the letter sent to them by their father in the gospel, and their hearts went out in love to him. He had told them these things before; but at that time their minds were striving to grasp doctrines that seemed new and strange, and it is not surprising that the force of some points had not been vividly impressed on their minds. But they were hungering for truth, and Paul's epistle gave them new hope and strength, and a firmer faith in, and a deeper affection for, the One who through His death had brought life and immortality to light.

12) What words of Paul often get misinterpreted?
1 Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Many interpret this passage to mean that the sleeping ones will be brought with Christ from heaven; but Paul meant that as Christ was raised from the dead, so God will call the sleeping saints from their graves and take them with Him to heaven. Precious consolation! glorious hope! not only to the church of Thessalonica, but to all Christians wherever they may be.

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13) What else did Paul point out the believers there?
1 Thessalonians 5:1-2 But of the _____ and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a _____ in the night.

There are in the world today many who close their eyes to the evidences that Christ has given to warn men of His coming. They seek to quiet all apprehension, while at the same time the signs of the end are rapidly fulfilling, and the world is hastening to the time when the Son of man shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven. Paul teaches that it is sinful to be indifferent to the signs which are to precede the second coming of Christ.

14) How should we be?
1 Thessalonians 5:8-9 But let us, who are of the day, be _____, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of _____. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in _____ for their work's sake. And be at _____ among yourselves.
15) What was troubling to the Thessalonians?
2 Thessalonians 3:11-12 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are _____. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with _____ they work, and eat their own bread.
16) What did Paul tell them to do?
1 Thessalonians 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to _____ and to _____ God, so ye would abound more and more.

In his anxiety that the believers at Thessalonica should walk in the fear of God, the apostle pleaded with them to reveal practical godliness in the daily life.

The apostle felt that he was to a large extent responsible for the spiritual welfare of those converted under his labors. His desire for them was that they might increase in a knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He had sent. Often in his ministry he would meet with little companies of men and women who loved Jesus, and bow with them in prayer, asking God to teach them how to maintain a living connection with Him. Often, he took counsel with them as to the best methods of giving to others the light of gospel truth. And often, when separated from those for whom he had thus labored, he pleaded with God to keep them from evil and help them to be earnest, active missionaries.

17) What is one of the indicators of God's indwelling love?
1 Thessalonians 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of _____ to _____ one another.

One of the strongest evidences of true conversion is love to God and man. Those who accept Jesus as their Redeemer have a deep, sincere love for others of like precious faith. Thus, it was with the believers at Thessalonica.

18) What does love include?
1 Thessalonians 5:14-15 Now we exhort you, brethren, _____ them that are unruly, _____ the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render _____ for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.
19) What else should we be aware of?
1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 Quench not the _____. Despise not prophesyings. _____ all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all _____ of evil.

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The instruction that Paul sent the Thessalonians in his first epistle regarding the second coming of Christ, was in perfect harmony with his former teaching. Yet his words were misapprehended by some of the Thessalonian brethren. They understood him to express the hope that he himself would live to witness the Saviour's advent. This belief served to increase their enthusiasm and excitement. Those who had previously neglected their responsibilities and duties, now became more persistent in urging their erroneous views.

20) What did Paul say about the church in Thessalonica to others?
2 Thessalonians 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your _____ and faith in all your _____ and tribulations that ye endure:

He told them that he presented them to other churches as an example of the patient, persevering faith that bravely withstands persecution and tribulation, and he carried their minds forward to the time of the second coming of Christ, when the people of God shall rest from all their cares and perplexities.

21) What did he say to the despairing because of the wickedness surrounding them?
2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In _____ _____ taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting _____ from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this _____, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in _____, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
22) What words of warning did Paul give them (and us)?
2 Thessalonians 2:2-4 That ye be not soon _____ in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man _____ you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be _____, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as _____ sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

The apostle therefore cautioned the brethren to receive no such message as coming from him that Jesus was returning in Paul's time, and he proceeded to emphasize the fact that the papal power, so clearly described by the prophet Daniel, was yet to rise and wage war against God's people. Until this power should have performed its deadly and blasphemous work, it would be in vain for the church to look for the coming of their Lord.

23) What was brewing as Paul spoke these warnings?
2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of _____ doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.
24) How will this present itself?
2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying _____, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the _____, that they might be saved.
25) What follows?
2 Thessalonians 2:11-12 And for this cause God shall send them strong _____, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in _____.

Men cannot with impunity reject the warnings that God in mercy sends them. From those who persist in turning from these warnings, God withdraws His Spirit, leaving them to the deceptions that they love.

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26) What counsel did Paul leave them with?

2 Thessalonians 15-16 Therefore, brethren, _____ _____, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good _____ through grace,

The work of the believers had been given them by God. By their faithful adherence to the truth, they were to give to others the light which they had received. The apostle bade them not to become weary in well-doing and pointed them to his own example of diligence in temporal matters while laboring with untiring zeal in the cause of Christ.

Can you see that God wants you to prosper?

Do you want to be able to see Jesus when He returns?

When is the time to step up and be counted worthy?

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Lesson 25 – Apollos at Corinth

Based on Acts 18:18-28

The Apostle Paul and his fellow travelers were nearing the end of his second missionary journey. He had stayed in Corinth for an extra season after God encouraged him in a vision that he would protect him.

1) Where does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 18:18 And Paul after this tarried there (Corinth) yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in _____: for he had a vow.

Having his head shaved signaled either the beginning or the end of a special vow. The nature of the vow is uncertain among Bible commentators. Most likely it was to signal the accomplishment of something. Some translations even say it may have been Aquilla that took a vow.

2) Where did he stop after having his head saved in Cenchrea?
   Acts 18:19 And he came to _____, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

After leaving Corinth, Paul's next scene of labor was Ephesus. He was on his way to Jerusalem to attend an approaching festival, and his stay at Ephesus was necessarily brief. He reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue, and so favorable was the impression made upon them that they entreated him to continue his labors among them.

3) What was Paul's reply to their request?
   Acts 18:20-21 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented _____; But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in _____: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

Aquila and Priscilla had accompanied him to Ephesus, and he left them there to carry on the work that he had begun.

4) Who met Aquilla and Priscilla at Ephesus?
   Acts 18:24 And a certain Jew named _____, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.
5) How did they meet?
   Acts 18:25-26 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to _____ _____ in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and _____ unto him the way of God more perfectly.

He had heard the preaching of John the Baptist, had received the baptism of repentance, and was a living witness that the work of the prophet had not been in vain.

Through their teaching he obtained a clearer understanding of the Scriptures and became one of the ablest advocates of the Christian faith.

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6) Where did he desire to minister?
Acts 18:27 And when he was disposed to pass into _____, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

Achia is the lower region of Greece that included Corinth and Athens.

7) Going house to house, what success did he have?
Acts 18:28 For he _____ convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

Paul had planted the seed of truth; Apollos now watered it. The success that attended Apollos in preaching the gospel led some of the believers to exalt his labors above those of Paul. This comparison of man with man brought into the church a party spirit that threatened to hinder greatly the progress of the gospel.

8) How had Paul labored in Corinth?
1 Corinthians 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came _____ with _____ of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.
1 Corinthians 2:4-5 And my speech and my preaching was _____ with _____ words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the _____ and of _____: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

During the year and a half that Paul had spent in Corinth, he had purposely presented the gospel in its simplicity. He had come to the Corinthians with fear and trembling.

9) How did Paul adapt his teaching for them?
1 Corinthians 3:1-2 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto _____, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with _____, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

Many of the Corinthian believers had been slow to learn the lessons that he was endeavoring to teach them. Their advancement in spiritual knowledge had not been proportionate to their privileges and opportunities. They should have been far advanced in Christian experience, and able to comprehend and to practice the deeper truths of the word.

10) What similar thing did Jesus tell His Disciples?
John 16:12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot _____ them now.

Jealousy, evil surmising, and accusation had closed the hearts of many of the Corinthian believers against the full working of the Holy Spirit.

11) How are things revealed to us?
1 Corinthians 2:10 But God hath _____ them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

It had been Paul's work to instruct the Corinthian converts in the rudiments, the very alphabet, of the Christian faith. He had been obliged to instruct them as those who were ignorant of the operations of divine power upon the heart. At that time, they were unable to comprehend the mysteries of salvation.

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12) How did Paul try to explain it?

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the _____ man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are _____ unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

When the apostle took up his work in Corinth, he realized that he must introduce most carefully the great truths he wished to teach. He knew that among his hearers would be proud believers in human theories, and exponents of false systems of worship, who were groping with blind eyes, hoping to find in the book of nature theories that would contradict the reality of the spiritual and immortal life as revealed in the Scriptures. He also knew that critics would endeavor to controvert the Christian interpretation of the revealed word, and that skeptics would treat the gospel of Christ with scoffing and derision.

He dwelt especially upon practical godliness and the holiness to which those must attain who shall be accounted worthy of a place in God's kingdom. He longed to see the light of the gospel of Christ piercing the darkness of their minds, that they might see how offensive in the sight of God were their immoral practices. Therefore, the burden of his teaching among them was Christ and Him crucified.

Paul saw that the character of Christ must be understood before men could love Him or view the cross with the eye of faith. Here must begin that study which shall be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In the light of the cross alone can the true value of the human soul be estimated.

13) How are we to view ministers here?

1 Corinthians 3:4-7 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of _____; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have _____, Apollos _____; but God gave the _____. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

It was Paul who had first preached the gospel in Corinth, and who had organized the church there. This was the work that the Lord had assigned him. Later, by God's direction, other workers were brought in, to stand in their lot and place. The seed sown must be watered, and this Apollos was to do. He followed Paul in his work, to give further instruction, and to help the seed sown to develop. He won his way to the hearts of the people, but it was God who gave the increase.

14) What did Paul add to that?

1 Corinthians 3:8-9 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own _____ according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's _____.

In this scripture the apostle compares the church to a cultivated field, in which the husbandmen labor, caring for the vines of the Lord's planting; and also, to a building, which is to grow into a holy temple for the Lord. God is the Master Worker, and He has appointed to each man his work. All are to labor under His supervision, letting Him work for and through His workmen. He gives them tact and skill, and if they heed His instruction, crowns their efforts with success.

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15) How should we treat one another?
Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour _____ one another;

Each one has an individuality of his own, which he is not to sink in that of any other man. Yet each is to work in harmony with his brethren. In their service God's workers are to be essentially one. No one is to set himself up as a criterion, speaking disrespectfully of his fellow workers or treating them as inferior. Under God each is to do his appointed work, respected, loved, and encouraged by the other laborers. Together they are to carry the work forward to completion.

16) Are we to judge another's work?
1 Corinthians 4:1-3 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be _____ of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine _____ _____.
1 Corinthians 4:4-5 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until _____ _____ come, who both will bring to light the _____ things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

17) What did Paul suggest about the divisions in them about Paul or Apollos?
1 Corinthians 4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men _____ that which is written, that no one of you be _____ up for one against another.

Paul plainly set before the church the perils and the hardships that he and his associates had patiently endured in their service for Christ.

18) Were things easy for Paul or any of his coworkers?
1 Corinthians 4:11-15 Even unto this present hour we both _____, and _____, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being _____, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I _____ you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

The Lord sends help to His people, not always as they may choose, but as they need; for men are shortsighted and cannot discern what is for their highest good. It is seldom that one minister has all the qualifications necessary to perfect a church in all the requirements of Christianity; therefore, God often sends to them other ministers, each possessing some qualifications in which the others were deficient.

Those who are working for Christ today may reveal the same distinguishing excellencies revealed by those who in the apostolic age proclaimed the gospel. God is just as ready to give power to His servants today as He was to give power to Paul and Apollos, to Silas and Timothy, to Peter, James, and John.

19) What promise is still kept today?
Psalm 25:9 The meek will he _____ in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

Can you see that we are one in Christ? **Do you see things may get challenging at times?**

When is the time to seek guidance?

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Lesson 26 - Ephesus

Based on Acts 19:1-20

In our last lesson. Paul was returning from his 2nd Missionary Journey. Apollos had gone to Corinth where Paul had planted the seeds of the Gospel.

1) Where did Paul go when he returned home?
   Acts 18:18 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of _____ and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

While Apollos was preaching at Corinth, Paul fulfilled his promise to return to Ephesus. He had made a brief visit to Jerusalem and had spent some time at Antioch, the scene of his early labors. Thence he traveled through Asia Minor, visiting the churches which he himself had established, and strengthening the faith of the believers.

In the time of the apostles the western portion of Asia Minor was known as the Roman province of Asia. Ephesus, the capital, was a great commercial center. Its harbor was crowded with shipping, and its streets were thronged with people from every country. Like Corinth, it presented a promising field for missionary effort.

2) Where did Paul end back up at?
   Acts 19:1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to _____: and finding certain disciples,

On his arrival at Ephesus, Paul found twelve brethren, who, like Apollos, had been disciples of John the Baptist, and like him had gained some knowledge of the mission of Christ. They had not the ability of Apollos, but with the same sincerity and faith they were seeking to spread abroad the knowledge they had received.

3) What did Paul ask them?
   Acts 19:2-3 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye _____? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto _____ baptism.

The apostle set before them the great truths that are the foundation of the Christian's hope. He told them of Christ's life on this earth and of His cruel death of shame. He told them how the Lord of life had broken the barriers of the tomb and risen triumphant over death.

4) What did he quote to them?
   Matthew 28:18-19 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All _____ is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and _____ all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

He told them also of Christ's promise to send the Comforter, through whose power mighty signs and wonders would be wrought, and he described how gloriously this promise had been fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost.

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5) What did Paul follow with?
Acts 19:4-5 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on _____ which should come _____ him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

With deep interest and grateful, wondering joy, the brethren listened to Paul's words. By faith they grasped the wonderful truth of Christ's atoning sacrifice and received Him as their Redeemer. They were then baptized in the name of Jesus.

6) What did Paul do right after they were baptized?
Acts 19:6 And when Paul had _____ his _____ upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.

It was by cherishing a humble, teachable spirit that these men gained the experience that enabled them to go out as workers into the harvest field. Their example presents to Christians a lesson of great value. There are many who make but little progress in the divine life because they are too self-sufficient to occupy the position of learners.

7) What did the Psalmist say about Scripture?
Psalm 119:130 The entrance of thy words giveth _____; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

If the followers of Christ were but earnest seekers after wisdom, they would be led into rich fields of truth as yet wholly unknown to them. He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hand. He may be lowly and apparently ungifted; yet if with a loving, trusting heart he obeys every intimation of God's will, his powers will be purified, ennobled, energized, and his capabilities will be increased. As he treasures the lessons of divine wisdom, a sacred commission will be entrusted to him; he will be enabled to make his life an honor to God and a blessing to the world.

8) What is God's goal for us?
Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the _____ of Christ:

The Author of this spiritual life is unseen, and the exact method by which that life is imparted and sustained, it is beyond the power of human philosophy to explain. Yet the operations of the Spirit are always in harmony with the written word. As in the natural, so in the spiritual world. The natural life is preserved moment by moment by divine power; yet it is not sustained by a direct miracle, but through the use of blessings placed within our reach. So, the spiritual life is sustained by the use of those means that Providence has supplied.

You must eat of the bread of life and drink of the water of salvation. He must watch and pray and work, in all things giving heed to the instructions of God in His word.

9) What did Paul do for the others in Ephesus?
Acts 19:8 And he went into the _____, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

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10) How'd that work out?
Acts 19:9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he _____ from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

As was his custom, Paul had begun his work at Ephesus by preaching in the synagogue of the Jews. He continued to labor there for three months. At first, he met with a favorable reception; but as in other fields, he was soon violently opposed. As they persisted in their rejection of the gospel, the apostle ceased to preach in the synagogue.

Fearing that the faith of the believers would be endangered by continued association with these opposers of the truth, Paul separated from them and gathered the disciples into a distinct body, continuing his public instructions in the school of Tyrannus, a teacher of some note.

11) How did Paul view his God given opportunities?
1 Corinthians 16:9 For a great door and _____ is opened unto me, and there are many _____.

Ephesus was not only the most magnificent, but the most corrupt, of the cities of Asia. Superstition and sensual pleasure held sway over her teeming population. Under the shadow of her temples, criminals of every grade found shelter, and the most degrading vices flourished.

Ephesus was a popular center for the worship of Diana. The fame of the magnificent temple of ***"Diana of the Ephesians"*** extended throughout all Asia and the world. Its surpassing splendor made it the pride, not only of the city, but of the nation. The idol within the temple was declared by tradition to have fallen from the sky. Upon it were inscribed symbolic characters, which were believed to possess great power. Books had been written by the Ephesians to explain the meaning and use of these symbols.

12) What did God give Paul to overcome these barriers?
Acts 19:10-12 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in _____ heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special _____ by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the _____ spirits went out of them.

These manifestations of supernatural power were far more potent than had ever before been witnessed in Ephesus and were of such a character that they could not be imitated by the skill of the juggler or the enchantments of the sorcerer. As these miracles were wrought in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the people had opportunity to see that the God of heaven was more powerful than the magicians who were worshipers of the goddess Diana.

13) Imitating Paul, what happened in Ephesus?
Acts 19:13-14 Then certain of the vagabond _____, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one _____, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

But the One to whom all the spirits of evil are subject and who had given His servants authority over them, was about to bring still greater shame and defeat upon those who despised and

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profaned His holy name. Sorcery had been prohibited by the Mosaic law, on pain of death, yet from time to time it had been secretly practiced by apostate Jews.

14) What happened to them?
Acts 19:15-16 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but _____ _____ _____? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Unmistakable proof was given of the sacredness of the name of Christ, and the peril which they incurred who should invoke it without faith in the divinity of the Saviour's mission.

15) What was the end result of this?
Acts 19:17-18 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and _____ fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was _____. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

16) What was their reaction to their new faith?
Acts 19:19-20 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and _____ them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the _____ of _____ and prevailed.

By burning their books on magic, the Ephesian converts showed that the things in which they had once delighted they now abhorred. It was by and through magic that they had especially offended God and imperiled their souls; and it was against magic that they showed such indignation. Thus, they gave evidence of true conversion.

These treatises on divination contained rules and forms of communication with evil spirits. They were the regulations of the worship of Satan, directions for soliciting his help and obtaining information from him. By retaining these books, the disciples would have exposed themselves to temptation; by selling them they would have placed temptation in the way of others. They had renounced the kingdom of darkness, and to destroy its power they did not hesitate at any sacrifice. Thus, truth triumphed over men's prejudices and their love of money.

From Ephesus the news was widely circulated, and a strong impetus was given to the cause of Christ. Long after the apostle himself had finished his course, these scenes lived in the memory of men and were the means of winning converts to the gospel.

17) What was and is Paul's advice for us?
Ephesians 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather _____ them.

The mystic voices that spoke at Endor and at Ephesus are still by their lying words misleading the children of men. Could the veil be lifted from before our eyes, we should see evil angels employing all their arts to deceive and to destroy. Wherever an influence is exerted to cause men to forget God, there Satan is exercising his bewitching power. When men yield to his influence, ere they are aware the mind is bewildered and the soul polluted. The apostle's admonition to the Ephesian church should be heeded by the people of God today

Can you see that God's way is better? Do you want to be free from your chains?

When is the time to renounce your sin?

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Lesson 27 – Days of Toil and Trial

Based on Acts 19:21-41; 20:1

For over three years Ephesus was the center of Paul's work. A flourishing church was raised up here, and from this city the gospel spread throughout the province of Asia, among both Jews and Gentiles. The apostle had now for some time been contemplating another missionary journey.

1) Where did Paul hope to go to plant the seeds of the Gospel?
   Acts 19:21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see _____.
2) Who did he send ahead of him?
   Acts 19:22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, _____ and _____; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

Feeling that the cause in Ephesus still demanded his presence, he decided to remain until after Pentecost. An event soon occurred, however, which hastened his departure.

3) What was happening?
   Acts 19:23-26 And the same time there arose no small _____ about that way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small _____ unto the craftsmen; Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our _____. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no _____, which are made with hands:

Paul's labors had given the heathen worship a telling blow, in consequence of which there was a perceptible falling off in the attendance at the national festival and in the enthusiasm of the worshipers. The influence of his teachings extended far beyond the actual converts to the faith. Many who had not openly accepted the new doctrines became so far enlightened as to lose all confidence in their heathen gods.

There existed also another cause of dissatisfaction. An extensive and profitable business had grown up at Ephesus from the manufacture and sale of small shrines and images, modeled after the temple and the image of Diana. Those interested in this industry found their gains diminishing, and all united in attributing the unwelcome change to Paul's labors.

4) How successful were the efforts of the Christians there in Ephesus?
   Acts 19:27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be _____, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.
5) What did the followers of Diana do?
   Acts 19:25-29 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of _____, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they _____ with one accord into the theatre.

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6) Where was Paul during this?
Acts 19:30-31 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not _____ _____ into the theatre.

Search was made for Paul, but the apostle was not to be found. His brethren, receiving an intimation of the danger, had hurried him from the place. Angels of God had been sent to guard the apostle; his time to die a martyr's death had not yet come.

7) How did things escalate?
Acts 19:32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was _____; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.
8) What did the troublemakers do to make things worse for Paul?
Acts 19:33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And _____ beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

The fact that Paul and some of his companions were of Hebrew extraction made the Jews anxious to show plainly that they were not sympathizers with him and his work. They therefore brought forward one of their own number to set the matter before the people.

9) What did Paul say about Alexander later?
2 Timothy 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much _____: the Lord reward him according to his works:

Alexander was a man of considerable ability, and he bent all his energies to direct the wrath of the people exclusively against Paul and his companions. But the crowd, seeing that Alexander was a Jew, thrust him aside.

At last, from sheer exhaustion, they ceased, and there was a momentary silence. Then the recorder of the city arrested the attention of the crowd, and by virtue of his office obtained a hearing. He met the people on their own ground and showed that there was no cause for the present tumult.

10) Why did he address the mob?
Acts 19:40 For we are in _____ to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

Rome ruled with a heavy hand. If they got word of an uprising, any uprising, they would crush it speedily with brutal force.

11) What did Town Clerk say to the mob?
Acts 19:35-36 And when the townclerk had _____ the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? Seeing then that these things cannot be _____ against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

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Acts 19:37-39 For ye have brought hither these men, which are _____ robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a _____ _____.

The decision of the recorder and of others holding honorable offices in the city had set Paul before the people as one innocent of any unlawful act. This was another triumph of Christianity over error and superstition. God had raised up a great magistrate to vindicate His apostle and hold the tumultuous mob in check. Paul's heart was filled with gratitude to God that his life had been preserved and that Christianity had not been brought into disrepute by the tumult at Ephesus.

12) Where did Paul go when it was over?
Acts 20:1 And after the _____ was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.

Paul's labors in Ephesus were concluded. His ministry there had been a season of incessant labor, of many trials, and of deep anguish. He had taught the people in public and from house to house, with many tears instructing and warning them. Continually he had been opposed by the Jews, who lost no opportunity to stir up the popular feeling against him.

Amidst the constant storm of opposition, the clamor of enemies, and the desertion of friends the intrepid apostle almost lost heart. But he looked back to Calvary and with new ardor pressed on to spread the knowledge of the Crucified. He was but treading the blood-stained path that Christ had trodden before him. He sought no discharge from the warfare till he should lay off his armor at the feet of his Redeemer.

Can you see we need to be all in?

Do you want to be all in?

When is the time to renounce worldly ways?

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Lesson 28 – A Message of Warning and Entreaty

Based on 1 Corinthians chapters 1-6

For over three years Ephesus was the center of Paul's work. A flourishing church was raised up here, and from this city the gospel spread throughout the province of Asia, among both Jews and Gentiles. The first epistle to the Corinthian church was written by the apostle Paul during the latter part of his stay at Ephesus. For no others had he felt a deeper interest or put forth more untiring effort than for the believers in Corinth. For a year and a half, he had labored among them, pointing them to a crucified and risen Saviour as the only means of salvation, and urging them to rely implicitly on the transforming power of His grace.

