Lesson 98 - What is the Gospel?

1. What is the gospel? **Romans 1:16, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14**

EGW: The converted soul lives in Christ. His darkness passes away, and a new and heavenly light shines into his soul. "He that winneth souls is wise." "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." What is done through the co-operation of men with God is a work that shall never perish, but endure through the eternal ages. He that makes God his wisdom, that grows up into the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus, will stand before kings, before the so-called great men of the world, and show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into his marvelous light. Science and literature cannot bring into the darkened mind of men the light which the glorious gospel of the Son of God can bring. The Son of God alone can do the great work of illuminating the soul. No wonder Paul exclaims, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The gospel of Christ becomes personality in those who believe, and makes them living epistles, known and read of all men. In this way the leaven of godliness passes into the multitude. The heavenly intelligences are able to discern the true elements of greatness in character; for only goodness is esteemed as efficiency with God. {RH, December 15, 1891 par. 9}

2. What does that power also accomplish? **Romans 16:25**

EGW: Many who suppose that they are fitted to give counsel and instruction to others need first to learn from the Great Teacher what is truth. Many who think that they are wise enough to teach others are building upon a sandy foundation. Such need to offer to the Lord Jesus Christ the prayer, "Lord, teach me thy way." Obedience to the truth will sanctify the soul, making men and women Christlike in thought, word, and deed. The Lord calls for earnest, whole-hearted, sensible men and women, whose habits and practices and ideas are brought into conformity to the Word, and who are ever ready to stand in defense of the truth. {RH, April 19, 1906 par. 3}

"I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but . . . by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. . . . Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever." Romans 16:17-27. {RH,

April 19, 1906 par. 4}

3. When we stand firm in the faith and not believe in vain, what shall the result be for us? **1 Corinthians 15:1-2 [Answer at the beginning of verse 2.]**

EGW: We cannot possibly have a changing religion. The gospel is to be proclaimed and personally received. A general assent is not enough. There must be an intelligent heart reception of the truth wherein the receiver must stand and perseveringly communicate to others the knowledge received. The truth must be practiced in every respect, holding fast the word of life, "by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:2). {9MR 213.2}

4. What are we to do in response to the gospel? **Mark 1:15 [2 answers]**

EGW: The burden of Christ's preaching was, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel." Thus the gospel message, as given by the Saviour Himself, was based on the prophecies. The "time" which He declared to be fulfilled was the period made known by the angel Gabriel to Daniel. "Seventy weeks," said the angel, "are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." Daniel 9:24. A day in prophecy stands for a year. See Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6. The seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days, represent four hundred and ninety years. A starting point for this period is given: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks," sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years. Daniel 9:25. The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, as completed by the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (see Ezra 6:14; 7:1, 9, margin), went into effect in the autumn of B. C. 457. From this time four hundred and eighty-three years extend to the autumn of A. D. 27. According to the prophecy, this period was to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One. In A. D. 27, Jesus at His baptism received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and soon afterward began His ministry. Then the message was proclaimed. "The time is fulfilled." {DA 233.1}

5. What may we lose in the process, but is not only physical, in fact, it is often spiritual? **Mark 8:35**

EGW: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the

gospel's, the same shall save it." Selfishness is death. No organ of the body could live should it confine its service to itself. The heart, failing to send its lifeblood to the hand and the head, would quickly lose its power. As our lifeblood, so is the love of Christ diffused through every part of His mystical body. We are members one of another, and the soul that refuses to impart will perish. And "what is a man profited," said Jesus, "if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" {DA 417.2}

6. What three things are done to show that the prior answer is spiritual? **Mark 8:34**

EGW: The truth of God has never been popular with the world. The natural heart is ever averse to the divine teachings. Those who obey God will never be loved and honored by the world. From the lips of the Great Teacher, as he walked in humility among the children of men, were heard the words, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Yes, we must follow our Exemplar. Did he seek for praise and honor of men? Oh, no! The Majesty of heaven, the King of glory, left his riches and splendor, his honor and glory, and, in order to save sinful man, condescended to a life of humiliation, poverty, and reproach. "For the joy that was set before him," he "endured the cross, despising the shame." {RH, May 26, 1885 par. 1}

