

Sabbath School Lesson #6 – Confidence Only in Christ – 31 January-6 February 2026

Christ is our only confidence. If we believe God, we shall know the exceeding richness of His power, even of that power which raised Jesus from the dead. The death and resurrection of Christ is God's pledge to us that He will save us from sin, if we believe in Him; and it shows the power that will be put forth to effect this. This was the thought in the mind of Paul when he wrote that he counted all things loss if he might win Christ, and be found not having his own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, when Paul wrote the following: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:10-11). To know the power of Christ's resurrection, is to experience the working of that same power, in the removal of sin, which God wrought in Christ when he raised Him from the dead. Who could fail with this strength?

Sunday: Rejoicing in the Lord – Read Philippians 3:1-3; what does Paul teach us here about the importance of trusting in God? "The Christian's life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4. Truly spoke God's servant Nehemiah: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Nehemiah 8:10. And Paul says: "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18" {GC 477.3}. "Such are the fruits of Bible conversion and sanctification" {GC 478.1}. "Decided perseverance in a course of righteousness, disciplining the mind by religious exercises to love devotion and heavenly things, will bring the greatest amount of happiness" {RH May 19, 1885, par. 2}. "If we make God our trust, we have it in our power to control the mind in these things. Through continued exercise, it will become strong to battle with eternal foes, and to subdue self, until there is a complete transformation, and the passions, appetites, and will are brought into perfect subjection. Then there will be daily piety at home and abroad, and when we engage in labor for souls, a power will attend our efforts. The humble Christian will have seasons of devotion which are not spasmodic, fitful, or superstitious, but calm and tranquil, deep, constant, and earnest. The love of God, the practice of holiness, will be pleasant when there is perfect surrender to God" {2T 507.1}.

Monday: Paul's "Past Life" – Read Philippians 3:4-6; what does this tell us about the past life of Paul? Christ appeared to Saul, Ananias was asked to heal Saul's blindness, Ananias hesitated fearing Saul, "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16).

"Concerning zeal persecuting the church" (Philippians 3:6) – to Saul (later named Paul), how great his zeal was he himself says he persecuted the church of God "beyond measure," and "wasted it" (Galatians 1:13), "made havock of the church" (Acts 8:3). Before Agrippa he said: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11). Addressing the Jews in Jerusalem, who knew his life, he said, "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:4). This he did because he was "zealous toward God" (verse 3). So full of this sort of zeal was he that he breathed nothing but "threatening and slaughter" (Acts 9:1).

It seems almost incredible that any one professing to worship the true God, can have such false ideas of Him as to suppose that He is pleased with that kind of service; yet Saul of Tarsus, one of the most bitter and relentless persecutors of Christians that ever lived, could say years afterward, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1). Although kicking against the pricks (Acts 9:5), and endeavouring to silence the growing conviction that would force itself upon him as he witnessed the patience of the Christians, and heard their dying testimonies to the truth, Saul was not willfully stifling the

voice of conscience. On the contrary, he was striving to preserve a good conscience, and so deeply had he been indoctrinated with the Pharisaic traditions, that he felt sure that these inconvenient pricking must be the suggestions of an evil spirit, which he was in duty bound to suppress. Pricking of the Spirit of God had for a time only led him to redouble his zeal against Christians. Saul, the self-righteous Pharisee, had no bias in favour of Christianity.

“Profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation” (Galatians 1:14) – above those of his own age, among his countrymen. He had possessed every advantage that was possible to a Jewish youth. “A Hebrew of the Hebrews” (Philippians 3:5), he was nevertheless a free-born Roman citizen (Acts 22:26-28). Naturally quick and intelligent, he had enjoyed the instruction of Gamaliel, one of the wisest doctors of the law, and had been “taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers” (Acts 22:3). After the “strictest sect” among the Jews, he lived a Pharisee, and was “a Pharisee of the Pharisees,” so that he was “more exceedingly zealous of the traditions” of the fathers than any others of his class. Grown to manhood, he had become a member of the great council among the Jews, – the Sanhedrim, – as is shown by the fact that he gave his vote (Acts 26:10) when Christians were condemned to death. Added to this, he possessed the confidence of the high priest, who readily gave him letters of introduction to the rulers of all the synagogues throughout the land, with authority to seize and bind any whom he found guilty of “heresy.” He was, indeed, a rising young man, on whom the rulers of the Jews looked with pride and hope, believing that he would contribute much to the restoration of the Jewish nation and religion to their former greatness. There had been a promising future before Saul, from a worldly point of view; but what things were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ, for whose sake he suffered the loss of all things (Philippians 3:7-8). What caused this great change? No less than the power of the everlasting love and patient forbearance of God.

Tuesday: The Things That Matter – Read John 9; how does this teach us the things that matter? The story of the healing of the blind man tells us what matter is to “believe on Him whom God hath sent” which is to receive Christ as the real Son of God. The Sonship of Christ is not mere title of Christ, but the relationship He has with God. In no other way can the “works of God”, which includes real liberty, be manifest in any professed child of God. The “works of God” were manifest in the man born blind when the man believed that Christ was the Son of God. The man believed that God was truly the Father of Christ, and that Christ was truly the real Son of God. Only then were the “works of God” manifest in the man. The “works of God” can only be manifest in a person if that person accepts the whole purpose of Scripture, which is to (a) “believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God”, so that (b) “believing ye might have life through His name” (John 20:31). The “works of God” being “manifest” in the man was not only when he was healed from blindness, much as that led him to see Christ, but were manifest in him when he believed that Christ was indeed the literal Son of God. The man born blind believed in the literal, not metaphorical, Son of God.

Wednesday: The Faith of Christ – Read Philippians 3:9; what two things does Paul contrast, and why is this contrast important to always remember? He contrasts two degrees of righteousness that we find in Matthew 23:27-28 – two kinds of righteousness. These two kinds of righteousness are named by Paul in Philippians 3:8-9: “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” Paul here clearly recognises his own righteousness as righteousness entirely distinct from the righteousness that is of God by faith. The former was such righteousness as the scribes and Pharisees find; the latter is the kind which we must have, – a kind far exceeding that of the Pharisees, – if we would enter into the kingdom of Heaven, – the latter is the Lord our Righteousness.

Thursday: Just One Thing — Knowing Christ – Read Philippians 3:10-16; what does Paul teach us in having Christ? There can be no question but that the man who resists sin as Christ did, will not sin. But the only way in which this can be done, is to have Christ Himself living in us His own life of resistance to sin. He alone of all those who have lived on earth, committed no sin. He stands at the door of every heart, knocking, craving admittance.