1) What was the purpose of the 1st letter to the Corinthians?
   1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no _____ among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

After the departure of Paul, however, unfavorable conditions arose; tares that had been sown by the enemy appeared among the wheat, and erelong these began to bring forth their evil fruit. This was a time of severe trial to the Corinthian church. The apostle was no longer with them to quicken their zeal and aid them in their endeavors to live in harmony with God, and little by little many became careless and indifferent, and allowed natural tastes and inclinations to control them.

2) How did Paul find out these things?
   1 Corinthians 1:11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of _____, that there are contentions among you.

There came to Ephesus members of the household of Chloe, a Christian family of high repute in Corinth. Paul asked them regarding the condition of things, and they told him that the church was rent by divisions. The dissensions that had prevailed at the time of Apollos's visit had greatly increased. False teachers were leading the members to despise the instructions of Paul. The doctrines and ordinances of the gospel had been perverted. Pride, idolatry, and sensualism, were steadily increasing among those who had once been zealous in the Christian life.

3) How did Paul feel about all the churches he went to?
   Romans 9:1-3 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my _____ also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my _____. For I could wish that myself were _____ from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:
   2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and _____ of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the _____ which I have more abundantly unto you.

He knew that in their present condition the believers would not profit by his labors, and therefore he sent Titus to prepare the way for a visit from himself later on. Then, putting aside all personal feelings over the course of those whose conduct revealed such strange perverseness, and keeping his soul stayed upon God, the apostle wrote to the church at Corinth one of the richest, most instructive, most powerful of all his letters.

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4) What specifically did he tell the Corinthians?
1 Corinthians 1:5 That in every thing ye are _____ by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;
1 Corinthians 1:7-8 So that ye come behind in no _____; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also _____ you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He referred to their experience in turning from idolatry to the worship and service of the true God. He reminded them of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which they had received and showed that it was their privilege to make continual advancement in the Christian life until they should attain to the purity and holiness of Christ.

The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches, and, as these evils developed, the apostle recognized their significance. He had been set for the defense of the church. He was to watch for souls as one who must render account to God, and it is consistent and right for him to take notice of the reports concerning the anarchy and divisions among them.

5) What instructions did he give them?
1 Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man _____ _____ how he buildeth thereupon.
1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's _____.

He claimed no wisdom of his own but acknowledged that divine power alone had enabled him to present the truth in a manner pleasing to God. United with Christ, the greatest of all teachers, Paul had been enabled to communicate lessons of divine wisdom, which met the necessities of all classes, and which were to apply at all times, in all places, and under all conditions.

6) What else did he warn them?
1 Corinthians 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little _____ leaveneth the whole lump?

Among the more serious of the evils that had developed among the Corinthian believers, was that of a return to many of the debasing customs of heathenism. One former convert had so far backslidden that his licentious course was a violation of even the low standard of morality held by the Gentile world.

7) What did Paul counsel about fornication?
1 Corinthians 5:5 To deliver such an one unto _____ for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
8) What else were the Corinthians doing to one another?
1 Corinthians 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to _____ before the unjust, and not before the saints?

Abundant provision had been made for the settlement of difficulties among believers. Christ Himself had given plain instruction as to how such matters were to be adjusted.

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9) What were those provisions?
Matthew 18:15-18 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him _____: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or _____ _____, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an _____ man and a publican.

10) What did Paul counsel them on this?
1 Corinthians 6:3-4 Know ye not that we shall judge _____? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least _____ in the church.

Satan is constantly seeking to introduce distrust, alienation, and malice among God's people. We shall often be tempted to feel that our rights are invaded, even when there is no real cause for such feelings. Those whose love for self is stronger than their love for Christ and His cause will place their own interests first and will resort to almost any expedient to guard and maintain them.

11) How should we become the bigger person?
1 Corinthians 6:7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather _____ yourselves to be defrauded?

12) What reminder did he leave us with?
1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the _____ of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a _____: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

13) What will become of the unrighteous?
1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not _____ the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor _____, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

The apostle plainly outlined the result of turning from a life of purity and holiness to the corrupt practices of heathenism.

14) What did he add to that?
1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are _____, but ye are _____, but ye are _____ in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The Corinthian believers needed a deeper experience in the things of God. They did not know fully what it meant to behold His glory and to be changed from character to character. They had seen but the first rays of the early dawn of that glory. Paul's desire for them was that they might be filled with all the fullness of God, following on to know Him whose going forth is prepared as the morning, and continuing to learn of Him until they should come into the full noontide of a perfect gospel faith.

Can you see we are a work in progress? **Would you like to grow into the Fulness of Christ?**

When is the time to renounce worldly ways?

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Lesson 29 – Called to Reach Higher Standard

Based on 1 Corinthians chapters 9-15

In our last lesson we covered some of the issues Paul was addressing in His 1st letter to the Corinthians. Today we'll be covering the last half of the Letter written to the young and growing church in Corinth.

1) What analogy did Paul make to impress their minds?
   1 Corinthians 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but _____ receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Paul in his letter to them made a striking comparison between the Christian warfare and the celebrated foot races held at stated intervals near Corinth. Of all the games instituted among the Greeks and the Romans, the foot races were the most ancient and the most highly esteemed. They were witnessed by kings, nobles, and statesmen. Young men of rank and wealth took part in them and shrank from no effort or discipline necessary to obtain the prize.

2) What parallel did he make?
   1 Corinthians 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an _____.

In these contests great risks were run. Some never recovered from the terrible physical strain. It was not unusual for men to fall on the course, bleeding at the mouth and nose, and sometimes a contestant would drop dead when about to seize the prize. But the possibility of lifelong injury or of death was not looked upon as too great a risk to run for the sake of the honor awarded the successful contestant.

The runners put aside every indulgence that would tend to weaken the physical powers, and by severe and continuous discipline trained their muscles to strength and endurance, that when the day of the contest should arrive, they might put the heaviest tax upon their powers. How much more important that the Christian, whose eternal interests are at stake, bring appetite and passion under subjection to reason and the will of God!

3) How did Paul view this?
   1 Corinthians 9:26-27 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into _____: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a _____.

the Christian must put forth the utmost exertion in order to gain the victory. In the Corinthian games the last few strides of the contestants in the race were made with agonizing effort to keep up undiminished speed. So, the Christian, as he nears the goal, will press onward with even more zeal and determination than at the first of his course.

4) Why?
   1 Corinthians 9:25 …Now they do it to obtain a corruptible _____; but we an incorruptible.
5) What similar thing did he tell the receivers of the Letter to the Hebrews?
   Hebrews 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us _____ _____ every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto _____ the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Envy, malice, evil thinking, evil speaking, covetousness, these are weights that the Christian must lay aside if he would run successfully the race for immortality. Every habit or practice that leads into sin and brings dishonor upon Christ must be put away, whatever the sacrifice.

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6) What wisdom did Jesus give us?
Mark 9:43 And if thy hand offend thee, _____ it _____: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:
7) How is the race before us different than the Corinthian races?
1 Corinthians 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but _____ receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Such is not the case in the Christian warfare. Not one who complies with the conditions will be disappointed at the end of the race. Not one who is earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint, as well as the strongest, may wear the crown of immortal glory. All may win who, through the power of divine grace, bring their lives into conformity to the will of Christ.

Nothing is small that will help or hinder. Every act casts its weight into the scale that determines life's victory or defeat. And the reward given to those who win will be in proportion to the energy and earnestness with which they have striven.

8) What was Paul's goal?
Philippians 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the _____, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

He realized that if he did not carry out in his life the principles he believed and preached, his labors on behalf of others would avail him nothing. His conversation, his influence, his refusal to yield to self-gratification, must show that his religion was not a profession merely, but a daily, living connection with God.

9) What other idea did he remind them of?
1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for _____: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.
10) To whom was he referring?
1 Corinthians 10:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our _____ were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual _____ that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Paul pointed the Corinthians to the experience of ancient Israel, to the blessings that rewarded their obedience, and to the judgments that followed their transgressions. He reminded them of the miraculous way in which the Hebrews were led from Egypt under the protection of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Thus, they were safely conducted through the Red Sea, while the Egyptians, essaying to cross in like manner, were all drowned. By these acts God had acknowledged Israel as His church.

11) What warning did Paul make about it?
1 Corinthians 10:5-6 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were _____ in the _____. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

It was when the children of Israel sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play, that they threw off the fear of God, which they had felt as they listened to the giving of the law; and, making a golden calf to represent God, they worshiped it. And it was after enjoying a luxurious feast connected with the worship of Baalpeor, that many of the Hebrews fell through licentiousness.

12) How many people perished because of a momentary lapse in judgement?
1 Corinthians 10:8 Neither let us commit _____, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

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13) What advice is still good today?
1 Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he _____ take heed lest he fall.
1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be _____ above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.
14) How should we conduct ourselves around others?
1 Corinthians 10:31-32 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the _____ of God. Give none _____, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

Paul urged his brethren to ask themselves what influence their words and deeds would have upon others and to do nothing, however innocent in itself, that would seem to sanction idolatry or offend the scruples of those who might be weak in the faith.

15) Paul made another analogy to the church in Corinth. What was it?
1 Corinthians 12:14-16 For the body is not one member, but _____. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the _____, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the _____?
16) What was his point?
1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all _____ into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

By a comparison of the church with the human body, the apostle aptly illustrated the close and harmonious relationship that should exist among all members of the church of Christ.

17) What did Paul tell us about God in Chapter 13?
1 Corinthians 13:1-3 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding _____, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am _____. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me _____.

No matter how high the profession, he whose heart is not filled with love for God, and his fellow men is not a true disciple of Christ. Though he should possess great faith and have power even to work miracles, yet without love his faith would be worthless.

18) What words about love reveal the character of God?
1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Charity suffereth long, and is _____; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily _____, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the _____; Beareth all things, believeth all things, _____ all things, endureth all things.
1 Corinthians 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is _____.
19) What last thing did Paul need to address to the Church there?
1 Corinthians 15:3-5 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ _____ for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he _____ _____ the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was _____ of Cephas, then of the twelve:

In the lowering of the moral standard among the Corinthian believers, there were those who had given up some of the fundamental features of their faith. Some had gone so far as to deny the doctrine of the resurrection. Paul met this heresy with a very plain testimony regarding the unmistakable evidence of the resurrection of Christ.

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20) With what did he try to reason with them?
1 Corinthians 15:12-14 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no _____ of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not _____: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also _____.
1 Corinthians 15:17-19 And if Christ be not _____, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are _____. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most _____.
1 Corinthians 15:20-22 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the _____ of them that slept. For since by man came _____, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made _____.

The apostle carried the minds of the Corinthian brethren forward to the triumphs of the resurrection morn, when all the sleeping saints are to be raised, henceforth to live forever with their Lord.

21) What did Paul look forward to?
1 Corinthians 15:51-52 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be _____, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the _____ shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.
1 Corinthians 15:53-54 So when this corruptible shall have put on _____, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, _____ is swallowed up in victory.

Glorious is the triumph awaiting the faithful. The apostle, realizing the possibilities before the Corinthian believers, sought to set before them that which uplifts from the selfish and the sensual, and glorifies life with the hope of immortality.

22) What was his parting advice to the believers there in Corinth?
1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, _____, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Thus, the apostle, in the most decided and impressive manner, endeavored to correct the false and dangerous ideas and practices that were prevailing in the Corinthian church. He spoke plainly, yet in love for their souls. In his warnings and reproofs, light from the throne of God was shining upon them, to reveal the hidden sins that were defiling their lives.

After the letter had been dispatched, Paul feared lest that which he had written might wound too deeply those whom he desired to benefit. He keenly dreaded a further alienation and sometimes longed to recall his words. With trembling anxiety, he waited to receive some tidings as to the reception of his message…

Can you see Paul loved the church in Corinth?

Would you like to benefit from the counsels given to them?

When is the time to crucify your lusts?

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Lesson 30 – The Message Heeded

Based on 2 Corinthians

Paul had left Ephesus on his 3rd Missionary journey during which he hoped to visit once more the scenes of his former labors in Europe tarrying for a time at Troas.

1) What was on his mind?
   2 Corinthians 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the _____ of all the churches.

Particularly of the church at Corinth, rested heavily on his heart. He had hoped to meet Titus at Troas and to learn from him how the words of counsel and reproof sent to the Corinthian brethren had been received.

2) Did he find him?
   2 Corinthians 2:12-13 Furthermore, when I came to _____ to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not _____ my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

He therefore left Troas and crossed over to Macedonia, where, at Philippi he met Timothy.

3) What did he say about it later?
   2 Corinthians 7:5-6 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no _____, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of _____;
4) What news did he bring?
   2 Corinthians 7:7-8 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was _____ in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I _____ the more. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

This faithful messenger brought the cheering news that a wonderful change had taken place among the Corinthian believers. Many had accepted the instruction contained in Paul's letter and had repented of their sins. Their lives were no longer a reproach to Christianity but exerted a powerful influence in favor of practical godliness.

Filled with joy, the apostle sent another letter to the Corinthian believers, expressing his gladness of heart because of the good work wrought in them:

5) How did the Corinthians receive Paul's first letter?
   2 Corinthians 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye _____ after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have _____ yourselves to be clear in this matter.

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6) How stressed was Paul at that time?
2 Corinthians 1:8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we _____ even of _____:

For some time, Paul had been carrying a burden of soul for the churches, a burden so heavy that he could scarcely endure it. False teachers had sought to destroy his influence among the believers and to urge their own doctrines in the place of gospel truth.

7) To Whom did he show appreciation first?
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Blessed be God, even the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our _____, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
8) What did Paul add to that?
2 Corinthians 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our _____ also aboundeth by Christ.
9) Paul made an interesting statement in his 2nd letter to Corinth, what was it?
2 Corinthians 2:14-15 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every _____. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are _____, and in them that perish:

It was the custom of the day for a general victorious in warfare to bring with him on his return a train of captives. On such occasions incense bearers were appointed, and as the army marched triumphantly home, the fragrant odor was to the captives appointed to die, a savor of death, showing that they were nearing the time of their execution; but to those of the prisoners who had found favor with their captors, and whose lives were to be spared, it was a savor of life, in that it showed them that their freedom was near.

10) What did Paul add to that?
2 Corinthians 2:16 To the one we are the savour of _____ unto death; and to the other the savour of _____ unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

Like incense the fragrance of the gospel was to be diffused throughout the world. To those who should accept Christ, the message would be a savor of life unto life; but to those who should persist in unbelief, a savor of death unto death.

Paul desired to impress upon believers the solemn responsibility of the gospel ministry. Faithfulness in preaching the word, united with a pure, consistent life, can alone make the efforts of ministers acceptable to God and profitable to souls.

11) What did Paul ask the Corinthians about his 1st Epistle to them?
2 Corinthians 3:1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

There were those who had charged Paul with self-commendation in writing his former letter. The apostle now referred to this by asking the members of the church if they thus judged his motives.

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The Corinthian believers, who had been led from the worship of idols to the faith of the gospel, were themselves all the recommendation that Paul needed. Their reception of the truth, and the reformation wrought in their lives, bore eloquent testimony to the faithfulness of his labors and to his authority to counsel, reprove, and exhort as a minister of Christ.

12) How did he refer to his brethren there?
2 Corinthians 3:2-3 Ye are our _____ written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with _____, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

The conversion of sinners and their sanctification through the truth is the strongest proof a minister can have that God has called him to the ministry. The evidence of his apostleship is written upon the hearts of those converted and is witnessed to by their renewed lives. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. A minister is greatly strengthened by these seals of his ministry.

13) How did Paul view his ministry?
2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Not that we are _____ of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of _____; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament…
2 Corinthians 4:1-2 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we _____ not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's _____ in the sight of God.
2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are _____: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which _____ not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
2 Corinthians 4:5-6 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of _____, hath shined in our _____, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

By God's abundant mercy he and his brethren had been sustained in difficulty, affliction, and danger. They had not modeled their faith and teaching to suit the desires of their hearers, nor kept back truths essential to salvation in order to make their teaching more attractive. They had presented the truth with simplicity and clearness, praying for the conviction and conversion of souls. And they had endeavored to bring their conduct into harmony with their teaching, that the truth presented might commend itself to every man's conscience.

14) How did he continue?
2 Corinthians 4:7-8 But we have this _____ in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of _____, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

God could have proclaimed His truth through sinless angels, but this is not His plan. He chooses human beings, men compassed with infirmity, as instruments in the working out of His designs. The priceless treasure is placed in earthen vessels. Through men His blessings are to be conveyed to the world. Through them His glory is to shine forth into the darkness of sin. In loving ministry, they are to meet the sinful and the needy and lead them to the cross.

15) How difficult was life for Paul and the Early Disciples?
2 Corinthians 4:11-12 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our _____ flesh. So then death worketh in us, but _____ in you.

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That which was working death in them was bringing spiritual life and health to the Corinthians, who by a belief in the truth were being made partakers of life eternal.

16) How was Paul constrained to speak?
2 Corinthians 4:13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore _____;

Fully convinced of the reality of the truth entrusted to him, nothing could induce Paul to handle the word of God deceitfully or to conceal the convictions of his soul. He would not purchase wealth, honor, or pleasure by conformity to the opinions of the world. Though in constant danger of martyrdom for the faith that he had preached to the Corinthians, he was not intimidated, for he knew that He who had died and risen again would raise him from the grave and present him to the Father.

17) For whom did he work?
2 Corinthians 4:15-16 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the _____ of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is _____ day by day.

Paul felt the power of the enemy; but though his physical strength was declining, yet faithfully and unflinchingly he declared the gospel of Christ. Clad in the whole armor of God, this hero of the cross pressed forward in the conflict. His voice of cheer proclaimed him triumphant in the combat.

18) What did he declare?
2 Corinthians 4:17-18 For our light _____, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are _____.
19) How did Paul remind them of Jesus?
2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was _____, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his _____ might be rich.

You know the height from which He stooped, the depth of humiliation to which He descended. Having once entered upon the path of self-denial and sacrifice, he turned not aside until He had given His life. There was no rest for Him between the throne and the cross.

Point after point Paul lingered over, in order that those who should read his epistle might fully comprehend the wonderful condescension of the Saviour in their behalf. Presenting Christ as He was when equal with God and with Him receiving the homage of the angels, the apostle traced His course until He had reached the lowest depths of humiliation. Paul was convinced that if they could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their lives.

20) What did the Apostle John write about God in his 1st Epistle?
1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the _____ for our sins.
1 John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath _____ upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

In every true disciple this love, like sacred fire, burns on the altar of the heart. It was on the earth that the love of God was revealed through Christ. It is on the earth that His children are to reflect this love through blameless lives. Thus, sinners will be led to the cross to behold the Lamb of God.

Can you see lives depend on Godly People? **Would you like to be a blessing?**

When is the time to stand and speak?

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Lesson 31 – A Generous Church

In his first letter to the church at Corinth, Paul gave the believers instruction regarding the general principles underlying the support of God's work in the earth.

1) What did he ask the Corinthian Church?
   1 Corinthians 9:7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and _____ not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?
   1 Corinthians 9:9-10 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not _____ the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in _____; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.
   1 Corinthians 9:11-12 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your _____ things? If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have _____ _____ this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.
   1 Corinthians 9:13-14 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things _____ of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which _____ the gospel should live of the gospel.

The apostle here referred to the Lord's plan for the maintenance of the priests who ministered in the temple. Those who were set apart to this holy office were supported by their brethren, to whom they ministered spiritual blessings.

2) What was the Old Testament example that Paul was describing?
   Hebrews 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take _____ of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:
3) Why Levi?
   Deuteronomy 18:5 For the LORD thy God hath _____ him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

One tenth of all the increase was claimed by the Lord as His own, and to withhold the tithe was regarded by Him as robbery.

4) What did Paul tell have to say about it?
   1 Timothy 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that _____ out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.
   1 Corinthians 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should _____ of the gospel.

The payment of the tithe was but a part of God's plan for the support of His service. Numerous gifts and offerings were divinely specified. Under the Jewish system the people were taught to cherish a spirit of liberality both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy.

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

5) What did Jesus tell us?
Luke 12:48 …For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much _____: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

It is not God's purpose that Christians, whose privileges far exceed those of the Jewish nation, shall give less freely than they gave?

In the hands of His followers, Christ has placed the treasures of the gospel, and upon them He has laid the responsibility of giving the glad tidings of salvation to the world. Surely our obligations are much greater than were those of ancient Israel.

6) What command was given to God's people?
Malachi 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and _____ me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a _____, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

If professing Christians would faithfully bring to God their tithes and offerings, His treasury would be full. There would then be no occasion to resort to fairs, lotteries, or parties of pleasure to secure funds for the support of the gospel.

Men are tempted to use their means in self-indulgence, in the gratification of appetite, in personal adornment, or in the embellishment of their homes. For these objects many church members do not hesitate to spend freely and even extravagantly. But when asked to give to the Lord's treasury, to carry forward His work in the earth, they demur.

7) What did God tell the world through Malachi?
Malachi 3:8-9 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have _____ me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are _____ with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

It is the spirit of covetousness which leads men to keep for gratification of self means that rightfully belong to God, and this spirit is as abhorrent to Him now as when through His prophet He sternly rebuked His people.

8) What did the Apostle John say?
1 John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to _____, even as he walked.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. This spirit finds its highest manifestation in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. In our behalf the Father gave His only-begotten Son; and Christ, having given up all that He had, then gave Himself, that man might be saved. The cross of Calvary should appeal to the benevolence of every follower of the Saviour.

On the other hand, the spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan. The principle illustrated in the lives of worldlings is to get, get. Thus, they hope to secure happiness and ease, but the fruit of their sowing is misery and death.

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Not only should we render the Lord the portion that belongs to Him, but we should bring also to His treasury, as gratitude offering, a liberal tribute. With joyful hearts we should dedicate to the Creator the first fruits of our bounties, our choicest possessions, our best and holiest service. Thus, we will gain rich blessings. God Himself will make our souls like a watered garden whose waters fail not.

9) What did Jesus do for us?
2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his _____ might be rich.

Even the very poor should bring their offerings to God. They are to be sharers of the grace of Christ by denying self to help those whose need is more pressing than their own. The poor man's gift, the fruit of self-denial, comes up before God as fragrant incense. And every act of self-sacrifice strengthens the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to Christ.

10) What did Jesus point out to encourage us?
Mark 12:41-42 And Jesus sat over against the _____, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two _____, which make a farthing.
11) What did He say about it?
Mark 12:43-44 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast _____ in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her _____ did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

He esteemed her gift of more value than the large offerings of those whose alms did not call for self-denial. From their abundance they had given a small portion. To make her offering, the widow had deprived herself of even the necessities of life, trusting God to supply her needs for the morrow. Thus, He taught that the value of the gift is estimated not by the amount, but by the proportion that is given and the motive that actuates the giver.

12) What example did Paul make?
Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
2 Corinthians 9:6-7 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall _____ also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a _____ giver.

The apostle Paul in his ministry among the churches was untiring in his efforts to inspire in the hearts of the new converts a desire to do large things for the cause of God. Often, he exhorted them to the exercise of liberality.

13) What did Paul say about the Macedonian Churches?
2 Corinthians 8:1-2 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the _____ of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty _____ unto the riches of their liberality.

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2 Corinthians 8:3-4 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and _____ their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the _____ to the saints.

Nearly all the Macedonian believers were poor in this world's goods, but their hearts were overflowing with love for God and His truth, and they gladly gave for the support of the gospel. When general collections were taken up in the Gentile churches for the relief of the Jewish believers, the liberality of the converts in Macedonia was held up as an example to other churches.

14) Who moved on their hearts?
2 Corinthians 8:5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the _____ of _____.

It was not necessary to urge them to give; rather, they rejoiced in the privilege of denying themselves even of necessary things in order to supply the needs of others. When the apostle would have restrained them, they importuned him to accept their offering. In their simplicity and integrity, and in their love for the brethren, they gladly denied self and thus abounded in the fruit of benevolence.

