

1. BIBLE DOCTRINE SERIES

THE HOLY BIBLE

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. The entrance of Thy words gives light; it gives understanding unto the simple. Psalm 119:105, 130.

The Bible is of the highest value because it is the word of the living God. Of all the books in the world, it is the most deserving of study and attention; for it is eternal wisdom. The Bible is a history that tells us of the creation of the world, and opens to us past centuries. Without it we should have been left to conjecture and fable in regard to the occurrences of the remote past. It reveals to us the Creator of the heavens and the earth, with the universe that He has brought into being; and it sheds a glorious light over the world to come.

The Bible is a field where are concealed heavenly treasures, and they will remain hidden until, by diligent mining, they are discovered and brought to light. The Bible is a casket containing jewels of inestimable value, which should be so presented as to be seen in their intrinsic luster. But the beauty and excellence of these diamonds of truth are not discerned by the natural eye. The lovely things of the material world are not seen until the sun, dispelling the darkness, floods them with its light. And so with the treasures of God's word; they are not appreciated until they are revealed by the Sun of Righteousness-Counsels to Teachers, page 421.

What book can compare with the Bible? An understanding of its teachings is essential for every child and youth, and for those of mature age; for it is the word of God, given to guide the human family to heaven. In the world today there are gods many and doctrines many. Without an understanding of the Scriptures it is impossible for the youth to understand what is truth, or to discern between the sacred and the common.

The word of God should stand as the highest educating book in our world, and should be treated with reverential awe. It should be placed in the hands of the children and youth as the great lesson book, that they may know Him whom to know aright is life eternal...

What more important knowledge can be gained than that which outlines the fall of man, and the consequences of that sin which opened the floodgates of woe upon the world, which tells of Christ's first advent? The incarnation of Christ, His divinity, His atonement, His wonderful life in heaven as our advocate, the office of the Holy Spirit,-all these vital themes of Christianity are revealed from Genesis to Revelation. Each is a golden link in the perfect chain of truth. Why, then, should not the Scriptures be exalted in every school in our land?-Ibid., page 427.

“Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord! Star of eternity! the only star By which the bark of man could navigate The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss Securely! Only star which rose on Time, And on its dark and troubled billows, still, As generation, drifting swiftly by, Succeeded generation, threw a ray Of heaven's own light, and to the hills of God. The eternal hills, pointed the sinner's eye.” – “The Course of Time”, ROBERT POLLOCK, book 2, paragraph 17.

THE BIBLE INSPIRED OF GOD

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16. The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Peter 1:21. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. I Corinthians 2:13.

Every chapter and every verse of the Bible is a communication from God to men. We should bind its precepts as signs upon our hands, and as frontlets between our eyes. If studied and obeyed, it would lead God's people, as the Israelites were led, by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night.-Patriarchs and Prophets, page 504.

The union of the divine and the human, manifest in Christ, exists also in the Bible. The truths revealed are all “given by inspiration of God;- yet they are expressed in the words of men, and are adapted to human needs. Thus it may be said of the Book of God, as it was of Christ, that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” And this fact, so far from being an argument against the Bible, should

strengthen faith in it as the word of God. Those who pronounce upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, accepting some portions as divine, while they reject other parts as human, overlook the fact that Christ, the divine, partook of our human nature, that lie might reach humanity. In the work of God for man's redemption, divinity and humanity are combined." Testimonies, Vol. V, pp 747,748.

In His word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the text of experience. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, RV.

Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Savior to open the word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the word.

The Spirit was not given-nor can it ever be bestowed to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." I John 4:1. And Isaiah declares, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20-The Great Controversy, Introduction, page vii.

THE BIBLE TRANSFORMS CHARACTER

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Peter 1:4. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever. I Peter 1:23. It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63.

The Savior overcame to show man how he may overcome. All the temptations of Satan, Christ met with the word of God. By trusting in God's promises, He received power to obey God's commandments, and the tempter could gain no advantage. To every temptation His answer was, "It is written." So God has given us His word, wherewith to resist evil. Exceeding great and precious promises are ours, that by these we "might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4.

Bid the tempted one look not to circumstances, to the weakness of self, or to the power of temptation, but to the power of God's word. All its strength is ours. "Thy word," says the psalmist, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." "By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Psalm 119: 11; 17:4 Ministry of Healing, Page 181.

God will make the most precious revelations to His hungering, thirsting people. They will find that Christ is a personal Savior. As they feed upon His word, they find that it is spirit and life. The word destroys the natural earthly nature, and imparts a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to the soul as a comforter. By the transforming agency of His grace, the image of God is reproduced in the disciple; he becomes a new creature. Love takes the place of hatred, and the heart receives the divine similitude. This is what it means to live "by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." This is eating the bread that comes down from heaven." The Desire of Ages, page 391.

He who by faith receives the word, is receiving the very life and character of God-Christ's Object Lessons, page 38.

Its Transforming Power in Individual Life

The transforming power of the word of God is seen significantly in individual experience. It has been in every age the hope of the oppressed. What would life be worth, with all its stern realities, wearing perplexities, and sore disappointments, without the hope of a future life, without the staff of support and solace and comfort to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ?

