

Uplifting the Savior

“Behold the man!” (John 19:5).

“The great center of attraction, Jesus Christ, must not be left out of the third angel’s message. By many who have been engaged in the work for this time, Christ has been made secondary, and theories and arguments have had first place.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 383.

Suggested Reading: *Steps to Christ*, pp. 9–15.

1. Jesus our Surety

- a. What act on God's part demonstrated at the same time both His love for our world and the cost of transgression? John 3:16, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:21.
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“The scheme of redemption far exceeds the comprehension of the human mind. The great condescension on the part of God is a mystery that is beyond our fathoming. The greatness of the plan cannot be fully comprehended, nor could infinite Wisdom devise a plan that would surpass it. . . .Through this plan the great, the dreadful God can be just, and yet be the justifier of all who believe in Jesus, and who receive Him as their personal Saviour.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1133.

- a. **John 3:16-17** (16) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21** (21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1. Jesus our Surety

- b. What act of Jesus declared beyond doubt the infinite love that He has for each of us? John 15:13; Romans 5:6–8; Ephesians 2:13, 14.
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“Oh, wonderful condescension! The Majesty of heaven, through love and pity for fallen man, proposed to become his substitute and surety. He would bear man’s guilt. He would take the wrath of His Father upon Himself, which otherwise would have fallen upon man because of his disobedience.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 24, 1874.

b. John 15:13 (13) Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Romans 5:6-8 (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:13-14 (13) But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (14) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

2. Our Focus

- a. What titles in scripture describe the beauty of Jesus' character, and what effect will beholding this beauty have upon us? Song of Solomon 2:1; 5:16; Haggai 2:7.
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“With untold love our God has loved us, and our love awakens toward Him as we comprehend something of the length and breadth and depth and height of this love that passeth knowledge. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of His love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued.”—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 76.

a. Song of Solomon 2:1 (1) I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Song of Solomon 5:16 (16) His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Haggai 2:7 (7) And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

2. Our Focus

- b. Why is it essential for us to keep our eyes focused on Jesus? Compare Numbers 21:8 with John 3:14. Hebrews 7:25.
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“Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning Sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness.”—*Selected Messages*, bk. 1, p. 256.

“The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting His divine merits in the offering of Himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for He ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions. . . .

“It is the righteousness of Christ that makes the penitent sinner acceptable to God and works his justification. However sinful has been his life, if he believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, he stands before God in the spotless robes of Christ’s imputed righteousness.

“The sinner so recently dead in trespasses and sins is quickened by faith in Christ. He sees by faith that Jesus is his Saviour, and alive forevermore, able to save unto ‘the uttermost [all] that come unto God by Him’ (Hebrews 7:25). In the atonement made for him the believer sees such breadth and length and height and depth of efficiency—sees such completeness of salvation, purchased at such infinite cost, that his soul is filled with praise and thanksgiving. He sees as in a glass the glory of the Lord and is changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord. He sees the robe of Christ’s righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, wrought by His obedience, and imputed to the repenting soul through faith in His name.”—*Faith and Works*, pp. 105–107.

b. Numbers 21:8 (8) And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

John 3:14 (14) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Hebrews 7:25 (25) Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

3. Light of our Life

- a. What does it mean for us to have an eye single to God's glory?
Luke 11:34; John 8:12.
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“What is it to have a single eye? It is to have a disposition to look upon Christ for by beholding we become changed from glory to glory, from character to character.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, September 14, 1893.

a. **Luke 11:34** (34) The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

John 8:12 (12) Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

3. Light of our Life

b. What specific knowledge does God use to bring light into our life? John 1:4, 9; 2 Corinthians 4:6.

b. **John 1:4** (4) In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:9 (9) That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

2 Corinthians 4:6 (6) For 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.

3. Light of our Life

- c. How will beholding the light of God's glory, as seen in the life of Jesus, help our growth in Him and our commitment to Him? 2 Corinthians 3:18.
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"If we gaze even a moment upon the sun in its meridian glory, when we turn away our eyes, the image of the sun will appear in everything upon which we look. Thus it is when we behold Jesus; everything we look upon reflects His image, the Sun of Righteousness. We cannot see anything else, or talk of anything else. His image is imprinted upon the eye of the soul, and affects every portion of our daily life, softening and subduing our whole nature. By beholding, we are conformed to the divine similitude, even the likeness of Christ. To all with whom we associate we reflect the bright and cheerful beams of His righteousness. . . .