15) What does Proverbs say about it?
Proverbs 3:9-10 Honour the LORD with thy _____, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall _____ out with new wine.

The followers of Christ should rejoice in the privilege of revealing in their lives the beneficence of their Redeemer. As they give to the Lord, they have the assurance that their treasure is going before them to the heavenly courts.

16) What blessing did Isaiah share with us?
Isaiah 32:20 Blessed are ye that _____ beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass.

17) What should we be aware of?
Proverbs 11:24-26 There is that _____, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. He that _____ corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

The sower multiplies his seed by casting it away. So it is with those who are faithful in distributing God's gifts.

18) What promise did Jesus make?
Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same _____ that ye mete withal it shall be measured to _____ again.

Can you see the Gospel is dependent on God's people? **Would you like to be a blessing?**

When is the time to heed the Spirit's call?

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Lesson 32 – Salvation to the Jews

Based on The Epistle to the Romans

After many unavoidable delays in his 3rd Missionary Journey, Paul at last reached Corinth, the scene of so much anxious labor in the past, and for a time the object of deep solicitude. He found that many of the early believers still regarded him with affection as the one who had first borne to them the light of the gospel. As he greeted these disciples and saw the evidences of their fidelity and zeal, he rejoiced that his work in Corinth had not been in vain.

During his sojourn at Corinth, Paul found time to look forward to new and wider fields of service. His contemplated journey to Rome especially occupied his thoughts. To see the Christian faith firmly established at the great center of the known world was one of his dearest hopes and most cherished plans.

1) What was Paul's burden for the Jews in Rome?
   Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for _____ is, that they might be saved.
2) How did he describe it?
   Romans 9:1-3 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great _____ and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were _____ from Christ for my brethren, my _____ according to the flesh:
   Romans 9:4-5 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the _____, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the _____, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

The Jews were God's chosen people, through whom He had purposed to bless the entire race. From among them God had raised up many prophets. These had foretold the advent of a Redeemer who was to be rejected and slain by those who should have been the first to recognize Him as the Promised One.

3) What did Paul quote from Isaiah?
   Romans 10:20-21 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was _____ of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a _____ and gainsaying people.

Even though Israel rejected His Son, God did not reject them.

4) What did Paul say about that?
   Romans 11:1-3 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? _____ _____. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh _____ to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

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Romans 11:4-5 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of _____. Even so then at this present time also there is a _____ according to the election of grace.

5) Did their fall make it impossible to return to God?
Romans 11:11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall _____ is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.
Romans 11:13-15 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to _____ them which are my _____, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the _____ of them be, but life from the dead?

It was God's purpose that His grace should be revealed among the Gentiles as well as among the Israelites. This had been plainly outlined in Old Testament prophecies.

6) What analogy did Paul make?
Romans 9:21 Hath not the potter _____ over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?
Romans 9:23-26 And that he might make known the riches of his _____ on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even _____, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee (Hosea), I will call them my people, which were _____ _____ people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the _____ God.

Notwithstanding Israel's failure as a nation, there remained among them a goodly remnant of such as should be saved. At the time of the Saviour's advent there were faithful men and women who had received with gladness the message of John the Baptist and had thus been led to study anew the prophecies concerning the Messiah. When the early Christian church was founded, it was composed of these faithful Jews who recognized Jesus of Nazareth as the one for whose advent they had been longing.

7) How did Paul refer to this remnant?
Romans 11:16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the _____ be holy, so are the branches.
8) How does Paul here refer to the Gentiles?
Romans 11:17-18 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert _____ in among them, and with them partakest of the _____ and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Paul likens the remnant in Israel to a noble olive tree, some of whose branches have been broken off. He compares the Gentiles to branches from a wild olive tree, grafted into the parent stock.

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9) What did he add to that?
Romans 11:19-21 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of _____ they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but _____: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not _____.
Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the _____ and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou _____ in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Through unbelief and the rejection of Heaven's purpose for her, Israel as a nation had lost her connection with God. But the branches that had been separated from the parent stock God was able to reunite with the true stock of Israel, the remnant who had remained true to the God of their fathers.

10) …and finally?
Romans 11:23-25 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is _____ by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a _____ olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be _____ of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the _____ be come in.
11) What did he say to the honest seeking Jewish believers?
Romans 11:26-28 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the _____, and shall turn away _____ from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the _____, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.
Romans 11:29-32 For the _____ and _____ of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have _____ upon all.
Romans 11:33-36 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how _____ are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and _____ him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Thus, Paul shows that God is abundantly able to transform the hearts of Jew and Gentile alike, and to grant to every believer in Christ the blessings promised to Israel.

12) Paul quoted Isaiah, what did he say?
Romans 9:27-29 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a _____ shall be saved: For he will finish the work, and cut it _____ in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as _____, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

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At the time when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple laid in ruins, many thousands of the Jews were sold to serve as bondmen in heathen lands. Like wrecks on a desert shore, they were scattered among the nations.

Some have learned to see in the lowly Nazarene whom their forefathers rejected and crucified, the true Messiah of Israel. As their minds have grasped the significance of the familiar prophecies so long obscured by tradition and misinterpretation, their hearts have been filled with gratitude to God for the unspeakable gift He bestows upon every human being who chooses to accept Christ as a personal Saviour.

From Paul's day to the present time, God by His Holy Spirit has been calling after the Jew as well as the Gentile. ***"There is no respect of persons with God,"*** declared Paul. The apostle regarded himself as ***"debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians,"*** as well as to the Jews; but he never lost sight of the decided advantages possessed by the Jews over others, "***chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God***.

13) What is the Good News for us?
Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the _____ of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by _____.

14) What is the great news for everyone?
John 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the _____ of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of _____.

Can you see the God is patient and wants everyone to be saved?

Would you like to be a blessing?

When is the time to heed the Spirit's call?

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Lesson 33 – Apostasy in Galatia

Based on The Epistle to the Galatians

During his 3rd Missionary Journey, while tarrying at Corinth, Paul had cause for serious apprehension concerning some of the churches already established. Through the influence of false teachers who had arisen among the believers in Jerusalem, division, heresy, and sensualism were rapidly gaining ground among the believers in Galatia. These false teachers were mingling Jewish traditions with the truths of the gospel. Ignoring the decision of the general council at Jerusalem, they urged upon the Gentile converts the observance of the ceremonial law.

1) How did Paul greet the Galatian Church?
   Galatians 1:3-4 Grace be to you and _____ from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present _____ world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Paul was cut to the heart, and his soul was stirred by this open apostasy on the part of those to whom he had faithfully taught the principles of the gospel. He immediately wrote to the deluded believers, exposing the false theories that they had accepted and with great severity rebuking those who were departing from the faith.

2) What did he address almost immediately?
   Galatians 1:6-8 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another _____: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be _____.

Paul's teachings had been in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit had witnessed to his labors; therefore, he warned his brethren not to listen to anything that contradicted the truths he had taught them.

3) What bold questions did he ask?
   Galatians 3:1-2 O foolish Galatians, who hath _____ you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the _____ of the law, or by the _____ of faith?
   Galatians 3:3-4 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the _____, are ye now made perfect by the _____? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

The apostle bade the Galatian believers consider carefully their first experience in the Christian life. The Galatians had wandered back into a religion of works.

4) Where did Paul get his doctrines from?
   Galatians 1:10-12 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to _____ men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the _____ of Jesus Christ.

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5) What important thing did he wish to convey?
Galatians 2:19-21 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might _____ unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the _____ of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the _____, then Christ is dead in vain.

It is Satan's studied effort to divert minds from the hope of salvation through faith in Christ and obedience to the law of God. In every age the archenemy adapts his temptations to the prejudices or inclinations of those whom he is seeking to deceive. In apostolic times he led the Jews to exalt the ceremonial law and reject Christ; at the present time he induces many professing Christians, under pretense of honoring Christ, to cast contempt on the moral law and to teach that its precepts may be transgressed with impunity.

6) Was Abraham saved by works or by grace?
Galatians 3:6 Even as Abraham _____ God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.
Galatians 3:7-9 Know ye therefore that they which are of _____, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the _____ through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.
7) Are you blessed if you try to be saved by the keeping of the law?
Galatians 3:10-11 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the _____: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is _____ by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.
8) How do we become children of Abraham?
Galatians 3:13-14 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse _____ _____: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through _____.
9) Is the law bad?
Galatians 3:21-22 Is the law then _____ the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded _____ under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.
Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our _____ to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
10) What did Paul say about the freedom of faith in Christ?
Galatians 3:27-29 For as many of you as have been _____ into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all _____ in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and _____ according to the promise.

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11) Where does the Spirit reside?
Galatians 4:6-7 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your _____, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a _____; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

In the Galatian churches, open, unmasked error was supplanting the gospel message. Christ, the true foundation of the faith, was virtually renounced for the obsolete ceremonies of Judaism. The apostle saw that if the believers in Galatia were saved from the dangerous influences which threatened them, the most decisive measures must be taken, the sharpest warnings given.

12) What pleadings did Paul make?
Galatians 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in _____?
Galatians 4:16 Am I therefore become your _____, because I tell you the truth?
13) What directive did Paul give them?
Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the _____ wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The Holy Spirit wrought with mighty power, and many whose feet had wandered into strange paths, returned to their former faith in the gospel. Henceforth they were steadfast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. In their lives were revealed the fruits of the Spirit.

14) Paul tells us to have the fruits of the Spirit, what are they?
Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is _____, joy, _____, longsuffering, gentleness, _____, faith, Meekness, _____: against such there is no law.
15) How are we to treat our brethren?
Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a _____, ye which are spiritual, _____ such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us _____ _____ unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Paul pleaded with those who had once known in their lives the power of God, to return to their first love of gospel truth. With unanswerable arguments he set before them their privilege of becoming free men and women in Christ, through whose atoning grace all who make full surrender are clothed with the robe of His righteousness. He took the position that every soul who would be saved must have a genuine, personal experience in the things of God.

Can you see Paul dearly loved God's Church?

Would you like to stay on the path of righteousness?

When is the time to pray?

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Lesson 34 – Paul's Last Journey to Jerusalem

Based on Acts 20:4-38; 21:1-15

During his 3rd Missionary Journey, having completed his work at Corinth, he determined to sail directly for one of the ports on the coast of Palestine. All the arrangements had been made, and he was about to step on board the ship, when he was told of a plot laid by the Jews to take his life. In the past these opposers of the faith had been foiled in all their efforts to put an end to the apostle's work.

1) How did Scripture state it?
   Acts 20:3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through _____.

Paul greatly desired to reach Jerusalem before the Passover as he would thus have an opportunity to meet those who should come from all parts of the world to attend the feast. Upon receiving warning of the plot, Paul decided to go around by way of Macedonia. His plan to reach Jerusalem in time for the Passover services had to be given up, but he hoped to be there at Pentecost.

2) Who was with him?
   Acts 20:4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of _____; and of the _____, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

Paul had with him a large sum of money from the Gentile churches, which he purposed to place in the hands of the brethren in charge of the work in Judea; and because of this he made arrangements for these representative brethren from various contributing churches, to accompany him to Jerusalem.

3) Where were they at the time of Passover that year?
   Acts 20:5-6 These going before tarried for us at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

At Philippi Paul tarried to keep the Passover. Only Luke remained with him, the other members of the company passing on to Troas to await him there. The Philippians were the most loving and truehearted of the apostle's converts, and during the eight days of the feast he enjoyed peaceful and happy communion with them. Then, sailing from Philippi, Paul and Luke reached their companions at Troas five days later, and remained for seven days with the believers in that place.

4) What happened in Troas?
   Acts 20:7-8 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to _____ _____, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until _____. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

The fact that their beloved teacher was about to depart had called together a larger company than usual. They assembled in an ***"upper chamber"*** on the third story. There, in the fervency of his love and solicitude for them, the apostle preached until midnight.

5) What happened that night?
   Acts 20:9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep _____: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up _____.

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In one of the open windows sat a youth named Eutychus. In this perilous position he went to sleep and fell to the court below. At once all was alarm and confusion. The youth was taken up dead, and many gathered about him with cries and mourning.

6) Did Paul panic?
Acts 20:10-11 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his _____ is in him. When he therefore was _____ _____ again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

Paul, passing through the frightened company, embraced him and offered up an earnest prayer that God would restore the dead to life. His petition was granted.

With rejoicing the believers again assembled in the upper chamber. They partook of the Communion, and then Paul ***"talked a long while, even till break of day."***

7) Paul had a change of plans, what were they?
Acts 20:13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go _____.

This gave him a short season for meditation and prayer. The difficulties and dangers connected with his coming visit to Jerusalem, the attitude of the church there toward him and his work, as well as the condition of the churches and the interests of the gospel work in other fields, were subjects of earnest, anxious thought, and he took advantage of this special opportunity to seek God for strength and guidance.

8) Where did they go next?
Acts 20:14-15 And when he met with us at _____, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to _____.

As the travelers sailed southward from Assos, they passed the city of Ephesus, so long the scene of the apostle's labors. Paul had greatly desired to visit the church there, for he had important instruction and counsel to give them. But upon consideration he determined to hasten on.

9) How does Scripture record it?
Acts 20:17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the _____ of the church.

Miletus, about thirty miles from Ephesus, he learned that it might be possible to communicate with the church before the ship should sail. He therefore immediately sent a message to the elders, urging them to hasten to Miletus, that he might see them before continuing his journey.

10) What did he have to tell them?
Acts 20:18-19 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into _____, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the _____:
Acts 20:20-21 And how I kept back nothing that was _____ unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and _____ toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul had ever exalted the divine law. He had shown that in the law there is no power to save men from the penalty of disobedience. Wrongdoers must repent of their sins and humble themselves before God, whose just wrath they have incurred by breaking His law, and they must also exercise faith in the blood of Christ as their only means of pardon. The Son of God had died as their sacrifice and had ascended to heaven to stand before the Father as their advocate. By repentance and faith, they might be freed from

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the condemnation of sin and through the grace of Christ be enabled henceforth to render obedience to the law of God.

11) What did he tell them was going to happen to him?
Acts 20:22-23 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall _____ me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that _____ and _____ abide me.

12) Was he upset by the news?
20:24-25 But none of these things _____ me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face _____ _____.

Paul had not designed to bear this testimony; but, while he was speaking, the Spirit of Inspiration came upon him, confirming his fears that this would be his last meeting with his Ephesian brethren.

13) Under the impression of the Spirit, what did he say?
Acts 20:26-27 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the _____ of _____.

No fear of giving offense, no desire for friendship or applause, could lead Paul to withhold the words that God had given him for their instruction, warning, or correction. From His servants today God requires fearlessness in preaching the word and in carrying out its precepts. The minister of Christ is not to present to the people only those truths that are the most pleasing, while he withholds others that might cause them pain. He should watch with deep solicitude the development of character.

14) Knowing he wouldn't see them again, what did he warn them of?
Acts 20:28 Take _____ therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

If ministers of the gospel were to bear constantly in mind the fact that they are dealing with the purchase of the blood of Christ, they would have a deeper sense of the importance of their work. They are to take heed to themselves and to their flock. Their own example is to illustrate and enforce their instructions. As teachers of the way of life, they should give no occasion for the truth to be evil spoken of. As representatives of Christ, they are to maintain the honor of His name. By their devotion, their purity of life, their godly conversation, they are to prove themselves worthy of their high calling.

15) Who is roaming about?
Acts 20:29-30 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous _____ enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking _____ things, to draw away disciples after them.

Paul trembled for the church as, looking into the future, he saw the attacks which she must suffer from both external and internal foes. With solemn earnestness he bade his brethren guard vigilantly their sacred trusts.

16) What did he commend them to do?
Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the _____ of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to _____ the _____, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

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Amidst his arduous labors and extensive journeys for the cause of Christ, he was able, not only to supply his own wants, but to spare something for the support of his fellow laborers and the relief of the worthy poor. This he accomplished only by unremitting diligence and the closest economy.

17) How did their meeting end?
Acts 20:36-38 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and _____ with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they _____ him unto the ship.
18) What happened next?
Acts 21:1-2 And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight _____ unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: And finding a ship sailing over unto _____, we went aboard, and set forth.
Acts 21:3-4 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into _____, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding _____, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Through the Holy Spirit these disciples were warned of the perils awaiting Paul at Jerusalem. But the apostle allowed not the fear of affliction and imprisonment to turn him from his purpose.

19) What followed?
Acts 21:5-6 And when we had accomplished those days, we _____ and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and _____. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.
Acts 21:7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

At the close of the week spent in Tyre, all the brethren, with their wives and children, went with Paul to the ship, and before he stepped on board, they knelt upon the shore and prayed, he for them, and they for him.

20) Where did the ship journey finally end?
Acts 21:8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of _____ the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.
21) What happened there?
Acts 21:10-11 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named _____. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and _____ his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.
22) What was the general consensus among the believers?
Acts 21:12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, _____ him not to go up to Jerusalem.
23) How did Paul reply?
Acts 21:13-15 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to _____ mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be _____, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to _____.

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Never before had the apostle approached Jerusalem with so sad a heart. He knew that he would find few friends and many enemies. He was nearing the city which had rejected and slain the Son of God, and over which now hung the threatenings of divine wrath. Remembering how bitter his own prejudice against the followers of Christ had been, he felt the deepest pity for his deluded countrymen. And yet how little could he hope that he will be able to help them! The same blind wrath which had once burned in his own heart was now with untold power kindling the hearts of a whole nation against him.

Yet in the midst of discouragements the apostle was not in despair. He trusted that the Voice which had spoken to his own heart would yet speak to the hearts of his countrymen, and that the Master whom his fellow disciples loved and served would yet unite their hearts with his in the work of the gospel.

Can you see Paul would do anything for Jesus?

Would you like to have the courage that Paul had?

When is the time to do the right thing?

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Lesson 35 – Paul a Prisoner

Based on Acts 21:17-Acts 23:35

Paul had just returned from his 3rd missionary journey. Many along the way home were prophesying that he would end up in chains when he returned to Jerusalem. He, unafraid, faced head-on, the perils of life and was willing to follow the direction of the LORD no matter the circumstances.

1) What did Paul do when he got into Jerusalem?
   Acts 21:17-19 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us _____. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the _____ were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the _____ by his ministry.
2) What was their reply?
   Acts 21:20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

On this occasion, Paul and his companions formally presented to the leaders of the work at Jerusalem the contributions forwarded by the Gentile churches for the support of the poor among their Jewish brethren. The gathering of these contributions had cost the apostle and his fellow workers much time, anxious thought, and wearisome labor. The sum, which far exceeded the expectations of the elders at Jerusalem, represented many sacrifices and even severe privations on the part of the Gentile believers.

They felt that the methods of labor pursued by the apostle bore the signet of Heaven. The liberal contributions lying before them added weight to the testimony of the apostle concerning the faithfulness of the new churches established among the Gentiles. The men who, while numbered among those who were in charge of the work at Jerusalem, had urged that arbitrary measures of control be adopted, saw Paul's ministry in a new light and were convinced that their own course had been wrong,

3) What were some of the rumors about Paul circulating about?
   Acts 21:21-22 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.
4) What suggestion did they make to possibly allay some of the fears about him?
   Acts 21:23-24 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a _____ on them; Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may _____ their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest _____, and keepest the _____.

The brethren hoped that Paul, by following the course suggested, might give a decisive contradiction to the false reports concerning him. They assured him that the decision of the former council concerning the Gentile converts and the ceremonial law, still held good. But the advice now given was not consistent with that decision. The Spirit of God did not prompt this instruction; it was the fruit of cowardice.

Paul realized that so long as many of the leading members of the church in Jerusalem should continue to cherish prejudice against him, they would work constantly to counteract his influence. He felt that if by any reasonable concession he could win them to the truth he would remove a great obstacle to the success of the gospel in other places. But he was not authorized of God to concede as much as they asked.

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5) What did Paul do?
Acts 21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day _____ himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an _____ should be offered for every one of them.

Those who advised Paul to take this step had not fully considered the great peril to which he would thus be exposed. During this season, Jerusalem was filled with worshipers from many lands. As, in fulfillment of the commission given him by God, Paul had borne the gospel to the Gentiles, he had visited many of the world's largest cities, and he was well known to thousands who from foreign parts had come to Jerusalem to attend the feast. Among these were men whose hearts were filled with bitter hatred for Paul, and for him to enter the temple on a public occasion was to risk his life.

6) What happened?
Acts 21:27-28 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, _____ up all the people, and laid hands on him, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where _____ the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath _____ this holy place.

By the Jewish law it was a crime punishable with death for an uncircumcised person to enter the inner courts of the sacred edifice. Paul had been seen in the city in company with Trophimus, an Ephesian, and it was conjectured that he had brought him into the temple. This he had not done; and being himself a Jew, his act in entering the temple was no violation of the law.

7) How bad did things get?
Acts 21:30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and _____ him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.
Acts 21:31-32 And as they went about to _____ him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left _____ of Paul.
8) Whom did the roman soldiers assume he was?
Acts 21:38 Art not thou that _____, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?
9) What did they do with him?
Acts 21:33-35 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be _____ with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the _____, he commanded him to be _____ into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

In the midst of the tumult the apostle was calm and self-possessed. His mind was stayed upon God, and he knew that angels of heaven were about him. He felt unwilling to leave the temple without making an effort to set the truth before his countrymen.

10) What request did he make?
Acts 21:37,39 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou _____ Greek?... ...But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of _____, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

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11) What happened next?
Acts 21:40, 22:1-2 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and _____ with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my _____ which I make now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more _____: and he saith,)
12) What did he say?
Acts 22:3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of _____, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

None could deny the apostle's statements, as the facts that he referred to were well known to many who were still living in Jerusalem. He then spoke of his former zeal in persecuting the disciples of Christ, even unto death; and he narrated the circumstances of his conversion, telling his hearers how his own proud heart had been led to bow to the crucified Nazarene.

13) After giving his testimony, he told them of his commission, what was it?
Acts 22:21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the _____.
14) Did they receive the message with joy?
Acts 22:22-23 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, _____ with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw _____ into the air,

Hitherto the people had listened with close attention, but when Paul reached the point in his history where he was appointed Christ's ambassador to the Gentiles, their fury broke forth anew. Accustomed to look upon themselves as the only people favored by God, they were unwilling to permit the despised Gentiles to share the privileges which had hitherto been regarded as exclusively their own.

15) How did the Roman Soldiers react to the new tumult?
Acts 22:24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the _____, and bade that he should be examined by _____; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.
16) How did Paul react?
Acts 22:25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a _____, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.
17) What followed?
Acts 22:26-29 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take _____ what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was _____ born. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had _____ him.
18) What did they do for Paul after that?
Acts 22:30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he _____ him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

The apostle was now to be tried by the same tribunal of which he himself had been a member before his conversion. As he stood before the Jewish rulers, his bearing was calm, and his countenance revealed the peace of Christ.

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19) How well did things go?
Acts 23:1-2 And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good _____ before God until this day. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to _____ him on the mouth.
Acts 23:3-4 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou _____ wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high _____?
Acts 23:5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak _____ of the ruler of thy people.

20) Paul understood the council better than most, what did he say to them?
Acts 23:6-7 But when Paul perceived that the one part were _____, and the other _____, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was _____.

21) What became of that?
Acts 23:9-10 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find _____ _____ in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in _____ of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

Later, while reflecting on the trying experiences of the day, Paul began to fear that his course might not have been pleasing to God. Could it be that he had made a mistake after all in visiting Jerusalem? Had his great desire to be in union with his brethren led to this disastrous result?

The cause of Christ was very near to Paul's heart, and with deep anxiety he thought of the perils of the scattered churches, exposed as they were to the persecutions of just such men as he had encountered in the Sanhedrin council. In distress and discouragement, he wept and prayed.

22) How did God answer his prayers?
Acts 23:11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at _____.