7. What may we lose in the process of accepting Jesus and the gospel? **Mark 10:29**

EGW: Peter was the first to rally from the secret conviction wrought by the Saviour's words. He thought with satisfaction of what he and his brethren had given up for Christ. "Behold," he said, "we have forsaken all, and followed Thee." Remembering the conditional promise to the young ruler, "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven," he now asked what he and his companions were to receive as a reward for their sacrifices. {COL 395.1}

The Saviour's answer thrilled the hearts of those Galilean fishermen. It pictured honors that fulfilled their highest dreams: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And He added, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." {COL 395.2}

8. What selfless person is eventually brought out with the gospel? **Matthew 26:7-13**

EGW: Jesus saw Mary shrink away abashed, expecting to hear reproof from the One she loved and worshiped. But instead of this she heard words of commendation. "Why trouble ye the woman?" Christ said, "for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." Her act is a prophetic anticipation of my death, and the record of it shall be repeated to the ends of the earth. {YI, July 12, 1900 par. 7}

The look that Jesus cast upon the selfish Judas convinced him that the Master had penetrated his hypocrisy, and read his base, contemptible character. This was a more direct reproof than Judas had before received. He was provoked by it, and thus a door was opened through which Satan entered to control his thoughts. Instead of repenting, he planned revenge. Stung by the knowledge of his sin, and provoked to madness because his guilt was known, he rose from the table, and went to the palace of the high priest, where he found the council assembled. He was imbued with the spirit of Satan, and acted like one bereft of reason. The reward promised for the betrayal of his Master was thirty pieces of silver; and for a far less sum than the box of ointment cost he sold the Saviour. {YI, July 12, 1900 par. 8}

9. What shall God do with the gospel? **Romans 2:16**

EGW: Those who had accepted the light concerning the mediation of Christ and the perpetuity of the law of God found that these were the truths presented in Revelation 14. The messages of this chapter constitute a threefold warning (see Appendix) which is to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord's second coming. The announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come," points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour's intercession shall cease and He shall return to the earth to take His people to Himself. The work of judgment which began in 1844 must continue until the cases of all are decided, both of the living and the dead; hence it will extend to the close of human probation. That men may be prepared to stand in the judgment, the message commands them to "fear God, and give glory to Him," "and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The result of an acceptance of these messages is given in the word: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." In order to be prepared for the judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the judgment. The apostle Paul declares: "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law, . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And he says that "the doers of the law shall be justified." Romans 2:12-16. Faith is essential in order to the keeping of the law of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please Him." And "whatsoever is not

of faith is sin." Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23. {GC 435.2}

10. If we do not share the gospel, what is the result for souls that miss out on hearing it? **2 Corinthians 4:3**

EGW: In this age we find men and women professing godliness who refuse to walk in the light which shows that they have greater truths to accept,--truths which involve a cross,--truths which, if accepted, would separate them from the world. They refuse to recognize the sacred claims of God's law. In an effort to justify their theories and their course, they misinterpret the plainest statements of Scripture. Filled with the love of the world, they say, "I cannot see; I cannot see." {RH, April 29, 1902 par. 4}

To such are applicable the words of Paul: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Men are crying, "Christ, Christ; give us Christ; but the law we will not acknowledge." Turning from the law, they turn from the Giver of the law, and they turn also from Christ; for he declares, "I and my Father are one." {RH, April 29, 1902 par. 5}

In every mind the solemn inquiry should be, "What must I do to be saved?" I must know for myself what is truth, that I may be sanctified by the truth, and thus obtain a fitness for the higher life. But Satan is untiring in his efforts to keep the transforming light of the gospel from the hearts of men. Those who do not willfully oppose, those who, like Paul, war against the truth ignorantly, may be converted. Yet it remains a stern, lamentable fact that among professed believers, as well as among unbelievers, the enemy blinds many to their ruin. They allow him to rob them of all desire to investigate the inspired word for themselves. {RH, April 29, 1902 par. 6}

