

Studies for Restitution

Whom the heaven must receive
until the times of restitution of all things,
which God hath spoken by the mouth of
all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:21

THE LOVE OF GOD, LEADETH US TO VICTORY

Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

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The Love Of God, Leadeth Us To Victory

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

How vast is the meaning of these words? We read;

All the plan of redemption is expressed in these precious words: "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." {FE 429.3}

The Whole Plan of Redemption encompasses one verse! And we know that this will be the study of the redeemed for all eternity –

We read in 6BC 1115

The **theme of redemption** will employ the minds and tongues of the redeemed through **everlasting ages**. The reflection of the glory of God will shine forth forever and ever from the Saviour's face (Letter 280, 1904). {6BC 1115.4}

So, through this study we will have only a glimpse of what the redeemed will study for eternity. So we may now have a foretaste of what by God's grace we will continue to study in heaven.

Why did God give his only-begotten son? - For, "God so loved the world". Some people may think that this sacrifice was made in order for God to show us that He loved us, but rather we read from Steps To Christ – page 13

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption. {SC 13.2}

So, was the Plan of Redemption an afterthought? We read in Desire of Ages -

The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of "the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal." Rom. 16:25, R. V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God's throne. From the beginning, God and Christ knew of the apostasy of Satan, and of the fall of man through the deceptive power of the apostate. God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence, and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world, that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.
{DA 22.2}

How did this Plan of Redemption come about though? We read in Zechariah 6:13 - Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the **counsel of peace** shall be between them both.

This counsel was some time in eternity as we read in Fundamentals of Christian Education -

The plan of salvation had its place in the counsels of the Infinite from all eternity. {FE 186.2}

We know the Bible says that the Counsel of Peace was between them both – so who was it between?

Even the angels were not permitted to share the counsels between the **Father and the Son** when the plan of salvation was laid.
{MH 429.2}

So, the Father and Son were engaged in the Counsel.

Is the plan of salvation sufficient for the whole world?

Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world. {PK 377.1}

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to **all men**,

1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for [the sins of] the whole world.

Definitely – the plan of salvation is broad enough for us all!

Following the fall of man, the counsel of peace was going to be in effect. Was it easy for God to put it into action?

Said the angel, "Think ye that the Father yielded up His dearly beloved Son without a struggle? No, no." It was even a struggle with the God of heaven, whether to let guilty man perish, or to give His darling Son to die for them. {EW 127.1}

Here we read that even the God of heaven struggled when deciding whether to let us fallen sinful beings perish, or allow his Son to come down and die for our sins. So, we can start to see glimpses of God's Love, and his willingness to save us.

Just how great is the Love of God?

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a **tiny rill** to the **boundless ocean**, when compared with the **infinite, exhaustless love of God**. Tongue can not utter it; pen can not portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an **infinity beyond**. You may study that love for ages; **yet you can never fully comprehend the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the love of God in giving His Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it.** {ST, April 12, 1910 par. 9}

rill – small stream

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, [saying], Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

The question has been asked, "Would not a lesser gift from God have been adequate for the redemption of lost man?" "In this was

manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The question is unanswerable, and it is not profitable for us to spend our time in making conjectures. All our thoughts and imaginations will not alter in the least any part of the plan of redemption devised from all eternity. God loved the world to such an extent that he gave **full and complete evidence of the fact**. He did not leave any chance for the tempter to say that he did not love us, for he gave a gift whose **value could not be estimated**.

Had he done less, Satan and his agencies would have sought to have inspired jealousy against God by intimating that he could **have done more than he did**. God so loved the world that he determined to give a gift **beyond all computation, and make manifest how immeasurable was his love**. The gift of God would be a wonder to all worlds, to all created intelligences, ever enlarging their ideas of what God's love was in its **infinity and greatness**. **Contemplation of this love would uproot from the heart all selfishness, and so transform the soul that men would cherish generosity, practice self-denial, and imitate the example of God**. God so loved the world that he gave heaven's best gift, in order that the most guilty transgressor should not be deferred from coming to Christ, however great his sin, and be enabled to ask for pardon at a throne of mercy. {ST, February 5, 1894 par. 6}

God's love is everlasting it encompasses all eternity, its a love that we will never be able to fully comprehend.