Paul had long looked forward to visiting Rome; he greatly desired to witness for Christ there but had felt that his purposes were frustrated by the enmity of the Jews. He little thought, even now, that it would be as a prisoner that he would go.

23) What were the Jews outside planning?
Acts 23:12-14 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a _____, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this _____. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have _____ Paul.

24) Does God love a fast like this?
Isaiah 58:4 Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not _____ as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Instead of rebuking this cruel scheme, the priests and rulers eagerly agreed to it. Paul had spoken the truth when he compared Ananias to a whited sepulcher.

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25) Who helped Paul?
Acts 23:16-17 And when Paul's sister's _____ heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief _____: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

26) What did the youth tell the chief captain?
Acts 23:20-21 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would _____ somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them: for there _____ in _____ for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

As a people, the Jews were in a state of excitement and irritation, and tumults were of frequent occurrence. The continued presence of the apostle in Jerusalem might lead to dangerous consequences to the city and even to the commandant himself.

27) What did he command?
Acts 23:23-24 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two _____ soldiers to go to Caesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night; And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him _____ unto Felix the governor.

28) Paul was sent to Felix in Caesarea, how did Felix respond?
Acts 23:35 I will hear thee, said he, when thine _____ are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.

The case of Paul was not the first in which a servant of God had found among the heathen an asylum from the malice of the professed people of Jehovah. In their rage against Paul the Jews had added another crime to the dark catalogue which marked the history of that people. They had still further hardened their hearts against the truth and had rendered their doom more certain.

Satan is constantly working through his agents to dishearten and destroy those whom God has chosen to accomplish a great and good work. They may be ready to sacrifice even life itself for the advancement of the cause of Christ, yet the great deceiver will suggest to their brethren doubts concerning them which, if entertained, would undermine confidence in their integrity of character, and thus cripple their usefulness.

Can you see Paul would do anything for Jesus?

Would you like to have the courage that Paul had?

When is the time to do the right thing?

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Lesson 36 – The Trial at Caesarea

Based on Acts 24

Paul had just been arrested in Jerusalem. Many of the Jews there wanted to kill him. He was assaulted and scourged. Paul asked why a Roman Citizen would be scourged and the tone changed. The Roman Guard had him sent for trial in Caesarea before Felix.

1) How did his trial there begin?
   Acts 24:1-3 And after five days _____ the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to _____ him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very _____ deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

Tertullus here descended to barefaced falsehood; for the character of Felix was base and contemptible. It was said of him, that "in the practice of all kinds of lust and cruelty, he exercised the power of a king with the temper of a slave." —Tacitus, History, ch. 5, par. 9. Those who heard Tertullus knew that his flattering words were untrue, but their desire to secure the condemnation of Paul was stronger than their love of truth.

2) What accusation did they make against Paul?
   Acts 24:5-6 For we have found this man a _____ fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a _____ of the sect of the Nazarenes: Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.
3) What did they accuse the Roman Guard of?
   Acts 24:7-8 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great _____ took him away out of our hands, Commanding his accusers to _____ unto _____: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.

Tertullus then stated that Lysias, the commandant of the garrison at Jerusalem, had violently taken Paul from the Jews when they were about to judge him by their ecclesiastical law, and had thus forced them to bring the matter before Felix. These statements were made with the design of inducing the procurator to deliver Paul over to the Jewish court. All the charges were vehemently supported by the Jews present, who made no effort to conceal their hatred of the prisoner.

Felix had sufficient penetration to read the disposition and character of Paul's accusers. He knew from what motive they had flattered him, and he saw also that they had failed to substantiate their charges against Paul.

4) What did Felix do for Paul?
   Acts 24:10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to _____, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

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5) What did Paul say before everyone?
Acts 24:11-12 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to _____. And they neither found me in the temple _____ with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:
Acts 24:13 Neither can they _____ the things whereof they now accuse me.
6) What did Paul admit to?
Acts 24:14-15 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call _____, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a _____ of the dead, both of the just and unjust.
7) What was Paul's desire?
Acts 24:16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a _____ void of offence toward God, and toward men.

In a candid, straightforward manner he stated the object of his visit to Jerusalem, and the circumstances of his arrest and trial.

8) Why did he go to Jerusalem?
Acts 24:17-18 Now after many years I came to bring _____ to my nation, and offerings. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me _____ in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.
9) What one thing could they only accuse him of?
Acts 24:21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the _____ of the _____ I am called in question by you this day.

The apostle spoke with earnestness and evident sincerity, and his words carried with them a weight of conviction. Claudius Lysias, in his letter to Felix, had borne a similar testimony in regard to Paul's conduct. Moreover, Felix himself had a better knowledge of the Jewish religion than many supposed. Paul's plain statement of the facts in the case enabled Felix to understand still more clearly the motives by which the Jews were governed in attempting to convict the apostle of sedition and treasonable conduct.

10) What did Felix do?
Acts 24:22-23 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect _____ of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have _____, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

The governor would not gratify the Jews by unjustly condemning a Roman citizen, neither would he give him up to them to be put to death without a fair trial. Yet Felix knew no higher motive than self-interest, and he was controlled by love of praise and a desire for promotion. Fear of offending the Jews held him back from doing full justice to a man whom he knew to be innocent. He therefore decided to suspend the trial until Lysias should be present.

11) What happened while they waited?
Acts 24:24 And after certain days, when _____ came with his wife _____, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

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12) What did they discuss?
Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and _____ to come, Felix _____, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Paul regarded this as a God-given opportunity, and faithfully he improved it. He knew that he stood in the presence of one who had power to put him to death or to set him free; yet he did not address Felix and Drusilla with praise or flattery. He knew that his words would be to them a savor of life or of death, and, forgetting all selfish considerations, he sought to arouse them to a sense of their peril.

13) What Words of Christ were marked on Paul?
Matthew 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never _____ you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

He knew that he must meet every one of his hearers before the tribunal of heaven and must render an account there, not only for all that he had said and done, but for the motive and spirit of his words and deeds.

So violent and cruel had been the course of Felix that few had ever before dared even to intimate to him that his character and conduct were not faultless. But Paul had no fear of man. He plainly declared his faith in Christ, and the reasons for that faith, and was thus led to speak particularly of those virtues essential to Christian character, but of which the haughty pair before him were so strikingly destitute.

The Jewish princess well understood the sacred character of that law which she had so shamelessly transgressed, but her prejudice against the Man of Calvary steeled her heart against the word of life. But Felix had never before listened to the truth, and as the Spirit of God sent conviction to his soul, he became deeply agitated. Conscience, now aroused, made her voice heard, and Felix felt that Paul's words were true.

14) What was Felix's reaction to the burden of Truth Paul laid upon him?
Acts 24:25 …_____ thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Never before had his soul been so filled with terror. The thought that all the secrets of his career of crime were open before the eye of God, and that he must be judged according to his deeds, caused him to tremble with dread.

15) How much different were things from the Philippian Jailer?
Acts 16:31-33 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be _____, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to _____ that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was _____, he and all his, straightway.

The jailer joyfully welcomed the Spirit of God to his heart and to his home; Felix bade the divine Messenger depart. The one chose to become a child of God and an heir of heaven; the other cast his lot with the workers of iniquity.

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16) Felix visited Paul occasionally, why?
Acts 24:26 He hoped also that _____ should have been given him of Paul, that he might _____ him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

The apostle, however, was of too noble a nature to free himself by a bribe. He was not guilty of any crime, and he would not stoop to commit a wrong in order to gain freedom. Furthermore, he was himself too poor to pay such a ransom, had he been disposed to do so, and he would not, in his own behalf, appeal to the sympathy and generosity of his converts. He also felt that he was in the hands of God, and he would not interfere with the divine purposes respecting himself.

17) Why was Paul left in prison?
Acts 24:27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the _____ a _____, left Paul bound.

Felix was finally summoned to Rome because of gross wrongs committed against the Jews. Before leaving Caesarea in answer to this summons, he thought to ***"show the Jews a pleasure"*** by allowing Paul to remain in prison. But Felix was not successful in his attempt to regain the confidence of the Jews. He was removed from office in disgrace, and Porcius Festus was appointed to succeed him, with headquarters at Caesarea.

18) How did Felix respond to his last call from the Holy Spirit?
Acts 24:25 …Go thy way for this time; when I have a _____ season, I will call for thee.

A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him concerning righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. That was his heaven-sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God.

Can you see Paul did what he could?

Would you know if today is the last time God asks you to follow Him?

When is the time to do the right thing?

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Lesson 37 – Paul Appeals to Caesar

Based on Acts 25:1-12

Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem, then carried to Caesarea for trial. He was brought before Felix, but when Paul started witnessing his faith to Felix and Felix began for the first time to look at his own record of sins, pushed off the judgment for a later time. Paul had given Felix his last appeal from God. Felix would be removed from power, and a new regent would take his place.

1) At this time, how long had Paul been incarcerated?
   Acts 24:27 But after _____ _____ Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.
2) How did Festus first hear of the prisoner in Caesarea?
   Acts 25:1 Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to _____.
   Acts 25:2-3 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews _____ him against Paul, and besought him, And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to _____ him.

In making this request they purposed to waylay Paul along the road to Jerusalem and murder him. But Festus had a high sense of the responsibility of his position and courteously declined to send for Paul.

3) What did he tell them?
   Acts 25:4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at _____, and that he himself would depart shortly thither.
   Acts 25:16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to _____, before that he which is accused have the accusers _____ to _____, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.
   Acts 25:5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any _____ in him.

This was not what the Jews wanted. They had not forgotten their former defeat at Caesarea. In contrast with the calm bearing and forcible arguments of the apostle, their own malignant spirit and baseless accusations would appear in the worst possible light. Again, they urged that Paul be brought to Jerusalem for trial, but Festus held firmly to his purpose of giving Paul a fair trial at Caesarea. God in His providence controlled the decision of Festus, that the life of the apostle might be lengthened.

4) How did Paul's hearing before Festus begin?
   Acts 25:6-7 And when he had tarried among them more than _____ days, he went down unto Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and _____ complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

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5) How did Paul rebut their accusations?
Acts 25:8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the _____ of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against _____, have I offended any thing at all.

Being on this occasion without a lawyer, the Jews preferred their charges themselves. As the trial proceeded, the accused (Paul) with calmness and candor clearly showed the falsity of their statements.

Festus discerned that the question in dispute related wholly to Jewish doctrines, and that, rightly understood, there was nothing in the charges against Paul, could they be proved, that would render him subject to sentence of death, or even to imprisonment. Yet he saw clearly the storm of rage that would be created if Paul were not condemned or delivered into their hands.

6) Was Porcius Festus a good guy?
Acts 25:9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a _____, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

The apostle knew that he could not look for justice from the people who by their crimes were bringing down upon themselves the wrath of God. He knew that, like the prophet Elijah, he would be safer among the heathen than with those who had rejected light from heaven and hardened their hearts against the gospel. Weary of strife, his active spirit could ill endure the repeated delays and wearing suspense of his trial and imprisonment. He therefore decided to exercise his privilege, as a Roman citizen.

7) What right did he exercise?
Acts 25:10-11 Then said Paul, I stand at _____ judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I _____ unto Caesar.

Festus knew nothing of the conspiracies of the Jews to murder Paul, and he was surprised at this appeal to Caesar. However, the words of the apostle put a stop to the proceedings of the court.

8) How did Festus reply?
Acts 25:12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto _____? unto Caesar shalt thou go.

Thus, it was that once more, because of hatred born of bigotry and self-righteousness, a servant of God was driven to turn for protection to the heathen. It was this same hatred that forced the prophet Elijah to flee for succor to the widow of Sarepta; and that forced the heralds of the gospel to turn from the Jews to proclaim their message to the Gentiles. And this hatred the people of God living in this age have yet to meet.

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Among many of the professing followers of Christ there is the same pride, formalism, and selfishness, the same spirit of oppression, that held so large a place in the Jewish heart. In the future, men claiming to be Christ's representatives will take a course similar to that followed by the priests and rulers in their treatment of Christ and the apostles. In the great crisis through which they are soon to pass, the faithful servants of God will encounter the same hardness of heart, the same cruel determination, the same unyielding hatred.

9) What Words of Christ must we never forget?
Matthew 26:41 _____ and _____, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Can you see Paul was well taken care of?

Would you like to have the faith to stand the test?

When is the time to watch and pray?

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Lesson 38 – "Almost Thou Persuadest Me"

Based on Acts 25:13 – 26:32

Paul had appealed to Caesar, and Festus could not do otherwise than send him to Rome. But some time passed before a suitable ship could be found; and as other prisoners were to be sent with Paul, the consideration of their cases also occasioned delay. This gave Paul opportunity to present the reasons of his faith before the principal men of Caesarea, and also before King Agrippa II, the last of the Herods.

1) How does our lesson begin today?
Acts 25:13-15 And after certain days king Agrippa and _____ came unto Caesarea to salute Festus. And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's _____ unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have _____ against him.

He outlined the circumstances that led to the prisoner's appeal to Caesar, telling of Paul's recent trial before him, and saying that the Jews had brought against Paul no accusation such as he had supposed they would bring.

2) What were the charges against Paul?
Acts 25:19 But had certain questions against him of their own _____, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

3) How did Agrippa respond to the story he was told?
Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also _____ the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

4) What did the next day look like?
Acts 25:23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great _____, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

In honor of his visitors, Festus had sought to make this an occasion of imposing display. The rich robes of the procurator and his guests, the swords of the soldiers, and the gleaming armor of their commanders, lent brilliancy to the scene.

The aged prisoner, chained to his soldier guard, had in his appearance nothing that would lead the world to pay him homage. Yet in this man, apparently without friends or wealth or position, and held a prisoner for his faith in the Son of God, all heaven was interested. Angels were his attendants. Had the glory of one of those shining messengers flashed forth, the pomp and pride of royalty would have paled; king and courtiers would have been stricken to the earth, as were the Roman guards at the sepulcher of Christ.

5) What did Festus say to the assembled crowd?
Acts 25:24-25 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to _____ any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to _____ him.

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Acts 25:26-27 Of whom I have no certain thing to _____ unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the _____ laid against him.

6) What did Agrippa do?
Acts 26:1 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to _____ for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

The apostle was not disconcerted by the brilliant display or the high rank of his audience; for he knew of how little worth are worldly wealth and position. Earthly pomp and power could not for a moment daunt his courage or rob him of his self-control.

7) What did Paul tell Agrippa and the others?
Acts 26:2-3 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for _____ this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: Especially because I know thee to be _____ in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

8) What was Paul's testimony?
Acts 26:4-5 My manner of _____ from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would _____, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.
Acts 26:6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the _____ made of God unto our fathers:

With clearness and power Paul outlined before Agrippa the leading events connected with the life of Christ on earth. He testified that the Messiah of prophecy had already appeared in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. He showed how the Old Testament Scriptures had declared that the Messiah was to appear as a man among men, and how in the life of Jesus had been fulfilled every specification outlined by Moses and the prophets. For the purpose of redeeming a lost world, the divine Son of God had endured the cross, despising the shame, and had ascended to heaven triumphant over death and the grave.

9) What question did he lay at the feet of Agrippa?
Acts 26:8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should _____ the dead?

10) What did Paul tell the assembled crowd later?
Acts 26:12-13 Whereupon as I went to _____ with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, O king, I saw in the way a _____ from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

11) Who was it?
Acts 26:14-15 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a _____ speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am _____ whom thou persecutest.

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12) What did Jesus have to tell him?
Acts 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a _____ and a _____ both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;
Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from _____ to _____, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

13) Paul stopped and looked directly at Agrippa, what did he say?
Acts 26:19-20 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was _____ _____ unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should _____ and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

14) Paul told him the real reason he was in chains, what was it?
Acts 26:21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to _____ me.
Acts 26:22-23 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the _____ and _____ did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew _____ unto the _____, and to the Gentiles.

The whole company had listened spellbound to Paul's account of his wonderful experiences. The apostle was dwelling upon his favorite theme. None who heard him could doubt his sincerity.

15) Who interjected the scene?
Acts 26:24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee _____.

16) How did Paul reply?
Acts 26:25-26 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of _____ and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are _____ from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

17) Under the direction of Holy Spirit, what did Paul ask Agrippa?
Acts 26:27 King Agrippa, _____ thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

Deeply affected, Agrippa for the moment lost sight of his surroundings and the dignity of his position.

18) What did Agrippa say, almost involuntarily?
Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a _____.

19) Paul didn't miss a beat, what did he reply?
Acts 26:29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these _____.

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Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice might in justice have worn the fetters that bound the apostle. All were guilty of grievous crimes. These offenders had that day heard the offer of salvation through the name of Christ. One, at least, had been almost persuaded to accept the grace and pardon offered. But Agrippa put aside the proffered mercy, refusing to accept the cross of a crucified Redeemer.

20) Having their curiosity satisfied, what did they do?
Acts 26:30 And when he had thus spoken, the king _____ _____, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:

21) What did they discuss among themselves?
Acts 26:31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth _____ worthy of death or of bonds.
Acts 26:32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto _____.

The case had been referred to that higher tribunal, and it was now beyond the jurisdiction of either Festus or Agrippa. Paul will head to Rome.

Can you see Paul was very plain in his testimony?

Would you like to have the faith to stand the test?

When is the time to watch and pray?

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Lesson 39 – The Voyage and Shipwreck

Based on Acts 27:1 – 28:10

Paul had appealed to Caesar, and Festus could not do otherwise than send him to Rome. They had to wait for some time for a ship to take prisoners and now at last Paul was on his way, on his next missionary trip, (in chains).

1) How does our lesson begin today?
Acts 27:1 And when it was determined that we should sail into _____, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

In the first century of the Christian Era traveling by sea was attended with peculiar hardship and peril. Mariners directed their course largely by the position of the sun and stars; and when these did not appear, there were indications of storm, the owners of vessels were fearful of venturing into the open sea. During a portion of the year, safe navigation was almost impossible.

2) Who was with Paul?
Acts 27:2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one _____, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

One circumstance greatly lightened the hardship of his lot, he was permitted the companionship of Luke and Aristarchus. Remember, Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles, he was included in the "us".

3) What did Paul lovingly call Aristarchus?
Colossians 4:10 Aristarchus my _____ saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

4) How did their journey begin?
Acts 27:3 And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him _____ to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

The voyage began prosperously. The following day they cast anchor in the harbor of Sidon. Here Julius, the centurion, ***"courteously entreated Paul,"*** and being informed that there were Christians in the place, ***"gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself."*** This permission was greatly appreciated by the apostle, who was in feeble health.

5) What followed?
Acts 27:4-6 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were _____. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into _____; and he put us therein.

Upon leaving Sidon, the ship encountered contrary winds; and being driven from a direct course, its progress was slow. At Myra, in the province of Lycia, the centurion found a large Alexandrian ship, bound for the coast of Italy, and to this he immediately transferred his prisoners.

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6) In the new ship, where did they go?
Acts 27:7-8 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the _____ not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The _____ _____; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

7) Was it a good time to set sail?
Acts 27:9-10 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now _____, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with _____ and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

At Fair Havens they were compelled to remain for some time, waiting for favoring winds. Winter was approaching rapidly; ***"sailing was now dangerous;"*** and those in charge of the vessel had to give up hope of reaching their destination before the season for travel by sea should be closed for the year. The only question now to be decided was, whether to remain at Fair Havens, or attempt to reach a more favorable place in which to winter.

8) Did they listen to Paul?
Acts 27:11-12 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the _____ of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. And because the haven was not _____ to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west.

9) How well did that go?
Acts 27:14:15 But not long after there arose against it a _____ wind, called Euroclydon. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her _____.

10) What did the crew do?
Acts 27:16-19 And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the _____: Which when they had taken up, they used helps, _____ the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they _____ the ship; And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

The sailors made ready for the worst. The lifeboat, their only means of escape in case the ship should founder, was in tow and liable to be dashed in pieces at any moment. Their first work was to hoist this boat on board. All possible precautions were then taken to strengthen the ship and prepare it to withstand the tempest. The scant protection afforded by the little island did not avail them long, and soon they were again exposed to the full violence of the storm.

11) What did Luke record for us?
Acts 27:20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small _____ lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

The wind did not abate. The storm-beaten ship, with its shattered mast and rent sails, was tossed hither and thither by the fury of the gale. Every moment it seemed that the groaning timbers must give way as the vessel reeled and quivered under the tempest's shock. The leak

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increased rapidly, and passengers and crew worked continually at the pumps. There was not a moment's rest for any on board.

12) What did Paul tell everyone onboard?
Acts 27:21-22 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have _____ unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no _____ of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

For fourteen days they drifted under a sunless and starless heaven. The apostle, though himself suffering physically, had words of hope for the darkest hour, a helping hand in every emergency. He grasped by faith the arm of Infinite Power, and his heart was stayed upon God. He had no fears for himself; he knew that God would preserve him to witness at Rome for the truth of Christ. But his heart yearned with pity for the poor souls around him, sinful, degraded, and unprepared to die. As he earnestly pleaded with God to spare their lives, it was revealed to him that his prayer was granted.

13) How did he know?
Acts 27:23-25 For there stood by me this night the _____ of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before _____: and, lo, God hath given thee _____ them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.
14) Where did he say they would end up?
Acts 27:26 Howbeit we must be _____ upon a certain island.

At these words, hope revived. Passengers and crew were roused from their apathy. There was much yet to be done, and every effort within their power must be put forth to avert destruction.

15) What did the sailors hear?
Acts 27:27-29 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew _____ to some country; And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little _____, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have _____ upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

It was on the fourteenth night of tossing on the black, heaving billows, that ***"about midnight"*** the sailors, hearing the sound of breakers.

16) Were all the crew believing Paul?
Acts 27:30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the _____ into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,
17) Paul stepped in, what did he say?
Acts 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these _____ in the ship, ye cannot be saved.
18) Who did believe Paul?
Acts 27:32 Then the soldiers _____ _____ the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

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19) What did Paul do next with his shipmates?

Acts 27:33-35 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take _____, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an _____ fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to _____ in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

Acts 27:36-37 Then were they all of _____ _____, and they also took some meat. And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

20) What did they do at daybreak?

Acts 27:39-40 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a _____, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. And when they had taken up the _____, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the _____ to the wind, and made toward shore.

21) Where did the ship find its resting place?

Acts 27:41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship _____; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

22) What is proper protocol for prisoners in the case of shipwreck?

Acts 27:42 And the soldiers' counsel was to _____ the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

Paul and the other prisoners were now threatened by a fate more terrible than shipwreck. The soldiers saw that while endeavoring to reach land it would be impossible for them to keep their prisoners in charge. Every man would have all he could do to save himself. Yet if any of the prisoners were missing, the lives of those who were responsible for them would be forfeited.

23) What happened?

Acts 27:43-44 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, _____ them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped _____ safe to land.

When the roll was called, not one was missing.

24) What did they do when they got on shore?

Acts 28:1-2 And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called _____. And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and _____ us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

25) Did that go well?

Acts 28:3-5 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a _____ out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a _____, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt _____ _____.

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26) What did the locals think about that?

Acts 28:6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they _____ their _____, and said that he was a god.

During the three months that the ship's company remained at Melita, Paul and his fellow laborers improved many opportunities to preach the gospel. In a remarkable manner the Lord wrought through them. For Paul's sake the entire shipwrecked company were treated with great kindness; all their wants were supplied, and upon leaving Melita they were liberally provided with everything needful for their voyage.

Can you see that if God gives you a plan, He will follow through?

Would you like to do God's will?

When is the time to ask?

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Lesson 40 – In Rome

Based on Acts 28:11-31, Philemon

Paul had appealed to Caesar, and Festus could not do otherwise than send him to Rome. Paul and a ship of fellow prisoners nearing the end of their harrowing journey, survived a shipwreck and after a bit, set sail towards Rome.

1) How does our lesson begin today?
   Acts 28:11-13 And after _____ months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at _____, we tarried there three days. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to _____: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:
2) Where did Paul and his fellow travelers stay in Rhegium?
   Acts 28:14 Where we found _____, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

In this place there were a few Christians, and they entreated the apostle to remain with them for seven days, a privilege kindly granted by the centurion. Since receiving Paul's epistle to the Romans, the Christians of Italy had eagerly looked forward to a visit from the apostle. They had not thought to see him come as a prisoner, but his sufferings only endeared him to them the more.

3) On the way to Rome, who met up with Paul?
   Acts 28:15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as _____ _____, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.

The Appii Forum was forty miles from Rome.

Suddenly a cry of joy is heard, and a man springs from the passing throng and falls upon the prisoner's neck, embracing him with tears and rejoicing, as a son would welcome a long-absent father. Again, and again is the scene repeated as, with eyes made keen by loving expectation, many discern in the chained captive the one who at Corinth, at Philippi, at Ephesus, had spoken to them the words of life.

4) What effect did these have on Paul?
   Acts 28:15 … he thanked God, and took _____.

The cloud of sadness that had rested upon his spirit was swept away. His Christian life had been a succession of trials, sufferings, and disappointments, but in that hour, he felt abundantly repaid. With firmer step and joyful heart, he continued on his way. He would not complain of the past, nor fear for the future. Bonds and afflictions awaited him, he knew; but he knew also that it had been his to deliver souls from a bondage infinitely more terrible, and he rejoiced in his sufferings for Christ's sake.

5) At Rome, what did the Centurion do for Paul?
   Acts 28:16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by _____ with a soldier that kept him.

The good account which he gave of Paul, together with the letter from Festus, caused the apostle to be favorably regarded by the chief captain, and, instead of being thrown into prison, he was permitted to live in his own hired house. Although still constantly chained to a soldier, he was at liberty to receive his friends and to labor for the advancement of the cause of Christ.

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6) What did Paul do when he got to Rome?
Acts 28:17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed _____ against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

Paul was determined to present the facts concerning himself and his work, before his enemies should have opportunity to embitter them against him. Three days after his arrival in Rome, therefore, he called together their leading men and in a simple, direct manner stated why he had come to Rome as a prisoner.

7) What did he say?
Acts 28:18-20 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no _____ of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was _____ to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the _____ of Israel I am bound with this chain.

He said nothing of the abuse which he had suffered at the hands of the Jews, or of their repeated plots to assassinate him. His words were marked with caution and kindness. He was not seeking to win personal attention or sympathy, but to defend the truth and to maintain the honor of the gospel.

8) How did they reply?
Acts 28:21-22 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of _____ concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any _____ of thee. But we desire to _____ of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

9) Did Paul comply with their request?
Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came _____ to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the _____ of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

The apostle showed that religion does not consist in rites and ceremonies, creeds and theories. If it did, the natural man could understand it by investigation, as he understands worldly things. Paul taught that religion is a practical, saving energy, a principle wholly from God, a personal experience of God's renewing power upon the soul.

He showed how Moses had pointed Israel forward to Christ as that Prophet whom they were to hear; how all the prophets had testified of Him as God's great remedy for sin, the guiltless One who was to bear the sins of the guilty. He did not find fault with their observance of forms and ceremonies but showed that while they maintained the ritual service with great exactness, they were rejecting Him who was the antitype of all that system.

The apostle asserted that he did not present to them Christ after the flesh. Herod had seen Christ in the days of His humanity; Annas had seen Him; Pilate and the priests and rulers had seen Him; the Roman soldiers had seen Him. But they had not seen Him with the eye of faith; they had not seen Him as the glorified Redeemer. To apprehend Christ by faith, to have a spiritual knowledge of Him, was more to be desired than a personal acquaintance with Him as He appeared on the earth.

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10) How did they respond?
Acts 28:24-26 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed _____. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall _____, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not _____:

11) What was the conclusion of this meeting?
Acts 28:28-29 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the _____, and that they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great _____ among themselves.

12) How long did Luke record Paul live in Rome?
Acts 28:30 And Paul dwelt two whole _____ in his own hired house…

Many months passed by after Paul's arrival in Rome, before the Jews of Jerusalem appeared in person to present their accusations against the prisoner. They had been repeatedly thwarted in their designs; and now that Paul was to be tried before the highest tribunal of the Roman Empire, they had no desire to risk another defeat. Lysias, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa had all declared their belief in his innocence. His enemies could hope for success only in seeking by intrigue to influence the emperor in their favor. Delay would further their object, as it would afford them time to perfect and execute their plans, and so they waited for a while before preferring their charges in person against the apostle.

13) How did God use their evil intentions?
Acts 28:30-31 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and _____ all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man _____ him.

During this time the churches that he had established in many lands were not forgotten. Realizing the dangers that threatened the converts to the new faith, the apostle sought so far as possible to meet their needs by letters of warning and practical instruction. And from Rome he sent out consecrated workers to labor not only for these churches, but in fields that he himself had not visited.

Thus, while apparently cut off from active labor, Paul exerted a wider and more lasting influence than if he had been free to travel among the churches as in former years. As a prisoner of the Lord, he had a firmer hold upon the affections of his brethren; and his words, written by one under bonds for the sake of Christ, commanded greater attention and respect than they did when he was personally with them.

14) Who was with him in Rome?
Colossians 4:7-9 All my state shall _____ declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; With _____, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.
Colossians 4:14 _____, the beloved physician, and _____, greet you.
Colossians 4:10 _____ my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and _____, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

Mark's Christian experience had deepened. As he had studied more closely the life and death of Christ he had obtained clearer views of the Saviour's mission, its toils and conflicts. Reading in the scars in Christ's hands and feet the marks of His service for humanity, and the length to which self-abnegation leads to save the lost and perishing, Mark had become willing to follow the Master in the path of self-sacrifice. Now, sharing the lot of Paul the prisoner, he understood better than ever before that it is infinite gain to win Christ, infinite loss to win the world and lose the soul for whose redemption the blood of Christ

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was shed. In the face of severe trial and adversity, Mark continued steadfast, a wise and beloved helper of the apostle.

15) What happened to Demas?
2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath _____ me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica…

For worldly gain, Demas bartered every high and noble consideration. How shortsighted the exchange! Possessing only worldly wealth or honor, Demas was poor indeed, however much he might proudly call his own; while Mark, choosing to suffer for Christ's sake, possessed eternal riches, being accounted in heaven an heir of God and a joint heir with His Son.

Onesimus endeared himself to Paul by his piety and sincerity, no less than by his tender care for the apostle's comfort, and his zeal in promoting the work of the gospel. Paul saw in him traits of character that would render him a useful helper in missionary labor, and he counseled him to return without delay to Philemon, beg his forgiveness, and plan for the future. The apostle promised to hold himself responsible for the sum of which Philemon had been robbed. Being about to dispatch Tychicus with letters to various churches in Asia Minor, he sent Onesimus with him. It was a severe test for this servant thus to deliver himself up to the master he had wronged; but he had been truly converted, and he did not turn aside from his duty.

16) What was in the letter Onesimus was to bear to his owner Philemon?
Philemon 1:3-6 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, Hearing of thy _____ and _____, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every _____ thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

The apostle reminded Philemon that every good purpose and trait of character which he possessed was due to the grace of Christ; this alone made him different from the perverse and the sinful. The same grace could make the debased criminal a child of God and a useful laborer in the gospel.

17) What plea did Paul make on behalf of Onesimus?
Philemon 1:9-11 Yet for love's sake I rather _____ thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now _____ to thee and to me:
Philemon 1:15-16 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a _____, but above a servant, a _____ beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

The apostle asked Philemon, in view of the conversion of Onesimus, to receive the repentant slave as his own child, showing him such affection that he would choose to dwell with his former master.

He tried to write to him in a way that would arouse his deepest and tenderest feelings as a Christian. The conversion of Onesimus had made him a brother in the faith, and any punishment inflicted on this new convert would be regarded by Paul as inflicted on himself.

18) What did Paul ask of his brother in faith, Philemon?
Philemon 1:17-19 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as _____. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine _____; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will _____ it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

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How fitting an illustration of the love of Christ for the repentant sinner! The servant who had defrauded his master had nothing with which to make restitution. The sinner who has robbed God of years of service has no means of canceling the debt. Jesus interposes between the sinner and God, saying, I will pay the debt. Let the sinner be spared; I will suffer in his stead.

19) What faith did Paul have in Philemon?
Philemon 1:21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do _____ than I say.

It was not the apostle's work to overturn arbitrarily or suddenly the established order of society. To attempt this would be to prevent the success of the gospel. But he taught principles which struck at the very foundation of slavery and which, if carried into effect, would surely undermine the whole system.

20) What did Paul declare to the Corinthians?
2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is _____.

When converted, the slave became a member of the body of Christ, and as such was to be loved and treated as a brother, a fellow heir with his master to the blessings of God and the privileges of the gospel.

21) How are we to serve?
Ephesians 6:6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the _____;

Christianity makes a strong bond of union between master and slave, king and subject, the gospel minister and the degraded sinner who has found in Christ cleansing from sin. They have been washed in the same blood, quickened by the same Spirit; and they are made one in Christ Jesus.

Can you see that God's plans supersede the evil Satan is doing?

Would you like to serve God no matter what?

When is the time to not worry?

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Lesson 41 – Caesar's Household

1) What observation did Paul give us?
1 Corinthians 1:26-27 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath _____ the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the _____ things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

It could not be expected that Paul, a poor and friendless prisoner, would be able to gain the attention of the wealthy and titled classes of Roman citizens. To them vice presented all its glittering allurements and held them willing captives. But from among the toilworn, want-stricken victims of their oppression, even from among the poor slaves, many gladly listened to the words of Paul and in the faith of Christ found a hope and peace that cheered them under the hardships of their lot.

2) What did Paul tell Timothy about the power of God?
2 Timothy 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto _____; but the word of God is not bound.
3) What was happening even in the Palace?
Philippians 4:22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of _____ household.

Rome was at this time the metropolis of the world. The haughty Caesars were giving laws to nearly every nation upon the earth. King and courtier were either ignorant of the humble Nazarene or regarded Him with hatred and derision. And yet in less than two years the gospel found its way from the prisoner's lowly home into the imperial halls.

4) How powerful is the Word?
2 Corinthians 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but _____ through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Nowhere could there exist an atmosphere more uncongenial to Christianity than in the Roman court. Nero seemed to have obliterated from his soul the last trace of the divine, and even of the human, and to bear the impress of Satan. His attendants and courtiers were in general of the same character as himself, fierce, debased, and corrupt. To all appearance it would be impossible for Christianity to gain a foothold in the court and palace of Nero.

Even in Nero's household, trophies of the cross were won. From the vile attendants of a viler king were gained converts who became sons of God. These were not Christians secretly, but openly. They were not ashamed of their faith.

5) What does God do with the impossible?
Philippians 1:12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the _____ of the gospel;

When the Christian churches first learned that Paul was to visit Rome, they looked forward to a signal triumph of the gospel in that city. Paul had borne the truth to many lands; he had proclaimed it in great cities. Might not this champion of the faith succeed in winning souls to Christ even in the metropolis of the world? But their hopes were crushed by the tidings that Paul had gone to Rome as a prisoner. They had confidently hoped to see the gospel, once

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established at this great center, extend rapidly to all nations and become a prevailing power in the earth. How great their disappointment! Human expectations had failed, but not the purpose of God.

6) How did Paul's incarceration affect those who knew him?
Philippians 1:14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing _____ by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

It was as a captive that he broke from so many souls the bonds that held them in the slavery of sin.

Paul's patience and cheerfulness during his long and unjust imprisonment, his courage and faith, were a continual sermon. His spirit, so unlike the spirit of the world, bore witness that a power higher than that of earth was abiding with him. And by his example, Christians were impelled to greater energy as advocates of the cause from the public labors of which Paul had been withdrawn.

7) After two years imprisonment what was Paul able to say?
Philippians 1:13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all _____ places;
Philippians 4:22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's _____.

Patience as well as courage has its victories. By meekness under trial, no less than by boldness in enterprise, souls may be won to Christ. The Christian who manifests patience and cheerfulness under bereavement and suffering, who meets even death itself with the peace and calmness of an unwavering faith, may accomplish for the gospel more than he could have effected by a long life of faithful labor. Often when the servant of God is withdrawn from active duty, the mysterious providence which our shortsighted vision would lament is designed by God to accomplish a work that otherwise would never have been done.

The apostle and his associate workers might have argued that it would be vain to call to repentance and faith in Christ the servants of Nero, subjected, as they were, to fierce temptations, surrounded by formidable hindrances, and exposed to bitter opposition. Even should they be convinced of the truth, how could they render obedience? But Paul did not reason; thus, in faith he presented the gospel to these souls, and among those who heard were some who decided to obey at any cost.

8) What Psalm had Paul memorized?
Psalm 56:3-4 What time I am afraid, I will _____ in thee. In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not _____ what flesh can do unto me.

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

Can you see that God's plans supersede the evil Satan is doing?

Would you like to serve God no matter what? **When is the time to not worry?**

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Lesson 42 – Written from Rome Part I

Based on Colossians

1) What revelation was Paul given?
   2 Corinthians 12:2,4 such an one caught up to the third _____… How that he was caught up into _____, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.
2) What did he want to share with the churches he visited and wrote to?
   Ephesians 3:18-19 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the _____, and length, and depth, and _____; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the _____ of God.
3) What was his knowledge of Godly things equal to?
   2 Corinthians 12:11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in _____ am I _____ the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

Paul could not tell all that he had seen in vision; for among his hearers were some who would have misapplied his words. But that which was revealed to him enabled him to labor as a leader and a wise teacher and also molded the messages that he in later years sent to the churches. The impression that he received when in vision was ever with him, enabling him to give a correct representation of Christian character.

4) What was Paul's desire for us?
   Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and _____ about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
   Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the _____ of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the _____ of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
5) Should we act like the people of the world?
   Ephesians 4:17-18 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other _____ walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being _____ from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
   Ephesians 5:15-16 See then that ye _____ circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are _____.
6) What did Christ do for us?
   Ephesians 5:25 …even as Christ also loved the church, and gave _____ for it;
7) What will Christ do for us?
   Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious _____, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without _____.

These messages, written with a power not of man but of God, contain lessons which should be studied by all, and which may with profit be often repeated. In them practical godliness is outlined, principles are laid down that should be followed in every church, and the way that leads to life eternal is made plain.

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8) To whom did he write while in Roman incarceration?
Colossians 1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at _____: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

9) Who brought the good tidings to Paul from Colosse?
Colossians 1:7-8 As ye also learned of _____ our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

10) What did Paul say he was going to do for the Colossians?
Colossians 1:9-11 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to _____ for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all _____, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; _____ with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Thus, Paul put into words his desire for the Colossian believers. How high the ideal that these words hold before the follower of Christ! They show the wonderful possibilities of the Christian life and make it plain that there is no limit to the blessings that the children of God may receive.

11) What is our inheritance?
Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the _____ in _____:

12) Who created us and everything around us?
Colossians 1:16-17 For by him were all things created, that are in _____, and that are in _____, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or _____, or _____, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

13) What miracle has God done for you?
Colossians 1:21-22 And you, that were sometime alienated and _____ in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you _____ and unblameable and _____ in his sight:

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.

14) How did Isaiah describe it?
Isaiah 53:5-6 But he was wounded for our _____, he was bruised for our _____: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are _____. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

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.

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15) How did John describe it?
John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and _____ among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

16) What warning did Paul give to the church in Colosse?
Colossians 2:6-7 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so _____ ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, _____ therein with thanksgiving.
Colossians 2:8-10 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain _____, after the _____ of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are _____ in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

17) What did Christ say the world will descend into?
Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall _____ _____.

He had warned the disciples that the church would be in more danger from this evil than from the persecution of her enemies. Again and again, Paul warned the believers against these false teachers. This peril, above all others, they must guard against; for by receiving false teachers, they would open the door to errors by which the enemy would dim the spiritual perceptions and shake the confidence of those newly come to the faith of the gospel. Christ was the standard by which they were to test the doctrines presented.

18) What are we to watch out for?
Colossians 2:4 And this I say, lest any man should _____ you with enticing words.

We will meet with spiritualistic interpretations of the Scriptures, but we are not to accept them. God's voice is to be heard in clear affirmation of the eternal truths of the Scriptures. Keeping our eyes fixed on Christ, we are to move steadily forward in the path marked out, discarding all ideas that are not in harmony with His teaching. The truth of God is to be the subject for our contemplation and meditation. We are to regard the Bible as the voice of God speaking directly to us. Thus, we will find the wisdom which is divine.

19) What did the Psalmist say to give us guidance?
Psalms 19:8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is _____, enlightening the eyes.

20) What is our only wise course?
1 Corinthians 3:11 For other _____ can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. This is the knowledge that works transformation of character. Received into the life, it will re-create the soul in the image of Christ. This is the knowledge that God invites His children to receive, beside which all else is vanity and nothingness.

21) What should we seek?
Colossians 3:1-3 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are _____, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the _____. For ye are dead, and your life is _____ with Christ in God.

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22) He told the people in Corinth something similar, what was it?
2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, _____ _____ are become new.

Through the power of Christ, men and women have broken the chains of sinful habit. They have renounced selfishness. The profane have become reverent, the drunken sober, the profligate pure. Souls that have borne the likeness of Satan have become transformed into the image of God. This change is in itself the miracle of miracles. A change wrought by the Word, it is one of the deepest mysteries of the Word.

23) What brings this change?
Colossians 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this _____ among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

24) How are we justified?
Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by _____, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

But because this experience is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him. He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ's strength for victory.

25) What shall we do?
Colossians 3:5 _____ therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is _____:
Colossians 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, _____ _____ out of your mouth.
Colossians 3:12-14 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; _____ one another, and _____ one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as _____ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

The letter to the Colossians is filled with lessons of highest value to all who are engaged in the service of Christ, lessons that show the singleness of purpose and the loftiness of aim which will be seen in the life of him who rightly represents the Saviour. Renouncing all that would hinder him from making progress in the upward way or that would turn the feet of another from the narrow path, the believer will reveal in his daily life mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, forbearance, and the love of Christ.

The power of a higher, purer, nobler life is our great need. The world has too much of our thought, and the kingdom of heaven too little.

Can you see that God's plans to bless you have no end?

Would you like to know more? **When is the time follow the Word?**

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Lesson 43 – Written from Rome Part II

Based on Philippians

1) What was Paul's wish for all the churches he came into contact with?
   Colossians 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be _____ with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
   Colossians 1:11 _____ with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with _____;

Paul's letter to the Philippians, like the one to the Colossians, was written while he was a prisoner at Rome. The church at Philippi had sent gifts to Paul by the hand of Epaphroditus.

2) Who was Epaphroditus?
   Philippians 2:25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and _____, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.
3) What happened while he was in Rome?
   Philippians 2:27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto _____: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

Hearing of the sickness of Epaphroditus, the believers at Philippi were filled with anxiety regarding him, and he decided to return to them.

4) What request did Paul make?
   Philippians 2:29-30 _____ him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not _____ his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

By Epaphroditus, Paul sent the Philippian believers a letter, in which he thanked them for their gifts to him. Of all the churches, that of Philippi had been the most liberal in supplying Paul's wants.

5) What was Paul grateful for?
   Philippians 4:15-16 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning _____ and _____, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.
   Philippians 4:17-18 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and _____: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, _____ to God.
6) How did Paul's letter begin?
   Philippians 1:2-5 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every _____ of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your _____ in the gospel from the first day until now;

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Philippians 1:6-7 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will _____ it until the day of Jesus Christ: Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are _____ of my grace.
Philippians 1:8-9 For God is my record, how greatly I _____ after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in _____ and in all judgment;
Philippians 1:10-11 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without _____ till the day of Christ; Being filled with the _____ of _____, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

The grace of God sustained Paul in his imprisonment, enabling him to rejoice in tribulation. With faith and assurance, he wrote to his Philippian brethren that his imprisonment had resulted in the furtherance of the gospel.

7) What statement of faith did he make?
Philippians 1:12-14 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the _____ of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the _____, and in all other places; And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more _____ to speak the word without fear.

There is a lesson for us in this experience of Paul's, for it reveals God's way of working. The Lord can bring victory out of that which may seem to us discomfiture and defeat. We are in danger of forgetting God, of looking at the things which are seen, instead of beholding by the eye of faith the things which are unseen. When misfortune or calamity comes, we are ready to charge God with neglect or cruelty. If He sees fit to cut off our usefulness in some line, we mourn, not stopping to think that thus God may be working for our good. We need to learn that chastisement is a part of His great plan and that under the rod of affliction the Christian may sometimes do more for the Master than when engaged in active service.

8) What did he remind the believers there about Jesus?
Philippians 2:6-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of _____ _____, and took upon him the form of a _____, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became _____ unto death, even the death of the cross.
9) What should we do?
Philippians 2:12-13 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own _____ with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to _____ and to _____ of his good pleasure.

These words were recorded for the help of every striving soul. Paul holds up the standard of perfection and shows how it may be reached.

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The work of gaining salvation is one of copartnership, a joint operation. There is to be co-operation between God and the repentant sinner. This is necessary for the formation of right principles in the character. Man is to make earnest efforts to overcome that which hinders him from attaining to perfection. But he is wholly dependent upon God for success. Human effort of itself is not sufficient. Without the aid of divine power, it avails nothing. God works and man works. Resistance of temptation must come from man, who must draw his power from God. On the one side there is infinite wisdom, compassion, and power: on the other, weakness, sinfulness, absolute helplessness.

10) What did the Psalmist say about God's power in our lives?
Psalm 110:3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power…

God wishes us to have the mastery over ourselves. But He cannot help us without our consent and co-operation. The divine Spirit works through the powers and faculties given to man. Of ourselves, we are not able to bring the purposes and desires and inclinations into harmony with the will of God; but if we are "willing to be made willing," the Saviour will accomplish this for us.

11) What did Paul say about this?
2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every _____ to the obedience of Christ;

He who would build up a strong, symmetrical character, he who would be a well-balanced Christian, must give all and do all for Christ; for the Redeemer will not accept divided service. Daily he must learn the meaning of self-surrender. He must study the word of God, learn its meaning and obey its precepts. Thus, he may reach the standard of Christian excellence. Day by day God works with him, perfecting the character that is to stand in the time of final test. And day by day the believer is working out before men and angels a sublime experiment, showing what the gospel can do for fallen human beings.

12) What did Paul think about the past and the future?
Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are _____, and reaching forth unto those things which are _____, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul never lost sight of one great purpose—to press toward the prize of his calling. One aim he kept steadfastly before him—to be faithful to the One who at the gate of Damascus had revealed Himself to him. From this aim nothing had power to turn him aside. To exalt the cross of Calvary—this was the all-absorbing motive that inspired his words and acts.

The great purpose that constrained Paul to press forward in the face of hardship and difficulty should lead every Christian worker to consecrate himself wholly to God's service. Worldly attractions will be presented to draw his attentions from the Saviour, but he is to press on toward the goal, showing to the world, to angels, and to men that the hope of seeing the face of God is worth all the effort and sacrifice that the attainment of this hope demands.

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13) Were Paul's spirits crushed because he was a prisoner?
Philippians 4:4 _____ in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.
Philippians 4:6-7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by _____ and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the _____ of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

14) What sage advice are we wise to follow?
Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, _____ on these things.

15) If you are following God, where do your necessities come from?
Philippians 4:19 But my God shall _____ all your need according to his _____ in glory by Christ Jesus.

16) What was Paul's final wish for you?
Philippians 4:23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Can you see there's no reason to lose hope?

Would you like to be positive of God's success?

When is the time put away negative thinking?

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Lesson 43b – Paul and Nero

What is written below is well agreed upon by Biblical Scholars of every flavor although there is nothing solid to point to as to what happened between Paul's first trial before Nero and Paul's death decree after a second trial. What is below is what can be found in the book Acts of the Apostles by Mrs. Ellen White.

