TALKING POINTS

Uniting Heaven and Earth:
Christ in Philippians & Colossians
Q1L9: "Reconciliation and Hope"

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MEMORY VERSE: "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." 2 Corinthians 5:21, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This lesson studies the plan of salvation from Colossians 1:19-29.

1. God never wanted sin, but He was ready for it (Tue, Wed)

- All creation was once united.
    - "reconcile all things… *on earth* or things *in heaven*" (Col. 1:19).
    - "*you*, who were once alienated" (Col. 1:21).
- Sin shattered the unity of creation.
    - "enemies in your mind by wicked works" (Col. 1:21; see also Isa. 59:1, 2; Gen. 3:8-11).
- The Apostle Paul understood that God had a plan "hidden from ages and from generations" (Col. 1:26, 27; see also Rom. 16:26; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 3:9).
    - Peter and John concur (see 1 Pet. 1:18-20; Rev. 13:8).

> The world has been committed to Christ… He was the Redeemer before as after His incarnation. As soon as there was sin, there was a Saviour. DA 210.2

> Why was not the death penalty at once enforced in his case?—Because a ransom was found. God's only begotten Son volunteered to take the sin of man upon himself, and to make an atonement for the fallen race. Review & Herald, Apr. 23, 1901

2. The goal of the Gospel is reunification (Sun, Wed)

- "Ultimately, 'all things' in heaven and on earth will be brought together into complete oneness in Christ… Exactly how this would come about was a mystery that has now been revealed through the gospel." Qtly, Wed, par 2 (see also Col. 1:20; Jn. 12:31-33).

> The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy… The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Signs of the Times, Dec. 30, 1889

- To successfully (safely) reunite heaven and earth, fallen humanity must be restored to our "original factory settings."
    - See the three parts of the Gospel in Qtly, Sun, par 5

Christ's work was to restore man to his original state, to heal him, through divine power, from the wounds and bruises made by sin. FE 430.2

3. "Christ in you" is our only "hope of glory" (Mon, Thu)

- Salvation involves continued growth to maturity (Col. 1:23).
    - "This idea of persisting is the meaning of the Greek word translated 'continue' (Col. 1:23, NKJV)… Contrary to the common belief of 'once saved, always saved,' Paul is saying something completely different." Qtly, Mon, par 2, 5

Man's part is to lay hold by faith of the merits of Christ, and co-operate with the divine agencies in forming a righteous character; so that God may save the sinner, and yet be just and His righteous law vindicated. Ibid

- The sacrifice of Jesus provides pardon for sin and power over sin—both of which are necessary for our moral restoration and the reunification of the universe (see Col. 1:26-29).

Jesus came to restore in man the image of his Maker. None but Christ can fashion anew the character that has been ruined by sin. He came to expel the demons that had controlled the will. He came to lift us up from the dust, to reshape the marred character after the pattern of His divine character, and to make it beautiful with His own glory. DA 37.3

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. We cannot understand it; we can only believe, as declared by the Scriptures, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." AA 476.1

CONCLUSION

It is only by the light reflected from the cross of Calvary that we can know the value of the human soul, or the depth of degradation from which man was rescued. It was to restore man to the perfection in which he was first created that this great sacrifice was made. With his human arm Jesus encircles the race, while with his divine arm he grasps the throne of the Infinite, thus uniting finite man with the infinite God and connecting earth with heaven. Review & Herald, Dec. 1, 1885