So, how was God's Love manifested?

1 John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins.

Just how great is the gift of God in giving us His Son?

The Lord God of heaven collected all the riches of the universe, and laid them down in order to purchase the pearl of lost humanity. The Father gave all his divine resources into the hands of Christ in order that the richest blessings of heaven might be poured out upon a

fallen race. **God could not express greater love than he has expressed in giving the Son of his bosom to this world.** This gift was given to man to convince him that God had left **nothing undone** that he could do, that there is nothing held in reserve, but that all heaven has been poured out in one vast gift. *The present and eternal happiness of man consists in receiving God's love, and in keeping God's commandments.* Christ is our Redeemer. He is the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the fountain in which we may be washed and cleansed from all impurity. He is the costly sacrifice that has been given for the reconciliation of man. **The universe of heaven, the worlds unfallen, the fallen world, and the confederacy of evil cannot say that God could do more for the salvation of man than he has done. Never can his gift be surpassed, never can he display a richer depth of love.** Calvary represents his crowning work. It is man's part to respond to his great love, by appropriating the great salvation the blessing of the Lord has made it possible for man to obtain. We are to show our appreciation of the wonderful gift of God by becoming partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. We are to show our gratitude to God by becoming a co-worker with Jesus Christ, **by representing his character to the world. In great mercy the Lord has rolled back the thick darkness from before his throne, that we may behold him as a God of love.** {YI, October 17, 1895 par. 2}

We know that God is all powerful (omnipotent) yet in the Gift of his Son, nothing more could have been given – by this we can begin to see just what the cost was for our salvation

Why did Christ condescend to humanity?

Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall **save his people from their sins.**

How will He save His people from their sins?

The Eternal Father, the unchangeable one, gave his only begotten Son, tore from his bosom Him who was made in the express image of his person, and sent him down to earth to reveal **how greatly he loved mankind.** {RH, July 9, 1895 par. 13}

What does the revelation, of God's Love lead men to do?

Romans 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the **goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?**

Satan is determined that men shall not see the love of God, which led him to give his only begotten Son to save the lost race; for it is the goodness of God that leads men to **repentance**.
{RH, March 20, 1894 par. 4}

It leads man to repent of his sins, and what is repentance? –

Proverbs 28:13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso **confesseth** and **forsaketh** [them] shall have mercy.

Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it.
{SC 23.2}

Repentance is to both confess and forsake our sins.

Following repentance how are we to respond to His love?

Since God has done so much for us, how shall we not, for Christ's sake, show our love to him by obedience to his commandments, by being doers of his word, by unreservedly consecrating ourselves to his service?" {RH, July 9, 1895 par. 13}

What is his commandment?

1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

What is the name of Jesus Christ referring to?

Name - 3686. onoma onoma on'-om-ah; from a presumed derivative of the base of 1097 (compare 3685); a "name" (literally or figuratively) [authority, character]:—called, (+ sur-)name(-d).

The name is referring to his character

So, we have to believe who Jesus is. But why is this so?

Because He (Jesus) revealed to mankind how great the Love of God is, and it's because of this that we return our love to him. Why is it so important though?

Because God only accepts obedience from love, – and why do we love God?

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.
– And how was His love manifested? In giving us His Son!

Why is it that some of us may not be overcoming as God would have us?

We need also much more knowledge; we need to be enlightened in regard to the **plan of salvation**. There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject that is **so necessary to our present and eternal welfare** {1SM 359.2}

We need to be enlightened in regard to the Plan of salvation,
– and who does the whole plan of salvation revolve around?

