

Lesson 82 - Character of Light Versus Darkness

1. What is God? **1 John 1:5, 2 Samuel 22:29, Psalms 27:1**

EGW: God is light; and in the words, "I am the light of the world," Christ declared His oneness with God, and His relation to the whole human family. It was He who at the beginning had caused "the light to shine out of darkness." 2 Corinthians 4:6. He is the light of sun and moon and star. He was the spiritual light that in symbol and type and prophecy had shone upon Israel. But not to the Jewish nation alone was the light given. As the sunbeams penetrate to the remotest corners of the earth, so does the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon every soul. {DA 464.3}

"That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The world has had its great teachers, men of giant intellect and wonderful research, men whose utterances have stimulated thought, and opened to view vast fields of knowledge; and these men have been honored as guides and benefactors of their race. But there is One who stands higher than they. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John 1:12, 18. We can trace the line of the world's great teachers as far back as human records extend; but the Light was before them. As the moon and the stars of the solar system shine by the reflected light of the sun, so, as far as their teaching is true, do the world's great thinkers reflect the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is from the Light of the world. In these days we hear much about "higher education." The true "higher education" is that imparted by Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." Colossians 2:3; John 1:4. "He that followeth Me," said Jesus, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." {DA 464.4}

In the words, "I am the light of the world," Jesus declared Himself the Messiah. The aged Simeon, in the temple where Christ was now teaching, had spoken of Him as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." Luke 2:32. In these words he was applying to Him a prophecy familiar to all Israel. By the prophet Isaiah, the Holy Spirit had declared, "It is too light a thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." Isaiah 49:6, R. V. This prophecy was generally understood as spoken of the Messiah, and when Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," the people could not fail to recognize His claim to be the Promised One. {DA 465.1}

2. What is Satan? **Acts 26:18**

EGW: I saw that Satan was working through agents in a number of ways. He was at work through ministers who have rejected the truth, and are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie that

they might be damned. While they were preaching or praying some would fall prostrate and helpless; not by the power of the Holy Ghost, but by the power of Satan breathed upon these agents, and through them to the people. Some professed Adventists who had rejected the present truth, while preaching, praying or in conversation used mesmerism to gain adherents, and the people would rejoice in this influence, for they thought it was the Holy Ghost. And even some that used it were so far in the darkness and deception of the Devil, that they thought it was the power of God, given them to exercise. They had made God altogether such an one as themselves, and had valued his power as a thing of naught. {ExV 26.1}

3. Responding to God's call to come out of darkness into light allows us to obtain what? **1 Peter 2:9-10**

EGW: Christ draws them to himself by an unseen power. He is the light of life, and he imbues them with his own Spirit. As they are drawn into the spiritual atmosphere, they see that they have been made the sport of Satan's temptations, and that they have been under his dominion; but they break the yoke of fleshly lusts, and refuse to be the servants of sin. Satan strives to hold them. He assails them with various temptations; but the Spirit works to renew them after the image of him who created them. They work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who worketh in them, to will and to do of his good pleasure. The human agents co-operate with the divine by putting forth earnest, holy endeavor. They realize that they have exchanged captains, and they take their directions from the lips of Jesus. As a servant looks to his master, and as a maid looks to her mistress, so these souls, drawn by cords of love to Christ, constantly look unto him who is the Author and Finisher of their faith. By beholding Jesus, by obeying his requirements, they increase in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Thus they become changed into his image from character to character until they are distinguished from the world, and it can be written of them: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." {RH, March 26, 1895 par. 2}

4. What does the light lead to? **John 8:12**

EGW: No one could listen to his gracious words and escape the conviction that he was a being of superior goodness and wisdom. The emotions of his listeners changed from admiration of his eloquence to desire to attain to the lofty character which he presented, both by precept and example. As he discoursed on themes of eternal interest, they hung upon his words as if spellbound under their power. Those who were thus attracted to the vital truths which Christ presented, were standing on holy ground, near to the rivers of the water of life. With what deep, impressive power he called to the multitudes on the last day of the feast, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." At another time he declared, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall

not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." {ST, May 2, 1892 par. 2}

5. What is light to provide? **2 Corinthians 4:6**

EGW: Let the glorious conceptions of God possess your mind. Let your life be knit by hidden links to the life of Jesus. He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness is willing to shine in your heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit will take the things of God and show them unto you, conveying them as a living power into the obedient heart. Christ will lead you to the threshold of the Infinite. You may behold the glory beyond the veil, and reveal to men the sufficiency of Him who ever liveth to make intercession for us. {COL 149.3}