At Liberty

While Paul's labors in Rome were being blessed to the conversion of many souls and the strengthening and encouragement of the believers, clouds were gathering that threatened not only his own safety, but also the prosperity of the church. On his arrival in Rome he had been placed in charge of the captain of the imperial guards, a man of justice and integrity, by whose clemency he was left comparatively free to pursue the work of the gospel. But before the close of the two years' imprisonment, this man was replaced by an official from whom the apostle could expect no special favor.

The Jews were now more active than ever in their efforts against Paul, and they found an able helper in the profligate woman whom Nero had made his second wife, and who, being a Jewish proselyte, lent all her influence to aid their murderous designs against the champion of Christianity.

Paul could hope for little justice from the Caesar to whom he had appealed. Nero was more debased in morals, more frivolous in character, and at the same time capable of more atrocious cruelty, than any ruler who had preceded him. The reins of government could not have been entrusted to a more despotic ruler. The first year of his reign had been marked by the poisoning of his young stepbrother, the rightful heir to the throne. From one depth of vice and crime to another, Nero had descended, until he had murdered his own mother, and then his wife. There was no atrocity which he would not perpetrate, no vile act to which he would not stoop. In every noble mind he inspired only abhorrence and contempt.

The details of the iniquity practiced in his court are too degrading, too horrible, for description. His abandoned wickedness created disgust and loathing, even in many who were forced to share his crimes. They were in constant fear as to what enormities he would suggest next. Yet even such crimes as Nero's did not shake the allegiance of his subjects. He was acknowledged as the absolute ruler of the whole civilized world. More than this, he was made the recipient of divine honors and was worshiped as a god.

From the viewpoint of human judgment, Paul's condemnation before such a judge was certain. But the apostle felt that so long as he was loyal to God, he had nothing to fear. The One who in the past had been his protector could shield him still from the malice of the Jews and from the power of Caesar.

And God did shield His servant. At Paul's examination the charges against him were not sustained, and, contrary to the general expectation, and with a regard for justice wholly at variance with his character, Nero declared the prisoner guiltless. Paul's bonds were removed; he was again a free man.

Had his trial been longer deferred, or had he from any cause been detained in Rome until the following year, he would doubtless have perished in the persecution which then took place. During Paul's imprisonment the converts to Christianity had become so numerous as to attract the attention and arouse the enmity of the authorities. The anger of the emperor was especially excited by the conversion

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of members of his own household, and he soon found a pretext to make the Christians the objects of his merciless cruelty.

About this time a terrible fire occurred in Rome by which nearly one half of the city was burned. Nero himself, it was rumored, had caused the flames to be kindled, but to avert suspicion he made a pretense of great generosity by assisting the homeless and destitute. He was, however, accused of the crime. The people were excited and enraged, and in order to clear himself, and also to rid the city of a class whom he feared and hated, Nero turned the accusation upon the Christians. His device succeeded, and thousands of the followers of Christ—men, women, and children—were cruelly put to death.

From this terrible persecution Paul was spared, for soon after his release he had left Rome. This last interval of freedom he diligently improved in laboring among the churches. He sought to establish a firmer union between the Greek and the Eastern churches and to fortify the minds of the believers against the false doctrines that were creeping in to corrupt the faith.

The trials and anxieties that Paul had endured had preyed upon his physical powers. The infirmities of age were upon him. He felt that he was now doing his last work, and, as the time of his labor grew shorter, his efforts became more intense. There seemed to be no limit to his zeal. Resolute in purpose, prompt in action, strong in faith, he journeyed from church to church, in many lands, and sought by every means within his power to strengthen the hands of the believers, that they might do faithful work in winning souls to Jesus, and that in the trying times upon which they were even then entering, they might remain steadfast to the gospel, bearing faithful witness for Christ.

The Final Arrest

Paul's work among the churches after his acquittal at Rome, could not escape the observation of his enemies. Since the beginning of the persecution under Nero the Christians had everywhere been a proscribed sect. After a time the unbelieving Jews conceived the idea of fastening upon Paul the crime of instigating the burning of Rome. Not one of them thought for a moment that he was guilty; but they knew that such a charge, made with the faintest show of plausibility, would seal his doom. Through their efforts, Paul was again arrested, and hurried away to his final imprisonment.

On his second voyage to Rome, Paul was accompanied by several of his former companions; others earnestly desired to share his lot, but he refused to permit them thus to imperil their lives. The prospect before him was far less favorable than at the time of his former imprisonment. The persecution under Nero had greatly lessened the number of Christians in Rome. Thousands had been martyred for their faith, many had left the city, and those who remained were greatly depressed and intimidated.

Upon his arrival at Rome, Paul was placed in a gloomy dungeon, there to remain until his course should be finished. Accused of instigating one of the basest and most terrible of crimes against the city and the nation, he was the object of universal execration.

The few friends who had shared the burdens of the apostle, now began to leave him, some by desertion, and others on missions to the various churches. Phygellus and Hermogenes were the first to go. Then Demas, dismayed by the thickening clouds of difficulty and danger, forsook the persecuted apostle. Crescens was sent by Paul to the churches of Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Tychicus to Ephesus. Writing to Timothy of this experience, Paul said, "Only Luke is with me." 2 Timothy 4:11. Never had the apostle needed the ministrations of his brethren as now, enfeebled as he was by age, toil, and infirmities, and

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confined in the damp, dark vaults of a Roman prison. The services of Luke, the beloved disciple and faithful friend, were a great comfort to Paul and enabled him to communicate with his brethren and the world without.

In this trying time Paul's heart was cheered by frequent visits from Onesiphorus. This warmhearted Ephesian did all in his power to lighten the burden of the apostle's imprisonment. His beloved teacher was in bonds for the truth's sake, while he himself went free, and he spared himself no effort to make Paul's lot more bearable.

In the last letter that the apostle ever wrote, he speaks thus of this faithful disciple: "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." 2 Timothy 1:16-18.

The desire for love and sympathy is implanted in the heart by God Himself. Christ, in His hour of agony in Gethsemane, longed for the sympathy of His disciples. And Paul, though apparently indifferent to hardship and suffering, yearned for sympathy and companionship. The visit of Onesiphorus, testifying to his fidelity at a time of loneliness and desertion, brought gladness and cheer to one who had spent his life in service for others.

Paul Before Nero

When Paul was summoned to appear before the emperor Nero for trial, it was with the near prospect of certain death. The serious nature of the crime charged against him, and the prevailing animosity toward Christians, left little ground for hope of a favorable issue.

Among the Greeks and Romans it was customary to allow an accused person the privilege of employing an advocate to plead in his behalf before courts of justice. By force of argument, by impassioned eloquence, or by entreaties, prayers, and tears, such an advocate often secured a decision in favor of the prisoner or, failing in this, succeeded in mitigating the severity of the sentence. But when Paul was summoned before Nero, no man ventured to act as his counsel or advocate; no friend was at hand even to preserve a record of the charges brought against him, or of the arguments that he urged in his own defense. Among the Christians at Rome there was not one who came forward to stand by him in that trying hour.

The only reliable record of the occasion is given by Paul himself, in his second letter to Timothy. "At my first answer," the apostle wrote, "no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." 2 Timothy 4:16, 17.

Paul before Nero—how striking the contrast! The haughty monarch before whom the man of God was to answer for his faith, had reached the height of earthly power, authority, and wealth, as well as the lowest depths of crime and iniquity. In power and greatness he stood unrivaled. There were none to question his authority, none to resist his will. Kings laid their crowns at his feet. Powerful armies marched at his command, and the ensigns of his navies betokened victory. His statue was set up in the halls of justice, and the decrees of senators and the decisions of judges were but the echo of his will.

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Millions bowed in obedience to his mandates. The name of Nero made the world tremble. To incur his displeasure was to lose property, liberty, life; and his frown was more to be dreaded than a pestilence.

Without money, without friends, without counsel, the aged prisoner stood before Nero—the countenance of the emperor bearing the shameful record of the passions that raged within; the face of the accused telling of a heart at peace with God. Paul's experience had been one of poverty, self-denial, and suffering. Notwithstanding constant misrepresentation, reproach, and abuse, by which his enemies had endeavored to intimidate him, he had fearlessly held aloft the standard of the cross. Like his Master, he had been a homeless wanderer, and like Him, he had lived to bless humanity. How could Nero, a capricious, passionate, licentious tyrant, understand or appreciate the character and motives of this son of God?

The vast hall was thronged by an eager, restless crowd that surged and pressed to the front to see and hear all that should take place. The high and the low were there, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the proud and the humble, all alike destitute of a true knowledge of the way of life and salvation.

The Jews brought against Paul the old charges of sedition and heresy, and both Jews and Romans accused him of instigating the burning of the city. While these accusations were urged against him, Paul preserved an unbroken serenity. The people and the judges looked at him in surprise. They had been present at many trials and had looked upon many a criminal, but never had they seen a man wear a look of such holy calmness as did the prisoner before them. The keen eyes of the judges, accustomed to read the countenances of prisoners, searched Paul's face in vain for some evidence of guilt. When he was permitted to speak in his own behalf, all listened with eager interest.

Once more Paul has an opportunity to uplift before a wondering multitude the banner of the cross. As he gazes upon the throng before him,—Jews, Greeks, Romans, with strangers from many lands,—his soul is stirred with an intense desire for their salvation. He loses sight of the occasion, of the perils surrounding him, of the terrible fate that seems so near. He sees only Jesus, the Intercessor, pleading before God in behalf of sinful men. With more than human eloquence and power, Paul presents the truths of the gospel. He points his hearers to the sacrifice made for the fallen race. He declares that an infinite price has been paid for man's redemption. Provision has been made for him to share the throne of God. By angel messengers, earth is connected with heaven, and all the deeds of men, whether good or evil, are open to the eye of Infinite Justice.

Thus pleads the advocate of truth. Faithful among the faithless, loyal among the disloyal, he stands as God's representative, and his voice is as a voice from heaven. There is no fear, no sadness, no discouragement in word or look. Strong in a consciousness of innocence, clothed in the panoply of truth, he rejoices that he is a son of God. His words are as a shout of victory above the roar of battle. He declares the cause to which he has devoted his life, to be the only cause that can never fail. Though he may perish, the gospel will not perish. God lives, and His truth will triumph.

Many who that day looked upon him "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Acts 6:15.

Never before had that company listened to words like these. They struck a cord that vibrated in the hearts of even the most hardened. Truth, clear and convincing, overthrew error. Light shone into the minds of many who afterward gladly followed its rays. The truths spoken on that day were destined to

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shake nations and to live through all time, influencing the hearts of men when the lips that had uttered them should be silent in a martyr's grave.

Never before had Nero heard the truth as he heard it on this occasion. Never before had the enormous guilt of his own life been so revealed to him. The light of heaven pierced the sin-polluted chambers of his soul, and he trembled with terror at the thought of a tribunal before which he, the ruler of the world, would finally be arraigned, and his deeds receive their just award. He feared the apostle's God, and he dared not pass sentence upon Paul, against whom no accusation had been sustained. A sense of awe restrained for a time his bloodthirsty spirit.

For a moment, heaven was opened to the guilty and hardened Nero, and its peace and purity seemed desirable. That moment the invitation of mercy was extended even to him. But only for a moment was the thought of pardon welcomed. Then the command was issued that Paul be taken back to his dungeon; and as the door closed upon the messenger of God, the door of repentance closed forever against the emperor of Rome. No ray of light from heaven was ever again to penetrate the darkness that enveloped him. Soon he was to suffer the retributive judgments of God.

Not long after this, Nero sailed on his infamous expedition to Greece, where he disgraced himself and his kingdom by contemptible and debasing frivolity. Returning to Rome with great pomp, he surrounded himself with his courtiers and engaged in scenes of revolting debauchery. In the midst of this revelry a voice of tumult in the streets was heard. A messenger dispatched to learn the cause, returned with the appalling news that Galba, at the head of an army, was marching rapidly upon Rome, that insurrection had already broken out in the city, and that the streets were filled with an enraged mob, which, threatening death to the emperor and all his supporters, was rapidly approaching the palace.

In this time of peril, Nero had not, like the faithful Paul, a powerful and compassionate God on whom to rely. Fearful of the suffering and possible torture he might be compelled to endure at the hands of the mob, the wretched tyrant thought to end his life by his own hand, but at the critical moment his courage failed. Completely unmanned, he fled ignominiously from the city and sought shelter at a countryseat a few miles distant, but to no avail. His hiding place was soon discovered, and as the pursuing horsemen drew near, he summoned a slave to his aid and inflicted on himself a mortal wound. Thus perished the tyrant Nero, at the early age of thirty-two.

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Lesson 44 – Paul's last Letter

Based on the Second Epistle to Timothy

At Paul's final trial before Nero, never before had he heard the truth as he heard it on this occasion. Never before had the enormous guilt of his own life been so revealed to him. The light of heaven pierced the sin-polluted chambers of his soul, and he trembled with terror at the thought of a tribunal before which he, the ruler of the world, would finally be arraigned, and his deeds receive their just award. He feared the apostle's God, and he dared not pass sentence upon Paul, against whom no accusation had been sustained. A sense of awe restrained for a time his bloodthirsty spirit.

From the judgment hall of Caesar, Paul returned to his cell, realizing that he had gained for himself only a brief respite. He knew that his enemies would not rest until they had compassed his death. But he knew also that for a time truth had triumphed. To have proclaimed a crucified and risen Saviour before the vast crowd who had listened to him, was in itself a victory. That day a work had begun which would grow and strengthen, and which Nero and all other enemies of Christ would seek in vain to hinder or destroy.

1) To whom did Paul write while awaiting his fate?

2 Timothy 1:2-4 To _____, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without _____ I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; Greatly desiring to _____ _____, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

Sitting day after day in his gloomy cell, knowing that at a word or a nod from Nero his life might be sacrificed, Paul thought of Timothy and determined to send for him. To Timothy had been committed the care of the church at Ephesus, and he had therefore been left behind when Paul made his last journey to Rome. Paul and Timothy were bound together by an affection unusually deep and strong.

Paul knew that his life was uncertain, and he feared that Timothy might arrive too late to see him. He had important counsel and instruction for the young man, to whom so great responsibility had been entrusted; and while urging him to come without delay, he dictated the dying testimony that he might not be spared to utter. His soul filled with loving solicitude for his son in the gospel and for the church under his care, Paul sought to impress Timothy with the importance of fidelity to his sacred trust.

2) How did his counsel begin?

2 Timothy 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the _____ of _____, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of _____; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou _____ of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

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3) What did Paul call Timothy's calling?
2 Timothy 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an _____ calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,
4) What is the fruit of that calling?
2 Timothy 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought _____ and _____ to light through the gospel:
5) How did Paul feel about his unfair imprisonment?
2 Timothy 1:11-12 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not _____: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is _____ to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Through his long term of service, Paul had never faltered in his allegiance to his Saviour. Wherever he was, whether before scowling Pharisees, or Roman authorities; before the furious mob at Lystra, or the convicted sinners in the Macedonian dungeon; whether reasoning with the panic-stricken sailors on the shipwrecked vessel or standing alone before Nero to plead for his life, he had never been ashamed of the cause he was advocating.

6) What would Paul have Timothy do in his absence?
2 Timothy 2:1-3 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same _____ thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore _____ hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

The true minister of God will not shun hardship or responsibility. From the Source that never fails those who sincerely seek for divine power, he draws strength that enables him to meet and overcome temptation, and to perform the duties that God places upon him. The nature of the grace that he receives, enlarges his capacity to know God and His Son.

7) What did Paul counsel Timothy to do?
2 Timothy 2:15 _____ to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2:22-23 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow _____, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions _____, knowing that they do gender strifes.
2 Timothy 2:24-25 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be _____ unto all men, apt to teach, _____, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;
8) What did Paul predict about the world?
2 Timothy 3:1,2,5 This know also, that in the _____ _____ perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, _____… Having a _____ of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.
2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall _____ worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

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9) What did Paul say to do about it?
2 Timothy 3:14-15 But _____ thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy _____, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

10) What is the only guide?
2 Timothy 3:16-17 All _____ 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 _____, throughly furnished unto all good works.

God has provided abundant means for successful warfare against the evil that is in the world. The Bible is the armory where we may equip for the struggle. Our loins must be girt about with truth. Our breastplate must be righteousness. The shield of faith must be in our hand, the helmet of salvation on our brow; and with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, we are to cut our way through the obstructions and entanglements of sin.

11) Paul gave Timothy a solemn charge, what was it?
2 Timothy 4:1-2 I _____ thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; _____ the word; be instant in season, out of season; _____, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

This solemn charge to one so zealous and faithful as was Timothy is a strong testimony to the importance and responsibility of the work of the gospel minister. Summoning Timothy before the bar of God, Paul bids him preach the word, not the sayings and customs of men; to be ready to witness for God whenever opportunity should present itself.

Fearing that Timothy's mild, yielding disposition might lead him to shun an essential part of his work, Paul exhorted him to be faithful in reproving sin and even to rebuke with sharpness those who were guilty of gross evils.

12) What did Paul tell Timothy to look for?
2 Timothy 4:3-5 For the time will come when they will not endure _____ _____; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an _____, make full proof of thy ministry.

The apostle does not here refer to the openly irreligious, but to the professing Christians who make inclination their guide and thus become enslaved by self. Such are willing to listen to those doctrines only that do not rebuke their sins or condemn their pleasure-loving course. They are offended by the plain words of the faithful servants of Christ and choose teachers who praise and flatter them. And among professing ministers there are those who preach the opinions of men instead of the word of God. Unfaithful to their trust, they lead astray those who look to them for spiritual guidance.

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13) How should we act today?

Titus 2:12-13 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live _____, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that _____ hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

The enemy of all righteousness has taken the world captive and has led men and women to disobey the law. As Paul foresaw, multitudes have turned from the plain, searching truths of God's word and have chosen teachers who present to them the fables they desire. Many among both ministers and people are trampling under their feet the commandments of God. Thus, the Creator of the world is insulted, and Satan laughs in triumph at the success of his devices.

14) What advice for Timothy is good for us as well?

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be _____ in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

In the Bible are found the only safe principles of action. It is a transcript of the will of God, an expression of divine wisdom. It opens to man's understanding the great problems of life, and to all who heed its precepts it will prove an unerring guide, keeping them from wasting their lives in misdirected effort.

God has made known His will, and it is folly for man to question that which has gone out of His lips. After Infinite Wisdom has spoken, there can be no doubtful questions for man to settle, no wavering possibilities for him to adjust. All that is required of him is a frank, earnest concurrence in the expressed will of God. Obedience is the highest dictate of reason as well as of conscience.

15) What were Paul's expectations?

2 Timothy 4:5-6 But _____ thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full _____ of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Paul was about to finish his course, and he desired Timothy to take his place, guarding the church from the fables and heresies by which the enemy, in various ways, would endeavor to lead them from the simplicity of the gospel. He admonished him to shun all temporal pursuits and entanglements that would prevent him from giving himself wholly to his work for God.

16) What is the reward of the faithful?

2 Timothy 4:7-8 I have fought a _____ fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a _____ of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Can you see Paul's faith didn't waiver?

Would you like to be positive in impossible times?

When is the time put away worldly thinking?

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Lesson 44b – Condemned to Die

This is an excerpt from the book Acts of the Apostles by Ellen White concerning Paul's execution (Italics supplied):

During Paul's final trial before Nero, the emperor had been so strongly impressed with the force of the apostle's words that he deferred the decision of the case, neither acquitting nor condemning the accused servant of God. But the emperor's malice against Paul soon returned. Exasperated by his inability to check the spread of the Christian religion, even in the imperial household, he determined that as soon as a plausible pretext could be found, the apostle should be put to death. Not long afterward Nero pronounced the decision that condemned Paul to a martyr's death. Inasmuch as a Roman citizen could not be subjected to torture, he was sentenced to be beheaded.

Paul was taken in a private manner to the place of execution. Few spectators were allowed to be present; for his persecutors, alarmed at the extent of his influence, feared that converts might be won to Christianity by the scenes of his death. But even the hardened soldiers who attended him listened to his words and with amazement saw him cheerful and even joyous in the prospect of death. To some who witnessed his martyrdom, his spirit of forgiveness toward his murderers and his unwavering confidence in Christ till the last, proved a savor of life unto life. More than one accepted the Saviour whom Paul preached, and erelong fearlessly sealed their faith with their blood.

Until his latest hour the life of Paul testified to the truth of his words to the Corinthians: ***"God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." 2 Corinthians 4:6-10***. His sufficiency was not in himself, but in the presence and agency of the divine Spirit that filled his soul and brought every thought into subjection to the will of Christ. The prophet declares***, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Isaiah 26:3***. The heaven-born peace expressed on Paul's countenance won many a soul to the gospel.

Paul carried with him the atmosphere of heaven. All who associated with him felt the influence of his union with Christ. The fact that his own life exemplified the truth he proclaimed, gave convincing power to his preaching. Here lies the power of truth. The unstudied, unconscious influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon that can be given in favor of Christianity. Argument, even when unanswerable, may provoke only opposition; but a godly example has a power that it is impossible wholly to resist.

The apostle lost sight of his own approaching sufferings in his solicitude for those whom he was about to leave to cope with prejudice, hatred, and persecution. The few Christians who accompanied him to the place of execution he endeavored to strengthen and encourage by repeating the promises given for those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. He assured them that nothing would fail of all that the Lord had spoken concerning His tried and faithful

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children. For a little season they might be in heaviness through manifold temptations; they might be destitute of earthly comforts; but they could encourage their hearts with the assurance of God's faithfulness, saying, ***"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him." 2 Timothy 1:12.*** Soon the night of trial and suffering would end, and then would dawn the glad morning of peace and perfect day.

The apostle was looking into the great beyond, not with uncertainty or dread, but with joyous hope and longing expectation. As he stands at the place of martyrdom he sees not the sword of the executioner or the earth so soon to receive his blood; he looks up through the calm blue heaven of that summer day to the throne of the Eternal.

This man of faith beholds the ladder of Jacob's vision, representing Christ, who has connected earth with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. His faith is strengthened as he calls to mind how patriarchs and prophets have relied upon the One who is his support and consolation, and for whom he is giving his life. From these holy men who from century to century have borne testimony for their faith, he hears the assurance that God is true. His fellow apostles, who, to preach the gospel of Christ, went forth to meet religious bigotry and heathen superstition, persecution, and contempt, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves that they might bear aloft the light of the cross amidst the dark mazes of infidelity—these he hears witnessing to Jesus as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. From the rack, the stake, the dungeon, from dens and caves of the earth, there falls upon his ear the martyr's shout of triumph. He hears the witness of steadfast souls, who, though destitute, afflicted, tormented, yet bear fearless, solemn testimony for the faith, declaring, ***"I know whom I have believed."*** These, yielding up their lives for the faith, declare to the world that He in whom they have trusted is able to save to the uttermost.

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

Well-nigh a score of centuries have passed since Paul the aged poured out his blood as a witness for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. No faithful hand recorded for the generations to come the last scenes in the life of this holy man, but Inspiration has preserved for us his dying testimony. Like a trumpet peal his voice has rung out through all the ages since, nerving with his own courage thousands of witnesses for Christ and wakening in thousands of sorrow-stricken hearts the echo of his own triumphant joy: ***"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Timothy 4:6-8.***

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Lesson 45 – A Faithful Under-Shepherd

Based on the First Peter

Little mention is made in the book of Acts of the later work of the Apostle Peter. During the busy years of ministry that followed the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, he was among those who put forth untiring efforts to reach the Jews who came to Jerusalem to worship at the time of the annual festivals.

As the number of believers multiplied in Jerusalem and in other places visited by the messengers of the cross, the talents possessed by Peter proved of untold value to the early Christian church. The influence of his testimony concerning Jesus of Nazareth extended far and wide.

1) What had Christ commissioned him to do?
Luke 22:32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, _____ thy brethren.