All the **great truths** of the Scriptures center in Christ; rightly understood, all lead to him. Let Christ be presented as the **alpha and omega**, the beginning and the end, of the great plan of redemption {RH, June 13, 1912 par. 18}

That is why we read in 1 John 5:5 - Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? The whole plan of redemption, the whole bible revolves around the Son of God

How is this important? Jesus manifests the Love of God to us in order that we may render obedience to God. So then all our belief and faith must revolve around the Love of God in sending His Son to earth.

How important is it to have this knowledge?

The knowledge of God as revealed in Christ is the knowledge that all who are saved must have. It is the knowledge that works transformation of character. This knowledge, received, will re-create the soul in the image of God. It will impart to the whole being a spiritual power that is divine. {8T 289.2}

What was the knowledge of God? – It was His Love for mankind.

So, now we read in 1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

What comes as a result of this love?

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Obedience. In keeping His commandments, because we love him.

Only by this love should our faith be actuated -

Galatians 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing,
nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Whatever else motivates us to believe in God if it does not come
from a heart of love towards God, then it is sin.

Romans 14:23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat,
because [he eateth] not of faith: for whatsoever [is] not of faith is sin.

Genuine faith is the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul.
A living faith will be a working faith. {YI, September 13, 1894 par. 2}

Who and what aspect does the gospel revolve around?

Mark 1:1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

So, what is the Gospel?

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of
God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the
Greek.

1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith:
as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

It's the power of God to everyone that believeth?
Believeth what?

We read in 1 John 5:5 - we believe that Jesus is the Son of God -
Why? For in the gift of Jesus is the Love of God manifested -

So, why were the gospels written?

We read in John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might
have life through his name.

The gospels were written that we might believe that Jesus is the
Christ, the Son of God and that through his name (character) we
may have life.

Can anything separate us from the Love of God? Is there any hindrance to our obedience to him?

Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from **the love of God**, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If nothing can separate us from the Love of God then there is nothing holding us back from obedience – for from the Love of God should stem all our obedience. We read;

The strongest temptation can not excuse sin. However great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel any one to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weakest points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the attack, God has provided help for us, and in his strength we may conquer. {RH, April 18, 1907 par. 4}

Brethren we can overcome by dwelling more on the plan of salvation and the Love of God – we should meditate more on John 3:16. So just how important is the Plan of Redemption? We read;

The **central theme** of the Bible, the **theme about which every other** in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. A reverent contemplation of such themes as these can not fail to soften, purify, and ennoble the heart, and, at the same time, to inspire the mind with new strength and vigor. {ST, April 18, 1906 par. 1}

So then, if this is the central theme of the Bible, it must be imperative for us to study this. Overcoming sin would also be one of the themes, which stems from the redemption plan. As we have noted the plan of Redemption revolves around John 3:16 we read;

All the plan of redemption is expressed in these precious words: "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." {FE 429.3}

How do we gain greater knowledge of the Plan of Redemption and the Love of God, in order that we may serve God wholly out of a loving heart and overcome sin?

Higher education is an experimental knowledge of the **plan of salvation**, and this knowledge is secured by **earnest and diligent study of the Scriptures**. Such an education will renew the mind and transform the character, restoring the image of God in the soul. It will fortify the mind against the deceptive whisperings of the adversary, and enable us to understand the voice of God. It will teach the learner to become a co-worker with Jesus Christ, to dispel the moral darkness about him, and bring light and knowledge to men. It is the simplicity of true godliness-- our passport from the preparatory school of earth to the higher school above. {CT 11.1}

By diligent and earnest study of the scriptures and from gaining the experimental knowledge we may be able to shine forth as lights in this world, we read first the experiences of the messengers in the early days of Christianity and their burdens -

The consecrated messengers who in the early days of Christianity carried to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation, allowed no thought of self-exaltation to mar their presentation of Christ and Him crucified. They coveted neither authority nor pre-eminence. Hiding self in the Saviour, **they exalted the great plan of salvation**, and the **life of Christ**, the Author and Finisher of this plan. **Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, was the burden of their teaching**. {AA 209.1}