6. When we are delivered from the power of darkness, what are we translated into? **Colossians 1:13**

EGW: The apostle Paul says that God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Colossians 1:13. And everyone who has passed from death unto life is able to "set to his seal that God is true." John 3:33. He can testify, "I needed help, and I found it in Jesus. Every want was supplied, the hunger of my soul was satisfied; and now the Bible is to me the revelation of Jesus Christ. Do you ask why I believe in Jesus? Because He is to me a divine Saviour. Why do I believe the Bible? Because I have found it to be the voice of God to my soul." We may have the witness in ourselves that the Bible is true, that Christ is the Son of God. We know that we are not following cunningly devised fables. {SC 112.1}

7. When we walk in the light what happens to us? **End of 1 John 1:7**

EGW: The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us. 1 John 4:16. Satan is working by every deception he can command, in order that we may not discern that love. He will lead us to think that our mistakes and transgressions have been so grievous that the Lord will not have respect unto our prayers and will not bless and save us. In ourselves we can see nothing but weakness, nothing to recommend us to God, and Satan tells us that it is of no use; we cannot remedy our defects of character. When we try to come to God, the enemy will whisper, It is of no use for you to pray; did not you do that evil thing? Have you not sinned against God and violated your own conscience? But we may tell the enemy that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. When we feel that we have sinned and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. Ashamed we may be

and deeply humbled, but we must pray and believe. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15. Forgiveness, reconciliation with God, comes to us, not as a reward for our works, it is not bestowed because of the merit of sinful men, but it is a gift unto us, having in the spotless righteousness of Christ its foundation for bestowal. {MB 115.1}

8. What primary body part does light or darkness enter through? **Luke 11:34**

EGW: The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.... No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." [Matthew 6:22-24.] Those who have an eye single to the glory of God, will manifest in their lives the loveliness and purity of Christ's character. The enemy will not be able to pervert their understanding, causing them to view things in a false light, and misjudge the words and motives of their brethren. They will not plan how they may gain approbation; neither will they be so deeply affected by any course that may be pursued toward them that they will give up in discouragement. Shall they forsake their post of duty because they are slighted, or imagine that they are not appreciated? No; they will seek to honor him whose servants they are. They have the Captain of their salvation to please, his orders to obey, and they will leave the result with him. {GW92 442.1}

9. What are we to do with the light? **1 Thessalonians 5:5-6**

EGW: There was a God to call to account the inhabitants of the antediluvian world. There is a God to try the deeds of the men of this generation, and to give every man according to his works. The faithful sentinels for God have a work to do, to keep these things vividly before the people. Every lay member of the church has also a duty, to show that there is a reality in the truth, that we are indeed living in the last days, and the Lord is at the door. The words of the great apostle are addressed directly to us: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The great question for us to settle is, What part are we to act in this fearfully important period? Shall we yield to the indulgence of worldliness and pride, or engage in mirth and revelry? {RH, February 28, 1882 par. 5}

The true Christian will not desire to enter any place of amusement or engage in any diversion upon which he cannot ask the blessing of God. He will not be found at the theater, the billiard hall, or the bowling saloon. He will not unite with the gay waltzers, or indulge in any other bewitching pleasure that will banish Christ from the mind. To those who plead for these diversions, we answer, We cannot indulge in them in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The blessing of God would not be invoked

upon the hour spent at the theater or in the dance. No Christian would wish to meet death in such a place. No one would wish to be found there when Christ shall come. When we come to the final hour, and stand face to face with the record of our lives, shall we regret that we have attended so few parties of pleasure? that we have participated in so few scenes of thoughtless mirth? Shall we not, rather, bitterly regret that so many precious hours have been wasted in self-gratification,--so many opportunities neglected, which, rightly improved, would have secured for us immortal treasures? {RH, February 28, 1882 par. 6}

It has become customary for professors of religion to excuse almost any pernicious indulgence to which the heart is wedded. By familiarity with sin, they become blinded to its enormity. Many who claim to be children of God, gloss over sins which his word condemns, by linking some purpose of church charity with their Godless carousals. Thus they borrow the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in. Souls are deceived, led astray, and lost to virtue and integrity by these fashionable dissipations. {RH, February 28, 1882 par. 7}

10. What are we to do with the darkness? **Romans 13:12, Ephesians 5:11**

EGW: There is a world to be warned. We are nearing the close of time. The Spirit of God is being withdrawn from the world. The Lord is calling us out of sleep. We have lost many precious opportunities, but let us lose no more time. The sunlight of truth is to shine forth to the world. Cast off the works of darkness and uncertainty. -MS 96, 1905. Written September 7, 1905. {HFM 75.3}