It was after Peter had been led to self-renunciation and entire reliance upon divine power, that he received his call to act as an under shepherd. For this work, Peter's own experience of sin and suffering and repentance had prepared him. Not until he had learned his weakness, could he know the believer's need of dependence on Christ. Amid the storm of temptation, he had come to understand that man can walk safely only as in utter self-distrust he relies upon the Saviour.

2) What was asked of Peter by the seaside?
John 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, _____ thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.
John 21:16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou _____ that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
John 21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, _____ _____ _____.

Peter, tested by the thrice-repeated question, had been restored to his place among the Twelve. His work had been appointed him; he was to feed the Lord's flock. Now, converted and accepted, he was not only to seek to save those without the fold, but was to be a shepherd of the sheep.

The Saviour's manner of dealing with Peter had a lesson for him and his brethren. Although Peter had denied his Lord, the love which Jesus bore him had never faltered. And as the apostle should take up the work of ministering the word to others, he was to meet the transgressor with patience, sympathy, and forgiving love. Remembering his own weakness and failure, he was to deal with the sheep and lambs committed to his care as tenderly as Christ had dealt with him.

3) To whom is the First Epistle of Peter written?
1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

These letters were written for the districts of Asia Minor. These letters bear the impress of having been written by one in whom the sufferings of Christ and also His consolation had been made to abound; one whose entire being had been transformed by grace, and whose hope of eternal life was sure and steadfast.

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4) How does the letter begin?
1 Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a _____ _____ by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance _____, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through _____ unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

5) What did Peter tell them?
1 Peter 1:6-7 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your _____, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the _____ of Jesus Christ:
1 Peter 1:8-9 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye _____ him _____, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your _____, even the salvation of your souls.

6) Why did Peter tell them this?
1 Peter 4:7 But the _____ of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and _____ unto _____.

7) What same sentiment did Paul share with the Hebrews?
Hebrews 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our _____ stedfast unto the end;

The apostle sought to teach the believers how important it is to keep the mind from wandering to forbidden themes or from spending its energies on trifling subjects. Those who would not fall a prey to Satan's devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest. The heart must be faithfully sentineled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness.

8) What advice was given?
1 Peter 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your _____, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
1 Peter 1:14-16 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the _____ lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, _____ _____ holy; for I am holy.
1 Peter 1:17 …pass the _____ of your sojourning here in fear:
1 Peter 1:19-21 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the _____ of the world, but was _____ in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your _____ and _____ might be in God.

9) How are we to care for one another?
1 Peter 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in _____ the truth through the _____ unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

10) Jesus said we must be born again, How did Peter describe it?
1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the _____ of _____, which liveth and abideth for ever.

This new birth is the result of receiving Christ as the Word of God. When by the Holy Spirit divine truths are impressed upon the heart, new conceptions are awakened, and the energies hitherto dormant are aroused to co-operate with God.

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11) Who did John say Jesus was?
John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was _____ God, and the Word _____ God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
John 1:14 And the Word was made _____, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
John 1:16 And of his _____ have all we received, and grace for grace.

Thus, it had been with Peter and his fellow disciples. Christ was the revealer of truth to the world. By Him the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, was sown in the hearts of men. But many of the most precious lessons of the Great Teacher were spoken to those who did not then understand them. When, after His ascension, the Holy Spirit brought His teachings to the remembrance of the disciples, their slumbering senses awoke. The meaning of these truths flashed upon their minds as a new revelation, and truth, pure and unadulterated, made a place for itself. Then the wonderful experience of His life became theirs.

12) How permanent is our human glory?
1 Peter 1:24-25 For all flesh is as _____, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof _____ away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

13) What should we do?
1 Peter 2:1-3 Wherefore _____ _____ all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere _____ of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is _____.

Many of the believers to whom Peter addressed his letters, were living in the midst of heathen, and much depended on their remaining true to the high calling of their profession.

14) Who are we?
1 Peter 2:9-10 But ye are a chosen generation, a _____ _____, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of _____ into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

15) How should we act?
1 Peter 2:11-12 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, _____ from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation _____ among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall _____, glorify God in the day of visitation.

16) What about obeying civil authorities?
1 Peter 2:13-16 _____ yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to _____ the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the _____ of _____.

17) What about servants?
1 Peter 2:18-20 Servants, be subject to your _____ with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is _____ with God.

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18) Why?
1 Peter 2:21-23 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an _____, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was _____ found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but _____ himself to him that judgeth righteously:
1 Peter 2:24-25 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose _____ ye were _____. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now _____ unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

19) Where does true Beauty come from?
1 Peter 3:3-4 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a _____ and quiet _____, which is in the sight of God of great price.

20) What is the most beautiful in God's eyes?
Matthew 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and _____ me.

21) How does Revelation describe the elect?
Revelation 19:4 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, _____ and _____.

This apparel will make them beautiful and beloved here and will hereafter be their badge of admission to the palace of the King.

22) What did God promise to John?
Revelation 3:4 and they shall walk with me in white: for they are _____.

23) Will everything be puppies and roses before the second coming of Christ?
1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the _____ _____ which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

Trial is part of the education given in the school of Christ, to purify God's children from the dross of earthliness. It is because God is leading His children that trying experiences come to them. Trials and obstacles are His chosen methods of discipline, and His appointed conditions of success

God's care for His heritage is unceasing. He suffers no affliction to come upon His children but such as is essential for their present and eternal good. He will purify His church, even as Christ purified the temple during His ministry on earth. All that He brings upon His people in test and trial comes that they may gain deeper piety and greater strength to carry forward the triumphs of the cross.

24) What advice did he give to the church elders?
1 Peter 5:2-3 _____ the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being _____ to the flock.

Those who occupy the position of under shepherds are to exercise a watchful diligence over the Lord's flock. This is not to be a dictatorial vigilance, but one that tends to encourage and strengthen and uplift. Ministry means more than sermonizing; it means earnest, personal labor. The church on earth is composed of erring men and women, who need patient, painstaking effort that they may be trained and disciplined to work with acceptance in this life, and in the future life to be crowned with glory and immortality.

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25) How will this be possible?

James 3:17-18 But the _____ that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the _____ of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

26) What is great advice for everybody?

1 Peter 5:6-8 _____ yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may _____ you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring _____, walketh about, seeking whom he may _____:

Thus, Peter wrote to the believers at a time of peculiar trial to the church. Many had already become partakers of Christ's sufferings, and soon the church was to undergo a period of terrible persecution. Within a few brief years many of those who had stood as teachers and leaders in the church were to lay down their lives for the gospel. Soon grievous wolves were to enter in, not sparing the flock. But none of these things were to bring discouragement to those whose hopes were centered in Christ.

27) Should we worry?

1 Peter 5:10-11 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you _____, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Can you see Peter's devotion to Christ?

Would you like to be positive in impossible times?

When is the time to humble yourself?

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Lesson 46 – Steadfast Unto the End

Based on the Second Epistle of Peter

1) To Whom is 2 Peter addressed?
2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained _____ precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

In the second letter addressed by Peter to those who had obtained ***"like precious faith"*** with himself, the apostle sets forth the divine plan for the development of Christian character.

2) What does he wish to convey?
2 Peter 1:2-4 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto _____ and _____, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious _____: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the _____ that is in the world through lust.
2 Peter 1:5-8 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith _____; and to virtue _____; And to knowledge _____; and to temperance _____; and to patience _____; And to godliness brotherly _____; and to brotherly kindness _____. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These words are full of instruction and strike the keynote of victory. The apostle presents before the believers the ladder of Christian progress, every step of which represents advancement in the knowledge of God, and in the climbing of which there is to be no standstill. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are the rounds of the ladder. We are saved by climbing round after round, mounting step after step, to the height of Christ's ideal for us. Thus, He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

3) What had he said in his first epistle?
1 Peter 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through _____ unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

It is the glory of God to give His virtue to His children. He desires to see men and women reaching the highest standard; and when by faith they lay hold of the power of Christ, when they plead His unfailing promises, and claim them as their own, when with an importunity that will not be denied they seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be made complete in Him.

4) What does God give us to help us succeed?
2 Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us _____ _____ that pertain unto life and godliness…

Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of 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.

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5) What was Jesus' prayer for us all?
John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might _____ thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

6) What did Jeremiah prophesy?
Jeremiah 9:23-24 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his _____, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I _____, saith the LORD.

None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ's character. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through co-operation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God's assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.

7) How does Peter describe us if we don't have faith, virtue, knowledge…?
2 Peter 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is _____, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

The apostle Peter had had a long experience in the things of God. His faith in God's power to save had strengthened with the years, until he had proved beyond question that there is no possibility of failure before the one who, advancing by faith, ascends round by round, ever upward and onward, to the topmost round of the ladder that reaches even to the portals of heaven.

8) What did he exhort us to do?
2 Peter 1:10-11 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election _____: for if ye do these things, ye shall _____ fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

For many years Peter had been urging upon the believers the necessity of a constant growth in grace and in a knowledge of the truth; and now, knowing that soon he would be called to suffer martyrdom for his faith, he once more drew attention to the precious privileges within the reach of every believer.

9) How long was Peter going to share the Gospel?
2 Peter 1:13-15 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this _____, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath _____ me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my _____ to have these things always in remembrance.

10) Can we trust the Word of God?
2 Peter 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised _____, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were _____ of his majesty.

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11) Whom did they hear from?
2 Peter 1:17-18 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a _____ to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we _____, when we were with him in the holy mount.

12) What else can we have to anchor our faith in the Word?
2 Peter 1:19-21 We have also a more sure word of _____; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any _____ interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were _____ by the Holy Ghost.

13) If there are real prophecies, what should we beware of?
2 Peter 2:1-2 But there were _____ prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And _____ shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

14) How does Peter describe the false prophets?
2 Peter 2:17 These are _____ without _____, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

15) What should we beware of in the last days?
2 peter 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days _____, walking after their own lusts,

16) How did Paul describe it?
1 Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, _____ and _____; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

Not all, however, would be ensnared by the enemy's devices. As the end of all things earthly should approach, there would be faithful ones able to discern the signs of the times. While a large number of professing believers would deny their faith by their works, there would be a remnant who would endure to the end.

17) What promise of Christ stayed alive in Peter's heart?
John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and _____ you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

18) Is God faithful?
2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not _____ concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

19) How will the LORD return?
2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a _____ in the _____; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

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20) Knowing this, how should we act?

2 Peter 3:11-12 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy _____ and _____, _____ for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

2 Peter 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be _____ that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

2 Peter 3:17-18 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, _____ lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But _____ in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

In the providence of God, Peter was permitted to close his ministry in Rome, where his imprisonment was ordered by the emperor Nero about the time of Paul's final arrest. Thus, the two veteran apostles, who for many years had been widely separated in their labors, were to bear their last witness for Christ in the world's metropolis, and upon its soil to shed their blood as the seed of a vast harvest of saints and martyrs.

21) Looking to the future, what had Christ said about Peter?

John 21:18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt _____ forth thy _____, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

Thus, Jesus had made known to the disciple the very manner of his death and even foretold the stretching of his hands upon the cross.

Peter, as a Jew and a foreigner, was condemned to be scourged and crucified. In prospect of this fearful death, the apostle remembered his great sin in denying Jesus in the hour of His trial. Once so unready to acknowledge the cross, he now counted it a joy to yield up his life for the gospel, feeling only that, for him who had denied his Lord, to die in the same manner as his Master died was too great an honor. Peter had sincerely repented of that sin and had been forgiven by Christ, as is shown by the high commission given him to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock. But he could never forgive himself. Not even the thought of the agonies of the last terrible scene could lessen the bitterness of his sorrow and repentance. As a last favor he entreated his executioners that he might be nailed to the cross with his head downward. The request was granted, and in this manner died the great Apostle Peter.

Can you see Peter's devotion to Christ?

Would you like to be positive in impossible times?

When is the time to humble yourself?

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Lesson 47 – John the Beloved

1) How did the Apostle John refer to himself?
John 21:20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus _____ following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

He was one of the three permitted to witness Christ's glory upon the mount of transfiguration and His agony in Gethsemane, and it was to his care that our Lord confided His mother in those last hours of anguish upon the cross.

The Saviour's affection for the beloved disciple was returned with all the strength of ardent devotion. John clung to Christ as the vine clings to the stately pillar. For his Master's sake he braved the dangers of the judgment hall and lingered about the cross, and at the tidings that Christ had risen, he hastened to the sepulcher, in his zeal out-stripping even the impetuous Peter.

2) What did Jesus call them when he first met them?
Mark 3:17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of _____:

John did not naturally possess the loveliness of character that his later experience revealed. By nature, he had serious defects. He was not only proud, self-assertive, and ambitious for honor, but impetuous, and resentful under injury. Evil temper, the desire for revenge, the spirit of criticism, were all in the beloved disciple. But beneath all this the divine Teacher discerned the ardent, sincere, loving heart.

3) What was one of the evidences of the old man Jesus was trying to heal?
Luke 9:52-54 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not _____ him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command _____ to come down from heaven, and _____ them, even as Elias did?
4) What was Jesus' reply?
Luke 9:55-56 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of _____ ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to _____ men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

They were surprised to see that Jesus was pained by their words, and still more surprised as His rebuke fell upon their ears.

5) What was asked of Jesus at a later date?
Matthew 20:20-21 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and _____ a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my _____ _____ may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

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James and John presented through their mother a petition requesting that they might be permitted to occupy the highest positions of honor in Christ's kingdom. Notwithstanding Christ's repeated instruction concerning the nature of His kingdom, these young disciples still cherished the hope for a Messiah who would take His throne and kingly power in accordance with the desires of men.

6) How did Jesus reply?
Matthew 20:22-23 But Jesus answered and said, Ye _____ _____ what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye _____ drink _____ of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

7) What did Jesus say to give clarity to them all?
Matthew 20:25-28 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise _____ over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall _____ _____ _____ among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your _____: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

In the kingdom of God, position is not gained through favoritism. It is not earned, nor is it received through an arbitrary bestowal. It is the result of character. The crown and the throne are the tokens of a condition attained, tokens of self-conquest through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

8) What is the condition of nearness to the Kingdom?
Revelation 3:21 To him that _____ will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

9) How did Paul describe love (charity)?
1 Corinthians 13:4-5 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity _____ not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not _____ up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no _____;

10) What was recorded about James John?
Mark 9:38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we _____ him, because he followeth not us.

11) What was Jesus' reply to that?
Mark 9:39-40 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on _____ _____.

None who showed themselves in any way friendly to Christ were to be repulsed. The disciples must not indulge a narrow, exclusive spirit, but must manifest the same far-reaching sympathy which they had seen in their Master. James and John had thought that in checking this man they had in view the Lord's honor; but they began to see that they were jealous for their own. They acknowledged their error and accepted the reproof.

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12) When John was very aged, what did he write?

John 1:12-14 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the _____ of _____, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the _____ was made flesh, and _____ among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

The lessons of Christ, setting forth meekness and humility and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for His work, were of the highest value to John. He treasured every lesson and constantly sought to bring his life into harmony with the divine pattern.

13) What did John testify to?

1 John 1:1-2 That which was from the beginning, which we have _____, which we have _____ with our eyes, which we have _____ upon, and our hands have _____, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

John 1:16 And of his _____ have all we received, and grace for grace.

The depth and fervor of John's affection for his Master was not the cause of Christ's love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ he did become meek and lowly. Self was hid in Jesus. Above all his companions, John yielded himself to the power of that wondrous life.

John knew the Saviour by an experimental knowledge. His Master's lessons were graven on his soul. When he testified of the Saviour's grace, his simple language was eloquent with the love that pervaded his whole being.

14) What hope did he ever carry in his heart?

1 John 3:1-2 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the _____ of _____: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be _____ _____; for we shall see him as he is.

Jesus loves those who represent the Father, and John could talk of the Father's love as no other of the disciples could. He revealed to his fellow men that which he felt in his own soul, representing in his character the attributes of God. The glory of the Lord was expressed in his face. The beauty of holiness which had transformed him shone with a Christlike radiance from his countenance. In adoration and love he beheld the Saviour until likeness to Christ and fellowship with Him became his one desire, and in his character was reflected the character of his Master.

Can you see John's transformation?

Would you like to be present with Jesus?

When is the time reflect the Father's love?

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Lesson 48 – A Faithful Witness

Based on the Epistles of John

After the ascension of Christ, John stands forth as a faithful, earnest laborer for the Master. With the other disciples he enjoyed the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, and with fresh zeal and power he continued to speak to the people the words of life, seeking to lead their thoughts to the Unseen. He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest. In beautiful language and with a musical voice he told of the words and works of Christ, speaking in a way that impressed the hearts of those who heard him. The simplicity of his words, the sublime power of the truths he uttered, and the fervor that characterized his teachings, gave him access to all classes.

1) What did Christ teach while he was with His Disciples?
John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye _____ one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

At the time when these words were spoken, the disciples could not understand them; but after they had witnessed the sufferings of Christ, after His crucifixion and resurrection, and ascension to heaven, and after the Holy Spirit had rested on them at Pentecost, they had a clearer conception of the love of God and of the nature of that love which they must have for one another.

2) What message did John have for the world?
1 John 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down _____ _____ for the brethren.

After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the disciples went forth to proclaim a living Saviour, their one desire was the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice for the truth's sake. In their daily association with one another, they revealed the love that Christ had enjoined upon them. By unselfish words and deeds, they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.

3) When John saw the church drifting, what did he say?
1 John 4:7-9 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is _____ of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth _____ knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might _____ through him.
1 John 4:10-11 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the _____ for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we _____ _____ to love one another.
1 John 2:8-9 Again, a new _____ I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the _____ is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.
1 John 2:10-11 He that loveth his brother abideth in the _____, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath _____ his eyes.

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1 John 3:14-15 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in _____. Whosoever hateth his brother is a _____: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

It is not the opposition of the world that most endangers the church of Christ. It is the evil cherished in the hearts of believers that works their most grievous disaster and most surely retards the progress of God's cause. There is no surer way of weakening spirituality than by cherishing envy, suspicion, faultfinding, and evil surmising. On the other hand, the strongest witness that God has sent His Son into the world is the existence of harmony and union among men of varied dispositions who form His church.

4) What did he add to that?
1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in _____ and in _____.

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

5) How are we able to love God?
1 John 4:19 We love him, because he _____ loved us.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another, this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found.

6) How is our love perfected?
1 John 4:17-18 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have _____ in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are _____ in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. This redeeming power, filling the heart, would control every other motive and raise its possessors above the corrupting influences of the world. And as this love was allowed full sway and became the motive power in the life, their trust and confidence in God and His dealing with them would be complete.

7) How confident was John in God?
1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask _____ _____ according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he _____ us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

8) What important reminder did John give us?
1 John 2:1-2 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye _____ _____. And if any man sin, we have an _____ with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

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9) What will God do if we confess our sins?
1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is _____ and _____ to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The conditions of obtaining mercy from God are simple and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing in order to gain forgiveness. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven or to expiate our transgression.

10) What promise was given through Solomon?
Proverbs 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not _____: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have _____.

11) How powerful is God's Love?
Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to _____ us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church, pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice.

As the years went by and the number of believers grew, John labored with increasing fidelity and earnestness for his brethren. The times were full of peril for the church. Satanic delusions existed everywhere. By misrepresentation and falsehood, the emissaries of Satan sought to arouse opposition against the doctrines of Christ, and in consequence dissensions and heresies were imperiling the church. Some who professed Christ claimed that His love released them from obedience to the law of God. On the other hand, many taught that it was necessary to observe the Jewish customs and ceremonies; that a mere observance of the law, without faith in the blood of Christ, was sufficient for salvation. Some held that Christ was a good man but denied His divinity. Some who pretended to be true to the cause of God were deceivers, and in practice they denied Christ and His gospel. Living themselves in transgression, they were bringing heresies into the church.

12) What warning did John give in his second Epistle?
2 John 1:7-8 For many _____ are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an _____. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.
2 John 1:9-11 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of _____, hath not _____. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, _____ _____ _____ into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

The epistles of John breathe the spirit of love. It seems as if he wrote with a pen dipped in love. But when he came in contact with those who were breaking the law of God, yet claiming that they were living without sin, he did not hesitate to warn them of their fearful deception.

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We are authorized to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ while living in transgression of God's law. There exist in these last days evils similar to those that threatened the prosperity of the early church; and the teachings of the apostle John on these points should be carefully heeded.

While we are to love the souls for whom Christ died, we are to make no compromise with evil. We are not to unite with the rebellious and call this charity. God requires His people in this age of the world to stand for the right as unflinchingly as did John in opposition to soul-destroying errors.

13) How did John feel about living righteously?

1 John 3:4-6 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the _____: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not _____ him, neither _____ him.

14) What exactly was it that John declared to the world?

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have _____, which we have _____ with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have _____, of the Word of life;

1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard _____ we unto you, that ye also may have _____ with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

As a witness for Christ, John entered into no controversy, no wearisome contention. He declared what he knew, what he had seen and heard. He had been intimately associated with Christ, had listened to His teachings, had witnessed His mighty miracles. Few could see the beauties of Christ's character as John saw them. For him the darkness had passed away; on him the true light was shining. His testimony in regard to the Saviour's life and death was clear and forcible. Out of the abundance of a heart overflowing with love for the Saviour he spoke; and no power could stay his words.

15) What do true believers do when they have the truth?

John 3:33 He that hath received his testimony hath _____ to his _____ that God is true.

You can bear witness to that which you have seen and heard and felt of the power of Christ.

Can you see John was serious about his commitment?

Would you like to be as dedicated as him?

When is the time to have the Word living inside?

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Lesson 49 – Transformed by Grace

In the life of the disciple John true sanctification is exemplified. During the years of his close association with Christ, he was often warned and cautioned by the Saviour; and these reproofs he accepted. As the character of the Divine One was manifested to him, John saw his own deficiencies and was humbled by the revelation. Day by day, in contrast with his own violent spirit, he beheld the tenderness and forbearance of Jesus and heard His lessons of humility and patience. Day by day his heart was drawn out to Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master. The power and tenderness, the majesty and meekness, the strength and patience, that he saw in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration. He yielded his resentful, ambitious temper to the molding power of Christ, and divine love wrought in him a transformation of character.

In striking contrast to the sanctification worked out in the life of John is the experience of his fellow disciple, Judas. Like his associate, Judas professed to be a disciple of Christ, but he possessed only a form of godliness. He was not insensible to the beauty of the character of Christ; and often, as he listened to the Saviour's words, conviction came to him, but he would not humble his heart or confess his sins. By resisting the divine influence he dishonored the Master whom he professed to love.

1) What did John teach as an unerring rule for the Christians?
1 John 3:3 And every man that hath this hope in him _____ himself, even as he is pure.
1 John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to _____, even as he walked.

He taught that the Christian must be pure in heart and life. Never should he be satisfied with an empty profession. As God is holy in His sphere, so fallen man, through faith in Christ, is to be holy in his sphere.

2) What did Paul teach that was similar?
1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 For this is the will of God, even your _____, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his _____ in sanctification and honour;

The sanctification of the church is God's object in all His dealings with His people. He has chosen them from eternity, that they might be holy. He gave His Son to die for them, that they might be sanctified through obedience to the truth, divested of all the littleness of self. From them He requires a personal work, a personal surrender. God can be honored by those who profess to believe in Him, only as they are conformed to His image and controlled by His Spirit.

3) How does this sanctification come?
1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in _____ dwelleth in _____, and God in him.

4) How does that journey begin?
Matthew 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him _____ _____, and take up his cross, and follow me.
2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light _____, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

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It is the fragrance of our love for our fellow men that reveals our love for God. It is patience in service that brings rest to the soul. It is through humble, diligent, faithful toil that the welfare of Israel is promoted. God upholds and strengthens the one who is willing to follow in Christ's way.

5) What is granted to him who overcomes?
Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to _____ with _____ in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. We do not know one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience.