It takes man in his natural condition, selfish and self-centered, the prey of lust and passion, swayed by caprice, by avarice, by anger, and transforms him into a being of noble purposes and generous

impulses. It converts the drunken sot into one who loves his enemy. It elevates, purifies, and ennoble all who accept its holy principles, and who shape their lives in harmony with its precepts-What the Bible Teaches, page 15.

THE WORD HID IN THE HEART

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to Thy word. With my whole heart have I sought Thee. O let me not wander from Thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of Thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in Thy precepts, and have respect unto Thy ways. I will delight myself in Thy statutes. I will not forget Thy word. Psalm 119:9-16.

It is the office of heavenly angels to prepare the heart so to comprehend God's word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist's petition our own, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." Psalm 119:18. Temptations often appear irresistible because, through neglect of prayer and the study of the Bible, the tempted one cannot readily remember God's promises and meet Satan with the Scripture weapons. But angels are round about those who are willing to be taught in divine things; and in the time of great necessity, they will bring to their remembrance the very truths which are needed. Thus "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19.

Jesus promised His disciples, The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26. But the teachings of Christ must previously have been stored in the mind, in order for the Spirit of God to bring them to our remembrance in the time of peril. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart," said David, "that I might not sin against Thee." Psalm 119:11-The Great Controversy, page 600.

It is of immense importance, in the light of the lessons of Christ, that every human being should study the Scriptures, that he may be convinced in whom his hopes of eternal life are centered. The Bible should ever have been made the great, grand book of study, which has come down to us from heaven, and is the word of life. Should that book which tells us what we must do in order to be saved, be set aside in a corner, and human productions be exalted as the great wisdom in education? The very knowledge children and youth need to obtain for usefulness in this life, and that they may carry with them in the future life, is found in the word of God. But this is not encouraged and presented before them as the most essential knowledge, and as that which will give the most correct information of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. There are gods many and doctrines many. There are maxims and commandments placed before our youth as the commandments of God. It is impossible for them to understand what is truth, what is the sacred, and what is the common, only as they understand the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments-Fundamentals of Christian Education, page 384.

TEACHING THE BIBLE TO THE CHILDREN

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that you may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that flows with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in your heart, and thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sits in your house, and when thou walks by the way, and when thou lies down, and when thou rises up. And thou shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And thou shall write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. Deuteronomy 6:3-9.

Here the duties of parents are clearly set forth. The word of God is to be their daily monitor. It gives such instruction that parents need not err in regard to the education of their children; but it admits of no indifference or negligence. The law of God is to be kept before the minds of the children as the great moral standard. When they rise up, and when they sit down, when they go out, and when they come in, this law is to be taught them as the great rule of life, and its principles are to be interwoven with all their

experience. They are to be taught to be honest, truthful, temperate, economical, and industrious, and to love God with the whole heart. This is bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is setting their feet in the path of duty and safety.

Youth are ignorant and inexperienced, and the love of the Bible and its sacred truths will not come naturally. Unless great pains is taken to build up around them barriers to shield them from Satan's devices, they are subject to his temptations, and are led captive by him at his will. In their early years, children are to be taught the claims of God's law, and faith in Jesus our Redeemer to cleanse from the stains of sin. This faith must be taught day by day, by precept and example-Testimonies, Vol. V, page 329.

A Father's Example

A man in Buffalo left home one morning after a heavy snowfall to go to work. His feet sank into the snow on the sidewalk, making great big tracks. He had just reached the corner, where he was about to turn into the saloon for what he called a "bracer," when he heard his five-year-old boy calling to him, "I'm coming after you, daddy; I've got my feet in your tracks." And, sure enough, he was coming along, putting his little feet in his father's big tracks. The man didn't stop in at the corner saloon that morning. He didn't want his boy to follow his tracks there. It made him think as never before, that whatever tracks he made his youngster was sure to follow in them. H. E. LUCCOCK, in Five Minute Shop Talks.

THE ETERNITY OF CHRIST

The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth. When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him. And I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and My delights were with the sons of men. Proverbs 8:22-31.

Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6. His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2. And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting.... When He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

The Father wrought by His Son in the creation of all heavenly beings. "By Him were all things created, . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him, and for Him." Colossians 1:16. Angels are God's ministers, radiant with the light ever flowing from His presence, and speeding on rapid wings to execute His will. But the Son, the anointed of God, the "express image of His person," "the brightness of His glory," "upholding all things by the word of His power," holds supremacy over them all. "A glorious high throne from the beginning," was the place of His sanctuary; 11 a scepter of righteousness," the scepter of His kingdom. Hebrews 1:3,8; Jeremiah 17:12. "Honor and majesty are before Him. Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Mercy and truth go before His face. Psalm 96:6; 89:14." Patriarchs and Prophets, page 34.

Nearly two thousand years ago, a voice of mysterious import was heard in heaven, from the throne of God, "Lo, I come." "Sacrifice and offering Thou would not, but a body has Thou prepared Me. . . . Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God." Hebrews 10:5-7. In these words is announced the fulfillment of the purpose that had been hidden from eternal ages. Christ was about to visit our world, and to become incarnate. He says, "A body has Thou prepared Me." Had He appeared with the glory that was His with the Father before the world was, we could not have endured the light of His presence. That we might behold it and not be destroyed, the manifestation of His glory was shrouded. His divinity was veiled with humanity, the invisible glory in the visible human form. The Desire of Ages, page 23.