If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin. {AA 209.2}

May the experience of the messengers back then, be ours today, for we
read;

Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, "Behold your God." The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation **of His character of love**. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the **grace of God has done for them**. {COL 415.5}

The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good **works--in words of truth and deeds of holiness.** {COL 416.1}

By our lives, we are to manifest the Love of God to mankind, in the same way God manifested his love to mankind through Jesus– and this was manifested in good works, words of truth and deeds of holiness. So overcoming is made possible through dwelling on the Love of God, which leads to obedience to his commands. May God’s light shine forth through us.

When this is completed what follows;

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. {COL 69.1}

Then the Lord will return and we will be able by God’s grace to continue this study throughout eternity. So we can in this life understand enough of the infinite Plan of Redemption to gain the victory over sin, and render obedience to God. After having obtained this victory we will forever study the wonderful Plan of Redemption.

We read;

In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance.

The length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost. {GC 651.1}

So, in summary, let me ask, what are we saved by?

Ephesians 2:8 For by **grace** are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:

Who is that faith in – Jesus Christ, the Son of God 1 John 5:5 – why?

Because He manifests the Love of God so that our faith may be actuated by His love

Galatians 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

What does this faith lead to?

The faith of the genuine believer will be made manifest in purity and holiness of character. Faith works by love and purifies the soul, and with faith there will be corresponding obedience, a faithful doing of the words of Christ. Christianity is always intensely practical, adapting itself to all the circumstances of actual life.

{MYP 200.1}

This faith leads to obedience – and what does God require of us?

Deuteronomy 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

10:13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

So God wants us to love him, which results ultimately to our obedience to him. And what happens as a result of this obedience?

Romans 13:10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore **love [is] the fulfilling of the law.**

So when we have this love, we will fulfill the law. But now we read of another requirement from God in order to obtain the victory.

Micah 6:8 He hath showed thee, O man, what [is] good; and what doth the LORD **require of thee**, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk **humbly with thy God?**

So why does God require us to walk humbly?

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but **giveth grace unto the humble.**

It is because God only gives grace to the humble and not only that -

Isaiah 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name [is] Holy; I dwell in the high and holy [place], with him also [that is] of a contrite and **humble spirit**, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

So for God to dwell in us – we also have to have a humble heart. Furthermore, there is still another requirement for God to dwell in us and this is found in 1 John 4:15 –

1 John 4:15 Whosoever shall **confess that Jesus is the Son of God**, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

We have to confess that Jesus is the Son of God. Not only verbally but by our obedience to his commands – And not just as a profession for we read in 1 John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

Our true, sincere and honest belief in Christ will result in obedience, which stems from love.

True refinement will never be revealed so long as self is considered as the supreme object. Love must dwell in the heart. **A thoroughgoing Christian draws his motives of action from his deep heart love for his Master.** {MH 490.1}

1 John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

When we dwell on the Love of God revealed in John 3:16 – God dwells in us and what happens us a result?

1 John 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

Our love is made perfect – and what does this love lead to – perfect obedience to his express commands!

The life of him in whose heart Christ abides, will reveal practical godliness. The character will be purified, elevated, ennobled, and glorified. {AA 560.1}

Let us:

Thank God for the gift of His dear Son and pray that He may not have died for you in vain. The Spirit invites you today.

Come with your whole heart to Jesus,
and you may claim His blessing. {SC 54.3}

May we ask God as David did -

Psalms 119:18 Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Why? So,

By beholding we become changed. As we look in faith to Jesus, His image is engraven on the heart. We are transformed in character.-- Letter 134, 1903. {1NL 142.4}

So to conclude let us read once again John 3:16 – and we will discover something very exciting –

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever **believeth in him** should not perish, but have everlasting life.

May we be found ready that day when he shall make up jewels for his kingdom.

Praise be to God!

Amen.

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