"Jesus Christ is everything to us—the first, the last, the best in everything. Jesus Christ, His Spirit, His character, colors everything; it is the warp and the woof, the very texture of our entire being. The words of Christ are spirit and life. We cannot, then, center our thoughts upon self; it is no more we that live, but Christ that liveth in us, and He is the hope of glory. Self is dead, but Christ is a living Saviour. Continuing to look unto Jesus, we reflect His image to all around us. We cannot stop to consider our disappointments, or even to talk of them; for a more pleasant picture attracts our sight—the precious love of Jesus. He dwells in us by the word of truth."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 388–390.

- c. **2 Corinthians 3:18** (18) But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

4. The Benevolence of Jesus

- a. How did Jesus treat the great variety of human beings He encountered on this earth? Acts 10:38; Matthew 14:14; 15:32.
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“Never was there such an evangelist as Christ. He was the Majesty of heaven, but He humbled Himself to take our nature, that He might meet men where they were. To all people, rich and poor, free and bond, Christ, the Messenger of the covenant, brought the tidings of salvation. His fame as the Great Healer spread throughout Palestine. The sick came to the places through which He would pass, that they might call on Him for help. Hither, too, came many anxious to hear His words and to receive a touch of His hand. Thus He went from city to city, from town to town, preaching the gospel and healing the sick—the King of glory in the lowly garb of humanity.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 22.

a. Acts 10:38 (38) How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Matthew 14:14 (14) And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

Matthew 15:32 (32) Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

4. The Benevolence of Jesus

- b. Compare the way Jesus treated Judas and Peter? Matthew 16:23; John 13:27; 17:12.
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Matthew 16:23 (23) But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

John 13:27 (27) And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

John 17:12 (12) While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

4. The Benevolence of Jesus

- c. What evidence do we have that He provided equal opportunities to both of these disciples—just as He does for each one of us? **John 13:1, 5.**
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“Jesus connected John, Peter, and Judas with Him in His work, making them colaborers with Him; but at the same time they were to be constantly learning lessons of Christ. They were to gather from His divine teachings instructions which were to correct their wrong ideas and their erroneous views of what constitutes a Christian character. John and Peter were not perfect men, but they improved every opportunity to learn. Peter did not learn to distrust himself, to be jealous of himself, until he was overcome by the temptations of the devil and denied his Lord. Judas had the same opportunity that these disciples had to learn the lessons taught by Christ, but he did not appreciate their value. He was a hearer only and not a doer. The result was seen in his betrayal of his Lord.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 557.

c. John 13:1 (1) Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

John 13:5 (5) After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Our Purpose: Reflecting the Love of Jesus

- a. Who are we as Christians to represent to the world, and how?
Colossians 1:26, 27; 1 Peter 2:22, 23.
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“It is through the word that Christ abides in His followers. This is the same vital union that is represented by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. The words of Christ are spirit and life. Receiving them, you receive the life of the Vine. You live ‘by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God’ (Matthew 4:4). The life of Christ in you produces the same fruits as in Him. Living in Christ, adhering to Christ, supported by Christ, drawing nourishment from Christ, you bear fruit after the similitude of Christ.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 677.

- a. **Colossians 1:26-27** (26) Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: (27) To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:
1 Peter 2:22-23 (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Our Purpose: Reflecting the Love of Jesus

- b. How is our Christian growth and maturity revealed in the way we treat our fellow humans? 1 Peter 3:8, 9; 1 John 4:7, 8; Hebrews 13:1–3.
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“When the attention is fastened on the cross of Christ, the whole being is ennobled. The knowledge of the Saviour’s love subdues the soul, and lifts the mind above the things of time and sense. Let us learn to estimate all temporal things in the light that shines from the cross. . . .

“In all true disciples 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 Jesus. It is on the earth that His children are to let this love shine out through blameless lives. Thus sinners will be led to the cross, to behold the Lamb of God.”—*The Review and Herald*, May 6, 1902.

b. 1 Peter 3:8-9 (8) Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: (9) Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

1 John 4:7-8 (7) Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (8) He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Hebrews 13:1-3 (1) Let brotherly love continue. (2) Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. (3) Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What emphasis should be given to the gospel today?
2. What are some meaningful examples of Christ's love to men and women?
3. Why is the message of the love and life of Jesus important to me?
4. What does it mean to be a Christian?
5. How can I reflect Christ more fully to those around me?