11. With Jesus as the light, many claim to be "believers", but what will true believers no longer do? **John 12:46**

EGW: Day by day I am given an assurance of the love of God. "He that heareth My word," Christ says, "and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." "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," I long to proclaim the gospel of good news, the glad tidings of great joy. I am anxious to present to our people the message that the Lord has given me, that Christ has made us His own, that He has bought us with a price beyond computation. The Saviour declared, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness." He would have all heed His invitation, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." God presents salvation to all; He gives it to those who believe. {21MR 115.3}

12. How long do we have the light since we live such a short life? **John 12:35**

EGW: I feel an earnest interest that those who have been creating dissension and strife shall be convicted of their wrong, and shall repent and be converted. Tell this to the people: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you" (John 12:35). Because the time is short we need to follow diligently the King's business. {UL 188.2}

13. What activity reveals that we are in darkness? **1 John 2:9, Proverbs 20:20**

EGW: Those who claim to believe the truth should obey the Word of God just as it reads, practicing its instruction. Remember that those who love not their brethren, deny the faith. Many, because their brethren do not follow their leading, manifest toward them a spirit of hatred. God has never bidden us follow the leading of any man, and he has said, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whether he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." Can we not see from this what it means to be at variance? {GCB, July 1, 1900 par. 7}

14. What removes the darkness that cloaks the secret activities of the devil through conspiracies (groups conspiring), through underhandedness, through false impressions, etc.? **2 Peter 1:19, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Psalms 119:105**

EGW: There is to be no compromise with those who make void the law of God. It is not safe to rely upon them as counselors. Our testimony is not to be less decided now than formerly; our real position is not to be cloaked in order to please the world's great men. They may desire us to unite with them and accept their plans, and may make propositions in regard to our course of action which may give the enemy an advantage over us. "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy." While we should not seek for controversy, and should not needlessly offend, we must present the truth clearly and decidedly, and stand firm to what God has taught us in his word. You are not to look to the world in order to learn what you shall write and publish or what you shall speak. Let all your words and works testify, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables." "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." {1888 902.6}

15. With all the devilish activities out of our control, some people choose to remain ignorant, uninformed about such things, but what are we called to do (2 answers)? **1 Thessalonians 5:5-6 [Answer at the end of verse 6.]**

EGW: There are in the world today many who close their eyes to the evidences that Christ has given to warn men of His coming. They seek to quiet all apprehension, while at the same time the signs of the end are rapidly fulfilling, and the world is hastening to the time when the Son of man shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven. Paul teaches that it is sinful to be indifferent to the signs which are to precede the second coming of Christ. Those guilty of this neglect he calls children of the night and of darkness. He encourages the vigilant and watchful with these words: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." {AA 260.1}

16. Why is God not surprised by what happens in darkness? **Daniel 2:22**

EGW: Men of all characters, righteous and unrighteous, will stand in their several positions in God's plan. With the characters they have formed, they will act their part in the fulfillment of history. In a crisis, just at the right moment, they will stand in the places they have prepared themselves to fill. Believers and unbelievers will fall into line as witnesses to confirm truth that they themselves do not comprehend. All will co-operate in accomplishing the purposes of God, just as did Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod. In putting Christ to death, the priests thought they were carrying out their own purposes, but unconsciously and unintentionally they were fulfilling the purpose of God. He "revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." {RH, June 12, 1900 par. 10}

17. Part of the devilish activities is to mix up the terminology and pretend that knowing sin is light while avoiding it is darkness, but what does God place upon such people pushing the agenda? **Isaiah 5:20**

EGW: If there were no other evidence of the real character of Spiritualism, it should be enough for the Christian that the spirits make no difference between righteousness and sin, between the noblest and purest of the apostles of Christ and the most corrupt of the servants of Satan. By representing the basest of men as in Heaven, and highly exalted there, Satan says to the world: "No matter how wicked you are; no matter whether you believe or disbelieve God and the Bible. Live as you please; Heaven is your home." The Spiritualist teachers virtually declare, "Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?" [Malachi 2:17.] Saith the Word of God, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness." [Isaiah 5:20.] {GC88 557.1}

18. In Satan's final act of mixing up light and darkness, what is he transformed into, and what are his ministers transformed into (2 answers)? **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**

EGW: I greatly fear for the church. As Paul expressed it: "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Paul then explains that it is by means of corrupt teachers that the enemy will assail the faith of the church. "For such are false apostles," he says, "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." {5T 297.2}

The more we learn in reference to the early days of the Christian church, and see with what subtlety Satan worked to weaken and destroy, the better we shall be prepared to resist his devices and meet coming perils. We are in the time when tribulations such as the world has never yet seen will prevail. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." But God has set bounds that Satan cannot pass. Our most holy faith is this barrier; and if we build ourselves up in the faith, we shall be safe in the keeping of the Mighty One. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." {5T 297.3}

