

Sabbath School Lesson #10 – The Role of Stewardship – 3–9 March 2018

Christ would have us know that the role of stewardship is to bring us to holiness in Him, if we let Him live His holiness in us. “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7). Our Lesson study this week is taken from: Colossians 1:16-18; Hebrews 4:14-16; 3 John 3; Genesis 6:13-18; Revelation 14:6-12; and 1 Peter 1:15-16.

Sunday: Christ as the Center – For Christ to be the centre of our lives, we must be Christians. But who is a Christian? a person who is Christ’s. We are “saved by His life” (Romans 5:10), but not unless we have His life and live by His life. To live by His life, the life of Christ does us no good unless it is in us. Christ lives in us by His own Spirit, for “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Romans 8:9). “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (2 Corinthians 13:5). “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 4:10), so that if the life of Christ is not “made manifest in our body,” we are not Christians at all. For Christ to be our centre He must live in us. Many professed Christians, by their doctrines, are not Christians.

Many fellow Seventh-day Adventists do not have Christ as their centre, for they are not Christ’s, for they do not have His own Spirit, they have a different ‘holy spirit’ in them. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Romans 8:9). The Holy Spirit is the life of Jesus, and only Jesus saves: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:10). The Holy Spirit is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). Christ lives in us: “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

Monday: Sanctuary Doctrine – The Lesson writer rightly quotes: “The correct understanding of the ministration [of Christ] in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith” – Ellen G White, *Evangelism*, p 221. But our Seventh-day Adventist Church fundamental belief that separates the Spirit of Christ from Christ to create another god, negate the much needed correct understanding of the ministration of Christ in the sanctuary. Stewardship calls for a correct understanding here.

We ask does Christ carry out any ministration here on earth while He is up there in the heavenly temple? We must understand the extent of the temple. Many think that the temple is only up there. But the temple is also on earth, for we are the temple: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16); “In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:21-22); “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). The High Priest in the earthly temple, in our bodies, is not another spirit, but Christ. False doctrines teach that there are two High Priests, Jesus in heaven, and another ‘holy spirit’ in us. But the Bible teaches that Christ is Omnipresent, that is, Christ is the Spirit in us. “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45). In other words, “the last Adam [Jesus Christ] was made [after His resurrection] a quickening Spirit.” Christ has given His own Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). The Holy Spirit is the omnipresence of Christ, not another god. “Now the Lord is that Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:17). Christ ministers physically in heaven, and spiritually in us.

What about Romans 8:26-27? “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” False teachers say this is a different intercessor. The Bible teach that we have One intercessor. The Spirit here is the very same Spirit of Christ, “God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6), not another intercessor. “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:34).

Christ alone, not another, is the intercessor. “While Jesus ministers in the sanctuary above, He is still by His Spirit the minister of the church on earth. He is withdrawn from the eye of sense, but His parting promise is fulfilled, ‘Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’ Matthew 28:20. While He delegates His power to inferior ministers, His energizing presence is still with His church” (Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, 166.2). “We have only one channel of approach to God. Our prayers can come to Him through one name only, – that of the Lord Jesus our advocate. His Spirit must inspire our petitions. No strange fire was to be used in the censers that were waved before

God in the sanctuary. So the Lord Himself must kindle in our hearts the burning desire, if our prayers are acceptable to Him. The Holy Spirit within must make intercessions for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered" (RH February 9, 1897 Par 10). "The Lord is soon to come. We want that complete and perfect understanding which the Lord alone can give. It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ. If we commune with God, we shall have strength and grace and efficiency" (Ellen White, Letter 66-1894 (April 10, 1894) par 18). Instead of the Holy Spirit being a personality or a manifestation of Christ, false doctrines have made it into a separate god with his own individual personality and Being. The Bible teaches there is only One High Priest. The Divinity of Christ enables Him to minister physically in heaven and simultaneously to minister spiritually on earth in our bodies. "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Tuesday: Christ-Centered Doctrinal Beliefs – If any of our Seventh-day Adventist Church's beliefs is not Christ-centered, then it destroys Christ. Our doctrinal belief that teach that we have another 'holy spirit' different from the "Spirit of Christ," in effect teaches us to save ourselves. Our works, even with help of another 'holy spirit,' cannot save us, for without Christ we can do nothing. But the good works which God has wrought in Christ can save us; "this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). Note that it is "the faith of Jesus" that we are to keep. Christ declared that He lived by faith in the Father. Thus the works of God were manifest in Him. Now we are to have and to keep the same faith – the faith of Jesus; and this we can do only by having Christ to living in us, exercising His own faith in us, as the Apostle says: "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 faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

Wednesday: The Three Angels' Messages – The three angels' messages are supposed to be our Seventh-day Adventist Church message to the world with worship at the core of the message, but negated by our doctrinal belief about God. The first angel calls out with a loud voice, "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7). The God we are to fear and worship is the Creator – the Bible teaches that He is the Father, who created all things through His Son. "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:9). Who created all things? it is God. How? "by Jesus Christ." God made the world, by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). Source of creation is the Father; the means of creation is His Son. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him" (1 Corinthians 8:6). The three angels' messages are about restoring true worship. The One God that the first angel calls us to worship is whom the apostles praised and prayed to: "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:24). This One God is whom His Son Jesus Christ praised: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Luke 10:21). This truth is negated by our Seventh-day Adventist Church's so-called fundamental belief that separates the Holy Spirit from the Father and His Son leaving them Spiritless to form another god in "a unity of three coeternal persons."

The God that the first angel calls us to worship is not "a unity of three coeternal persons." Your understanding of God is going to impact on who you worship. The three angels' messages are to correct worship. If you do not get it right with the first angel, as who to worship, then no need to go to the second and third angels' messages. Only the first angel tells you who to worship. The first angel calls us to worship the One God who created through His Son. Our Church's doctrinal belief calls us to worship "a unity of three coeternal" gods – destroying the very three angels' messages.

Thursday: Stewardship – Stewardship entails calling fellow men to choose Christ in this end-time battle between Christ and Satan – in which battle men are not mere spectators. The final call is: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Every day each one is making the choice. "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" "Without Me ye can do nothing." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." With Christ is to have His life manifested in mortal flesh; Without Christ is to be against Christ, for the life will inevitably be "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Every act of disobedience is the direct working of Satan against the truth of God. Every act of obedience is the working of Christ's power in the hearts of those who choose Him. "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure."