

Sabbath School Lesson #10 – Following Jesus in Everyday Life – 30May-5Jun 2015

Christ is the author and finisher of faith. Knowing their need, “the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith” (Luke 17:5). We need increased faith especially in the latter times. For “the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1). Following Jesus in everyday life, “beware ... of the doctrine of the Pharisees” (Matthew 16:12) “through which Satan is working to make a nonentity of God and of Christ” (9T 68.1).

We focus on subtitle: ‘Flee Pharisaism.’ Pharisees thought only being Abraham’s children saved them (John 8:39). “Let church members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ’s directions. They are to abide in Him, constantly exercising faith in Him. Thus they will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ – wholesome, cheerful, grateful Christians, led by God into clearer and still clearer light” {9T 48.1}.

An irreverence form of Pharisaism we must flee is offering prayers in pomposity during worship. In our Seventh-day Adventist churches, it is our irreverent tradition to stand in all prayers except pastoral prayer; this is classic Pharisaism we must flee. “We hope that our brethren will not manifest less reverence and awe as they approach the only true and living God than the heathen manifest for their idol deities, or these people will be our judges in the day of final decision. ... Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God” {Pr 208.3}.

In private worship, “Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God. Mistrust your own strength. Depend not in it; but often bow down on your knees before God, and worship Him” {2SM 314.1}. In public worship, pray on your bended knees. “And when you assemble to worship God, be sure and bow your knees before Him. Let this act testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to the Spirit of truth” {2SM 314.2}.

“Men and women, do not dishonor God by your irreverence and pomposity. Do not stand up in your Pharisaism and offer your prayers to God” {21MR 61.2}. “We are living in perilous times. Seventh-day Adventists are professedly the commandment-keeping people of God; but they are loosing their devotional spirit. This spirit of reverence for God teaches men how to approach their Maker – with sacredness and awe through faith, not in themselves, but in a Mediator. Thus man is kept fast, under whatever circumstances he is placed. Man must come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the footstool of mercy” {61.7}.

Another form of Pharisaism we must decidedly flee that makes “the word of God of none effect through your tradition” (Mark 7:9-13) is the unbiblical trinity error. This trinity tradition declares that there is one God, a single Being but who is simultaneously Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This idea immediately creates confusion as to who is the God that gave His Son (John 3:16) and who was the Son that was given. Indeed, it raises a question as to whether it was really a Son that was given. Furthermore, if God is a *trinity* and Jesus Christ is, therefore, Himself the Supreme Being or He is absolutely co-equal with the Supreme Being, then it implies that Jesus did not truly die. The Supreme Being is described as the one “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (1 Timothy 6:15-16). If such applied to Jesus then He did not truly die at the cross, but was very much alive while foisting a delusion on humanity, thus making all our professions about the death and resurrection of Christ mere vanity and illusion.

To flee Pharisaism, let us “beware ... of the doctrine of the Pharisees” (Matthew 16:12) “through which Satan is working to make a nonentity of God and of Christ” (9T 68.1). Under the subtitle, ‘Be a Fruitful Witness,’ the Lesson says, “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in their eternal council ‘before the foundation of the world’ (Eph. 1:4), laid the plan of salvation.” The statement, implying a trinity, makes a falsehood that the trinity devised the plan of salvation. The trinity separates the Spirit of God from Him and makes it a third god of the trinity, making Scripture of none effect. The plan of salvation was by only two Beings:

“The plan of redemption was arranged in the councils between the Father and the Son” (Ellen White, RH 28 May 1908 Par 12); “Even the angels were not permitted to share the

counsels between the Father and the Son when the plan of salvation was laid" (Ellen White, MH 429); "The plan of salvation devised by the Father and the Son will be a grand success" (Ellen White, ST 17 June 1903 Par 2); "Before the fall of man, the Son of God had united with His Father in laying the plan of salvation" (Ellen White, RH 13 September 1906 Par 4).

To flee Pharisaism, we are told: "Thousands have a false conception of God and His attributes. They are as verily serving a false god as were the servants of Baal" (5T 173.4). A false conception of God being a trinity is Baal worship. Through the trinity falsehood, Satan is worshipped as a third god in the minds of God's people. In heaven, Satan had a position next to Christ, but he wanted worship; any wonder he is worshipped in trinity? We are told:

"The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that His life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man" (2SP 9; LHU 24); "Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in Heaven. He was next in honor to Christ" (RH 24 February 1874). Note that Christ was next in authority behind His Father, and the third highest being was none other than Satan himself. Is it any wonder that Satan has since created the trinity to maintain his third position and elevated himself to a third trinity god?

"Speaking of Satan, our Lord says that 'he abode not in the truth.' He was once the covering cherub, glorious in beauty and holiness. He was next to Christ in exaltation and character. It was with Satan that self-exaltation had its origin. He became jealous of Christ, and falsely accused Him, and then laid blame upon the Father. He was envious of the position that was held by Christ and the Father, and he turned from his allegiance to the Commander of heaven and lost his high and holy estate" (RH 22 October 1895). Any call to flee Pharisaism that does not foremost call us from the trinity is Pharisaism itself! Satan was not jealous of "God the eternal Spirit," for there is never such a separate individual as the trinity teaches. Satan was jealous of Christ, and Satan has separated the Spirit of Christ from Christ and assuming the third position as "God the eternal Spirit" has declared a trinity.

In fleeing Pharisaism, we must shun tradition that teaches a falsehood that our God is a trinity. The Bible is clear as to who is the One God. "But to us there is but one God, the Father" (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Bible is clear as to who is the only begotten Son of the One God; "and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). The Bible is clear that the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is related to God in the same way that the spirit of man is related to man; "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? *Even* so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). The Holy Spirit is therefore not a third individual of the trinity, and the Holy Spirit is not a separate consciousness from Jehovah Himself. Rather, the Holy Spirit is an integral aspect of Jehovah's own being. Hence, when one grieves the Holy Spirit, it is Jehovah Himself that is grieved and not someone else such as the third trinity god.

As we flee Pharisaism, we begin to see clearly as to who are *the only two Beings* in the universe to whom worship is due; "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it" (Revelation 21:22). It is clear that the Lord God Almighty is not the same Being as the Lamb, even though the Lamb is worshipped alongside the Lord God Almighty. The reason for this is that the Lamb is the only begotten Son of the Lord God Almighty and it is the Father's will that His Son be likewise worshipped (John 5:22-23).

In fleeing Pharisaism and its unbiblical trinity doctrine, you will be accused of denying the divinity of Christ. Jehovah is divine. His only begotten Son could not be other than divine also. But the great mistake of trinitarians, in arguing this subject is this: they make no distinction between a denial of a trinity and a denial of the divinity of Christ. They see only the two extremes, between which the truth lies; and take every expression referring to the pre-existence of Christ as evidence of a trinity. The Scriptures abundantly teach the pre-existence of Christ and His divinity; but they are entirely silent in regard to a trinity. It is only a degraded concept of God that leads people to think that it is somehow demeaning to Jesus Christ to be the literal Son of the Supreme Being. The Bible is clear that even after an end is put to sin "then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). Christ has and will always be subject to God. Let us flee Pharisaism with its trinity that makes "a nonentity of God and of Christ." And following Jesus in everyday life calls us to worship the only true God on bended knees.