6) What did Paul say about his spiritual condition?
Romans 7:18-19 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth _____ _____ _____: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I _____.
Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should _____, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly, we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen.

7) What did Paul write AFTER he saw a vision of heaven?
Philippians 3:12-14 Not as though I had already attained, either were _____ _____: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have _____: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I _____ toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Angels rejoice to tell his triumphs, but Paul makes no boast of his attainments. The attitude of Paul is the attitude that every follower of Christ should take as he urges his way onward in the strife for the immortal crown.

8) What do we call God if we are deceived?
1 John 1:8-10 If we say that we have no sin, we _____ ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a _____, and his word is not in us.

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Let those who feel inclined to make a high profession of holiness look into the mirror of God's law. As they see its far-reaching claims and understand its work as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

9) How does one express love for the Father and Jesus?
1 John 2:4-5 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso _____ his _____, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are _____ _____.
1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments _____ in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the _____ which he hath given us.

There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord's, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in obedience to all His commandments.

10) Did John teach that you are saved by obedience?
1 John 3:5-6 And ye know that he was manifested to _____ away our _____; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

If we abide in Christ, if the love of God dwells in the heart, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions, will be in harmony with the will of God.

There are many who, though striving to obey God's commandments, have little peace or joy. This lack in their experience is the result of a failure to exercise faith. They walk as it were in a salt land, a parched wilderness. They claim little, when they might claim much; for there is no limit to the promises of God. Such ones do not correctly represent the sanctification that comes through obedience to the truth. The Lord would have all His sons and daughters happy, peaceful, and obedient. Through the exercise of faith, the believer comes into possession of these blessings. Through faith, every deficiency of character may be supplied, every defilement cleansed, every fault corrected, every excellence developed.

11) What shall we do in faith?
Matthew 7:7-8 _____, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be _____.

In the secret place of communion, that we are to contemplate His glorious ideal for humanity. In all ages, through the medium of communion with heaven, God has worked out His purpose for His children, by unfolding gradually to their minds the doctrines of grace.

12) How does God impart Himself to us?
Hosea 6:3 Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is _____ as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the _____, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

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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.

13) Whose are we?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are _____ _____ _____? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The greatest praise that men can bring to God is to become consecrated channels through whom He can work. Time is rapidly passing into eternity. Let us not keep back from God that which is His own.

Your sins may be as mountains before you; but if you humble your heart and confess your sins, trusting in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, He will forgive and will cleanse you from all unrighteousness. God demands of you entire conformity to His law. This law is the echo of His voice saying to you, Holier, yes, holier still. Desire the fullness of the grace of Christ. Let your heart be filled with an intense longing for His righteousness, the work of which God's word declares is peace, and its effect quietness and assurance forever.

Can you see God is on your side?

Would you like to see what great things God has planned for you?

When is the time to let the Word change you?

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Lesson 49b – Patmos

This is an excerpt from the book Acts of the Apostles by Ellen White concerning John (Italics supplied):

More than half a century had passed since the organization of the Christian church. During that time the gospel message had been constantly opposed. Its enemies had never relaxed their efforts and had at last succeeded in enlisting the power of the Roman emperor against the Christians.

In the terrible persecution that followed, the apostle John did much to confirm and strengthen the faith of the believers. He bore a testimony which his adversaries could not controvert and which helped his brethren to meet with courage and loyalty the trials that came upon them. When the faith of the Christians would seem to waver under the fierce opposition they were forced to meet, the old, tried servant of Jesus would repeat with power and eloquence the story of the crucified and risen Saviour. He steadfastly maintained his faith, and from his lips came ever the same glad message: ***"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ... that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." 1 John 1:1-3.***

John lived to be very old. He witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and the ruin of the stately temple. The last survivor of the disciples who had been intimately connected with the Saviour, his message had great influence in setting forth the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. No one could doubt his sincerity, and through his teachings many were led to turn from unbelief.

The rulers of the Jews were filled with bitter hatred against John for his unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. They declared that their efforts against the Christians would avail nothing so long as John's testimony kept ringing in the ears of the people. In order that the miracles and teachings of Jesus might be forgotten, the voice of the bold witness must be silenced.

John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. Here before the authorities the apostle's doctrines were misstated. False witnesses accused him of teaching seditious heresies. By these accusations his enemies hoped to bring about the disciple's death.

John answered for himself in a clear and convincing manner, and with such simplicity and candor that his words had a powerful effect. His hearers were astonished at his wisdom and eloquence. But the more convincing his testimony, the deeper was the hatred of his opposers. The emperor Domitian was filled with rage. He could neither dispute the reasoning of Christ's faithful advocate, nor match the power that attended his utterance of truth; yet he determined that he would silence his voice.

John was cast into a caldron of boiling oil; but the Lord preserved the life of His faithful servant, even as He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace. As the words were spoken, Thus perish all who believe in that deceiver, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, John declared, My Master patiently submitted to all that Satan and his angels could devise to humiliate and torture Him. He gave His life to save the world. I am honored in being permitted to suffer for His sake. I am a weak, sinful man. Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.

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These words had their influence, and John was removed from the caldron by the very men who had cast him in.

Again the hand of persecution fell heavily upon the apostle. By the emperor's decree John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned ***"for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 1:9.*** Here, his enemies thought, his influence would no longer be felt, and he must finally die of hardship and distress.

Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals; but to the servant of God this gloomy abode became the gate of heaven. Here, shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from the active labors of former years, he had the companionship of God and Christ and the heavenly angels, and from them he received instruction for the church for all future time. The events that would take place in the closing scenes of this earth's history were outlined before him; and there he wrote out the visions he received from God. When his voice could no longer testify to the One whom he loved and served, the messages given him on that barren coast were to go forth as a lamp that burneth, declaring the sure purpose of the Lord concerning every nation on the earth.

Among the cliffs and rocks of Patmos, John held communion with his Maker. He reviewed his past life, and at thought of the blessings he had received, peace filled his heart. He had lived the life of a Christian, and he could say in faith, ***"We know that we have passed from death unto life." 1 John 3:14***. Not so the emperor who had banished him. He could look back only on fields of warfare and carnage, on desolated homes, on weeping widows and orphans, the fruit of his ambitious desire for pre-eminence.

In his isolated home John was able to study more closely than ever before the manifestations of divine power as recorded in the book of nature and in the pages of inspiration. To him it was a delight to meditate on the work of creation and to adore the divine Architect. In former years his eyes had been greeted by the sight of forest-covered hills, green valleys, and fruitful plains; and in the beauties of nature, it had ever been his delight to trace the wisdom and skill of the Creator. He was now surrounded by scenes that to many would appear gloomy and uninteresting; but to John it was otherwise. While his surroundings might be desolate and barren, the blue heavens that bent above him were as bright and beautiful as the skies above his loved Jerusalem. In the wild, rugged rocks, in the mysteries of the deep, in the glories of the firmament, he read important lessons. All bore the message of God's power and glory.

All around him the apostle beheld witnesses to the Flood that had deluged the earth because the inhabitants ventured to transgress the law of God. The rocks thrown up from the great deep and from the earth by the breaking forth of the waters, brought vividly to his mind the terrors of that awful outpouring of God's wrath. In the voice of many waters, deep calling unto deep, the prophet heard the voice of the Creator. The sea, lashed to fury by the merciless winds, represented to him the wrath of an offended God. The mighty waves, in their terrible commotion, restrained within limits appointed by an invisible hand, spoke of the control of an infinite Power. And in contrast he realized the weakness and folly of mortals, who, though but worms of the dust, glory in their supposed wisdom and strength, and set their hearts against the Ruler of the universe, as if God were altogether such a one as themselves. By the rocks he was reminded of Christ, the Rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without fear. From the exiled

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apostle on rocky Patmos there went up the most ardent longing of soul after God, the most fervent prayers.

The history of John affords a striking illustration of the way in which God can use aged workers. When John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, there were many who thought him to be past service, an old and broken reed, ready to fall at any time. But the Lord saw fit to use him still. Though banished from the scenes of his former labor, he did not cease to bear witness to the truth. Even in Patmos he made friends and converts. His was a message of joy, proclaiming a risen Saviour who on high was interceding for His people until He should return to take them to Himself. And it was after John had grown old in the service of his Lord that he received more communications from heaven than he had received during all the former years of his life.

The most tender regard should be cherished for those whose life interest has been bound up with the work of God. These aged workers have stood faithful amid storm and trial. They may have infirmities, but they still possess talents that qualify them to stand in their place in God's cause. Though worn, and unable to bear the heavier burdens that younger men can and should carry, the counsel they can give is of the highest value.

They may have made mistakes, but from their failures they have learned to avoid errors and dangers, and are they not therefore competent to give wise counsel? They have borne test and trial, and though they have lost some of their vigor, the Lord does not lay them aside. He gives them special grace and wisdom.

Those who have served their Master when the work went hard, who endured poverty and remained faithful when there were few to stand for truth, are to be honored and respected. The Lord desires the younger laborers to gain wisdom, strength, and maturity by association with these faithful men. Let the younger men realize that in having such workers among them they are highly favored. Let them give them an honored place in their councils.

As those who have spent their lives in the service of Christ draw near to the close of their earthly ministry, they will be impressed by the Holy Spirit to recount the experiences they have had in connection with the work of God. The record of His wonderful dealings with His people, of His great goodness in delivering them from trial, should be repeated to those newly come to the faith. God desires the old and tried laborers to stand in their place, doing their part to save men and women from being swept downward by the mighty current of evil. He desires them to keep the armor on till He bids them lay it down.

In the experience of the apostle John under persecution, there is a lesson of wonderful strength and comfort for the Christian. God does not prevent the plottings of wicked men, but He causes their devices to work for good to those who in trial and conflict maintain their faith and loyalty. Often the gospel laborer carries on his work amid storms of persecution, bitter opposition, and unjust reproach. At such times let him remember that the experience to be gained in the furnace of trial and affliction is worth all the pain it costs. Thus, God brings His children near to Him, that He may show them their weakness and His strength. He teaches them to lean on Him. Thus, He prepares them to meet emergencies, to fill positions of trust, and to accomplish the great purpose for which their powers were given them.

In all ages God's appointed witnesses have exposed themselves to reproach and persecution for the truth's sake. Joseph was maligned and persecuted because he preserved his virtue and integrity. David, the chosen messenger of God, was hunted like a beast of prey by his enemies.

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Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he was true to his allegiance to heaven. Job was deprived of his worldly possessions and so afflicted in body that he was abhorred by his relatives and friends; yet he maintained his integrity. Jeremiah could not be deterred from speaking the words that God had given him to speak; and his testimony so enraged the king and princes that he was cast into a loathsome pit. Stephen was stoned because he preached Christ and Him crucified. Paul was imprisoned, beaten with rods, stoned, and finally put to death because he was a faithful messenger for God to the Gentiles. And John was banished to the Isle of Patmos ***"for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."***

These examples of human steadfastness bear witness to the faithfulness of God's promises—of His abiding presence and sustaining grace. They testify to the power of faith to withstand the powers of the world. It is the work of faith to rest in God in the darkest hour, to feel, however sorely tried and tempest-tossed, that our Father is at the helm. The eye of faith alone can look beyond the things of time to estimate aright the worth of the eternal riches.

Jesus does not present to His followers the hope of attaining earthly glory and riches, of living a life free from trial. Instead, He calls upon them to follow Him in the path of self-denial and reproach. He who came to redeem the world was opposed by the united forces of evil. In an unpitying confederacy, evil men and evil angels arrayed themselves against the Prince of Peace. His every word and act revealed divine compassion, and His unlikeness to the world provoked the bitterest hostility.

So, it will be with all who will live godly in Christ Jesus. Persecution and reproach await all who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ. The character of the persecution changes with the times, but the principle, the spirit that underlies it, is the same that has slain the chosen of the Lord ever since the days of Abel.

In all ages Satan has persecuted the people of God. He has tortured them and put them to death, but in dying they became conquerors. They bore witness to the power of One mightier than Satan. Wicked men may torture and kill the body, but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ in God. They can incarcerate men and women in prison walls, but they cannot bind the spirit.

Through trial and persecution, the glory, the character, of God is revealed in His chosen ones. The believers in Christ, hated and persecuted by the world, are educated and disciplined in the school of Christ. On earth they walk in narrow paths; they are purified in the furnace of affliction. They follow Christ through sore conflicts; they endure self-denial and experience bitter disappointments; but thus, they learn the guilt and woe of sin, and they look upon it with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they can look beyond the gloom to the glory, saying, ***"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18.***

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Lesson 50 – The Revelation

Based on The Revelation

In the days of the apostles the Christian believers were filled with earnestness and enthusiasm. So untiringly did they labor for their Master that in a comparatively short time, notwithstanding fierce opposition, the gospel of the kingdom was sounded to all the inhabited parts of the earth.

1) What did Jesus declare about the Early Christian Church?
Revelation 2:2-3 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are _____, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast _____ thy first love.

The Lord Jesus used the church at Ephesus as a symbol of the entire Christian church in the apostolic age.

2) What was their message to the world?
Luke 2:14 _____ to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

At the first, the experience of the church at Ephesus was marked with childlike simplicity and fervor. The believers sought earnestly to obey every word of God, and their lives revealed an earnest, sincere love for Christ. They rejoiced to do the will of God because the Saviour was in their hearts as an abiding presence. Filled with love for their Redeemer, their highest aim was to win souls to Him. They did not think of hoarding the precious treasure of the grace of Christ.

But after a time, the zeal of the believers began to wane, and their love for God and for one another grew less. Coldness crept into the church. Some forgot the wonderful manner in which they had received the truth. One by one the old standard-bearers fell at their post. Some of the younger workers, who might have shared the burdens of these pioneers, and thus have been prepared for wise leadership, had become weary of oft-repeated truths. In their desire for something novel and startling they attempted to introduce new phases of doctrine, more pleasing to many minds, but not in harmony with the fundamental principles of the gospel.

3) What did God do to stay this growing coldness?
Revelation 1:10-11 I was in the Spirit on the _____ _____, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, _____ in a _____, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.
Revelation 1:12-13 And I turned to see the _____ that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the _____ of _____, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

It was at this critical time in the history of the church that John was sentenced to banishment. Never had his voice been needed by the church as now. Nearly all his former associates in the ministry had suffered martyrdom. The remnant of believers was facing fierce opposition. To all outward appearance the day was not far distant when the enemies of the church of Christ would triumph.

In exiling John, the enemies of truth had hoped to silence forever the voice of God's faithful witness; but on Patmos the disciple received a message, the influence of which was to continue to strengthen the church till the end of time. Though not released from the responsibility of their wrong act, those who banished John became instruments in the hands of God to carry out Heaven's purpose; and the very effort to extinguish the light placed the truth in bold relief.

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4) What did Jesus look like at Calvary?
Isaiah 52:14 As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so _____ more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

5) How did He appear on Patmos?
Revelation 1:14-16 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a _____ of _____; And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many _____. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the _____ shineth in his strength.

6) What happened to John at this moment?
Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as _____. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not…

John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord. Then before his wondering vision were opened the glories of heaven. He was permitted to see the throne of God and, looking beyond the conflicts of earth, to behold the white-robed throng of the redeemed. He heard the music of the heavenly angels and the triumphant songs of those who had overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. In the revelation given to him there was unfolded scene after scene of thrilling interest in the experience of the people of God, and the history of the church foretold to the very close of time.

7) What blessing did Jesus give to all who read the Revelation?
Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that _____, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and _____ those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

8) What curses are upon people who change this message?
Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall _____ unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall _____ _____ his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

9) What book is a compliment to the Revelation?
Daniel 12:4 But thou, O _____, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the last days.

10) What did God want us to know?
Revelation 1:19-20 Write the things which thou hast _____, and the things which are, and the things which shall be _____; The mystery of the seven _____ which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number seven indicates completeness and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the world.

11) How did the Revelation begin?
Revelation 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of _____ write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

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Christ is represented as holding the seven stars in His right hand. This assures us that no church faithful to its trust need fear coming to nought, for not a star that has the protection of Omnipotence can be plucked out of the hand of Christ.

Through them His light is to shine forth. The Saviour is to be their efficiency. If they will look to Him as He looked to the Father they will be enabled to do His work. As they make God their dependence, He will give them His brightness to reflect to the world.

12) What warning did he give the church in Ephesus?
Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and _____, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Early in the history of the church the mystery of iniquity foretold by the apostle Paul began its baleful work; and as the false teachers concerning whom Peter had warned the believers, urged their heresies, many were ensnared by false doctrines. Some faltered under trial and were tempted to give up the faith. At the time when John was given this revelation, many had lost their first love of gospel truth. But in His mercy God did not leave the church to continue in a backslidden state.

13) What promise is given to every penitent believer?
Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and _____: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

14) Sardis was in conflict, what did Jesus tell them?
Revelation 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which _____, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

15) What did He tell the church of Philadelphia?
Revelation 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can _____ it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.
Revelation 3:10-11 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of _____, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: _____ that _____ which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

16) How did John declare himself at this point in his life?
Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your _____, and _____ in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ…

It was through one who declared himself to be a ***"brother, and companion in tribulation" (Revelation 1:9),*** that Christ revealed to His church the things that they must suffer for His sake. Looking down through long centuries of darkness and superstition, the aged exile saw multitudes suffering martyrdom because of their love for the truth. But he saw also that He who sustained His early witnesses would not forsake His faithful followers during the centuries of persecution that they must pass through before the close of time.

17) What counsel was given for God's people?
Revelation 2:10 Fear _____ of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou _____ unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

18) What is given to those who strive against evil?
Revelation 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the _____ of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

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Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of _____, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my _____, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

19) What glorious vision filled John's heart with joy?
Revelation 15:2-3 And I saw as it were a _____ of _____ mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of _____ the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

John saw the mercy, the tenderness, and the love of God blending with His holiness, justice, and power. He saw sinners finding a Father in Him of whom their sins had made them afraid. And looking beyond the culmination of the great conflict, he beheld them upon Zion.

20) What symbol was Jesus presented as in Chapter 5?
Revelation 5:5-6 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the _____ of the tribe of _____, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a _____ as it had been _____, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

These symbols represent the union of omnipotent power and self-sacrificing love. The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejectors of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of fire that speaks terror and wrath to the transgressor of God's law is a token of light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The arm strong to smite the rebellious will be strong to deliver the loyal.

21) What did Jesus promise?
Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall _____ together his _____ from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

In comparison with the millions of the world, God's people will be, as they have ever been, a little flock; but if they stand for the truth as revealed in His word, God will be their refuge. They stand under the broad shield of Omnipotence. ***God is always a majority.***

22) What promise should we never forget?
1 Corinthians 15:54-55 So when this corruptible shall have put on _____, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O _____, where is thy victory?

Standing then with God, with Christ, with the angels, and with the loyal and true of all ages, the children of God will be far in the majority.

23) What did John write about our future?
Revelation 22:5 And there shall be no _____ there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the _____ _____ giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

24) What promise of Jesus will have come to pass?
Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye _____ of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
Matthew 25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou _____ and _____ servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou.

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The vision of the prophet pictures them as standing on Mount Zion, girt for holy service, clothed in white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints. But all who follow the Lamb in heaven must first have followed Him on earth, not fretfully or capriciously, but in trustful, loving, willing obedience, as the flock follows the shepherd. into the joy of thy lord.

25) What are the future plans for the earth?

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

Revelation 21:10-11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a _____ most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve _____ of the children of Israel:

Revelation 21:21-22 And the twelve gates were twelve _____; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure _____, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

Revelation 22:3-5 And there shall be no more _____: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their _____. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:1-2 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as _____, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the _____ of _____, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

26) How are we given permission to enter?

Revelation 22:14 Blessed are they that do his _____, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Revelation 21:3

Can you see God REALLY loves you?

Would you like to be there in that great congregation?

When does your new life begin?

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Lesson 51 – The Church Triumphant

More than nineteen centuries have passed since the apostles rested from their labors, but the history of their toils and sacrifices for Christ's sake is still among the most precious treasures of the church. This history, written under the direction of the Holy Spirit, was recorded in order that by it the followers of Christ in every age might be impelled to greater zeal and earnestness in the cause of the Saviour.

1) Whom did God say would come to build the Temple of God?
   Zechariah 6:12 And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The _____; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:
   Zechariah 6:15 And they that are _____ _____ shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.
   Isaiah 60:10 And the sons of _____ shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee…
2) What did Peter say that we should become?
   1 Peter 2:3-5 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as _____ _____, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, _____ to God by Jesus Christ.

In the quarry of the Jewish and the Gentile world the apostles labored, bringing out stones to lay upon the foundation.

3) What did Paul say about the church to Ephesus?
   Ephesians 2:19-22 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the _____ of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy _____ in the Lord:
4) And to Corinth?
   1 Corinthians 3:10-11 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the _____, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man _____ _____ how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
   1 Corinthians 3:12-13 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made _____: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by _____; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
5) At the building of the Second Temple, what was unusual about the builders?
   Nehemiah 4:17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a _____.

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Not without hindrance did the builders labor. Their work was made exceedingly difficult by the opposition of the enemies of Christ. They had to contend against the bigotry, prejudice, and hatred of those who were building upon a false foundation.

One after another the foremost of the builders fell by the hand of the enemy. Stephen was stoned; James was slain by the sword; Paul was beheaded; Peter was crucified; John was exiled. Yet the church grew. New workers took the place of those who fell, and stone after stone was added to the building. Thus, slowly ascended the temple of the church of God.

6) Was God ever lacking for people to stand for the Truth?
Hebrews 11:36-38 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were _____, they were sawn asunder, were _____, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, _____; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.
Acts 14:17 Nevertheless he left not himself without _____, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Workers were raised up who ably defended the faith once delivered to the saints. History bears record to the fortitude and heroism of these men. Like the apostles, many of them fell at their post, but the building of the temple went steadily forward. The workmen were slain, but the work advanced. The Waldenses, John Wycliffe, Huss and Jerome, Martin Luther and Zwingli, Cranmer, Latimer, and Knox, the Huguenots, John and Charles Wesley, and a host of others brought to the foundation material that will endure throughout eternity.

7) How will your offerings to God be tested?
1 Corinthians 3:14-15 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be _____, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

The Christian who faithfully presents the word of life, leading men and women into the way of holiness and peace, is bringing to the foundation material that will endure, and in the kingdom of God he will be honored as a wise builder.

8) What did God's little church do after Jesus' ascension?
Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached _____ _____, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

As Christ sent forth His disciples, so today He sends forth the members of His church. The same power that the apostles had is for them. If they will make God their strength, He will work with them, and they shall not labor in vain.

9) As God did for Jeremiah, what will he do for you?
Jeremiah 1:7-9 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt _____. Be not _____ of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my _____ in thy mouth.

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Christ has given to the church a sacred charge. Every member should be a channel through which God can communicate to the world the treasures of His grace, the unsearchable riches of Christ. There is nothing that the Saviour desires so much as agents who will represent to the world His Spirit and His character. There is nothing that the world needs so much as the manifestation through humanity of the Saviour's love. All heaven is waiting for men and women through whom God can reveal the power of Christianity.

10) What day are we looking forward to?
Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, _____ the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

11) What will we declare in Heaven around the Throne of God?
Revelation 5:12-13 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the _____ that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the _____, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

There the redeemed greet those who led them to the Saviour, and all unite in praising Him who died that human beings might have the life that measures with the life of God. The conflict is over. Tribulation and strife are at an end. Songs of victory fill all heaven as the ransomed ones take up the joyful strain, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror.

12) Who did John see there in prophetic vision?
Revelation 7:9-10 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great _____, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with _____ _____, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

13) Who were they?
Revelation 7:14-15 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great _____, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him _____ and _____ in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

14) What is special about the Redeemed?
Revelation 7:16-17 They shall _____ no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of _____: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all _____ from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more _____: for the former things are passed away.

Can you see how this all ends?

Would you like to be there in that great congregation? **God is calling you! How will you respond?**

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Paul's Missionary Journeys

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