19. Who should we not have a close relationship with because the darkness and light are not to have communion? **2 Corinthians 6:14**

EGW: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" What can there be in common between these parties? There can be no fellowship, no communion. The word fellowship means participation, partnership. God employs the strongest figures to show that there should be no union between worldly parties and those who are seeking the righteousness of Christ. What communion can there be between light and darkness, truth and unrighteousness? -- None whatever. Light represents righteousness; darkness, error, sin, unrighteousness. Christians have come out of darkness into the light. They have put on Christ, and they wear the badge of truth and obedience. They are governed by the elevated and holy principles which Christ expressed in His life. But the world is governed by principles of dishonesty and injustice. {FE 476.1}

20. At the same time, we are to be a light to those in darkness, but what else are we to be? **Romans 2:19**

EGW: This instruction is for those who are living amid the perils of these last days. Be careful how you measure your brother. Take heed to yourself, and put no occasion of stumbling in your brother's way. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." {RH, January 7, 1902 par. 21}

21. What do people do that come to the light? **John 3:21**

EGW: The true Christian, "he that doeth truth, cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." His godly life and holy conversation are a daily testimony against sin and sinners. He is a living representative of the truth which he professes. Of these true-hearted followers, Jesus declares that he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Every one who at last secures eternal life will here manifest zeal and devotion in the service of God. He will not be ready to flee at the approach of trial, hardship, or reproach. He does not search the Scriptures to find some excuse for resistance to the truth. He does not inquire, What will my friends say, if I take my position with the people of God? To know his duty, is to do it heartily and fearlessly. He follows the light, as it shines upon his path, regardless of consequences. The God of truth is on his side, and will never forsake him. All apparent losses for Christ's sake will count to him as infinite gain. {ST, March 9, 1882 par. 8}

22. Why do most people resist the light while choosing to remain in darkness? **John 3:19-20**

EGW: Many do not want to know the truth, because it condemns their practices. The words of Christ are applicable to them: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." They do not have moral courage to obey the truth when it calls upon them to leave the customs and practices of the world. They have decided that they will not follow the teachings of the Bible if it requires a separation from the world. When obedience to God requires them to become peculiar in faith and practice, and to take their position with a people who are distinct from the world, they think the cross is too heavy for them to lift. They listen to the truth, and are convicted that it is the truth; but the world has a large place in their affections, and they go away and forget the word spoken. {ST, November 26, 1885 par. 6}

23. What aids in people staying in darkness? **John 1:5**

EGW: Brethren, there is light for us; there is light for the people of God, "and the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." The reason men do not understand is because

they fasten themselves in a position of questioning and doubt. They do not cultivate faith. If God gives light, you must walk in the light, and follow the light. Light is flashing from the throne of God, and what is this for?--It is that a people may be prepared to stand in the day of God. You who have devoted time and money to the adornment of your apparel and to the decoration of your homes, I would ask you, "Is Christ formed within you the hope of glory?" It is too late in the day to be taken up with the frivolous things of the world,--too late for any superficial work to be done. It is too late in the day to cry out against men for manifesting too much earnestness in the service of God; to say, "You are excited; you are too intense, too positive." It is too late to caution your brethren in studying the Bible for themselves, because they may be deceived by errors. We know falsehoods are coming in like a swift current, and that is just the reason why we want every ray of light that God has for us, that we may be able to stand amid the perils of the last days. Brethren, the Lord is coming! and it is time to lift up your "voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." {RH, March 4, 1890 par. 7}

24. What type of darkness covers the people? **Isaiah 60:2**

EGW: Those who will walk in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Jesus will be sensible that the light of life is illuminating their pathway. Said the prophet, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." While the world is lying under the gross shadow of error, ignorance, superstition, and death, the follower of Jesus walks in an atmosphere radiant with spiritual light. As he draws away from the traditions and customs of the world, and lifts the cross, and enters the way of truth, he finds that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Every step of faith and obedience brings him into closer connection with the light of the world, in whom "is no darkness at all." {ST, February 24, 1888 par. 2}

25. What are light and darkness compared to? **Ecclesiastes 2:13-14**

EGW: (no comment)

26. Despite all of the darkness around us, who stands up with light? **Psalms 112:4**

EGW: God declares, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." Isaiah 44:3; Psalm 112:4. To those who are seeking for light, and who accept it with gladness, the bright rays from the throne of God will shine.

{DA 47.2}

27. What is the test to see if someone is in the light or not? **Isaiah 8:20**

EGW: “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 people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions. At every revival of God's work, the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and his followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested. {GC88 593.1}