11. Who does not want people to hear the gospel? **2 Corinthians 4:4**

EGW: Satan is continually seeking to overcome the people of God by breaking down the barriers which separate them from the world. Ancient Israel were enticed into sin when they ventured into forbidden association with the heathen. In a similar manner are modern Israel led astray. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” [2 Corinthians 4:4.] All who are not decided followers of Christ are servants of Satan. In the unregenerate heart there is love of sin, and a disposition to cherish and excuse it. In the renewed heart there is hatred of sin, and determined resistance against it. When Christians choose the society of the ungodly and unbelieving, they expose themselves to temptation. Satan conceals himself from view, and stealthily draws his

deceptive covering over their eyes. They cannot see that such company is calculated to do them harm; and while all the time assimilating to the world in character, words, and actions, they are becoming more and more blinded. {GC88 508.2}

12. What does he do to cause confusion in the message? **2 Corinthians 11:4, Galatians 1:6 [3 items are purposely confused.]**

EGW: The position that it is of no consequence what men believe, is one of Satan's most successful deceptions. He knows that the truth, received in the love of it, sanctifies the soul of the receiver; therefore he is constantly seeking to substitute false theories, fables, another gospel. From the beginning, the servants of God have contended against false teachers, not merely as vicious men, but as inculcators of falsehoods that were fatal to the soul. Elijah, Jeremiah, Paul, firmly and fearlessly opposed those who were turning men from the Word of God. That liberality which regards a correct religious faith as unimportant, found no favor with these holy defenders of the truth. {GC88 520.2}

13. What is done to the gospel message that is so dangerous? **Galatians 1:7**

EGW: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Paul's teachings had been in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit had witnessed to his labors; therefore he warned his brethren not to listen to anything that contradicted the truths he had taught them. {AA 384.1}

14. What type of gospel are we to make sure we have? **Galatians 2:5, 14**

EGW: All who receive Christ as a personal Saviour are to demonstrate the truth of the gospel and its saving power upon the life. God makes no requirement without making provision for its fulfillment. Through the grace of Christ we may accomplish everything that God requires. All the riches of heaven are to be revealed through God's people. "Herein is My Father glorified," Christ says, "that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples." John 15:8. {COL 301.2}

15. When you hear that type of gospel, believe it, what is done by the Holy Spirit? **Ephesians 1:13**

EGW: There is a serious, solemn work to be done at this time. In all places the standard is to be lifted. God has "made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth" [verses 9-13]. The word of truth, Bible truth, present truth, is to be presented calmly, soberly, in the demonstration of the Spirit, for the angels of God are making impressions upon minds. "The gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believe, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." {21MR 51.3}

16. What is the gospel to the unconverted that needs to be made known? **Ephesians 6:19**

EGW: The Saviour rejoiced that the plan of salvation is such that those who are wise in their own estimation, who are puffed up by the teachings of vain philosophy, cannot see the beauty, power, and hidden mystery of the gospel. But to all those who are of a humble heart, who have a teachable, honest, childlike desire to know and do the will of their heavenly Father, His word is revealed as the power of God to their salvation. The operation of the Spirit of God is foolishness to the unrenewed man. The apostle Paul says: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." {4T 586.1}

17. What shall we have that points that the gospel ought to make us all think the same thing when it comes to religious matters? **Philippians 1:27, Philippians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 1:10**

EGW: The conversation of those who are converted to God will not be the same as before their conversion. The words of the apostle Paul are: "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine; . . . but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for

Christ's sake hath forgiven you." {YI, August 25, 1898 par. 3}

18. What will happen to those that choose to not obey the gospel? **2 Thessalonians 1:8**

EGW: And will Christ's second coming be wanting in glory?--No; he comes to triumph. At his death, creation shrouded itself in darkness, and all nature sympathized with his sorrow and humiliation. At his second appearing, nature will testify her triumph. Many think lightly of Christ now. They despise and reject him, and say, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning." But we read, "He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." The same Jesus whose atonement has been rejected, whose followers have been despised and reviled, will be revealed from heaven "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." "And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." {RH, November 22, 1898 par. 12}

19. On the other hand, what does the gospel bring forth to the saved? **2 Timothy 1:10**

EGW: Immortality, promised to man on condition of obedience, had been forfeited by transgression. Adam could not transmit to his posterity that which he did not possess; and there could have been no hope for the fallen race, had not God, by the sacrifice of his Son, brought immortality within their reach. While “death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,” Christ “hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” [Romans 5:12; 2 Timothy 1:10.] And only through Christ can immortality be obtained. Said Jesus, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” [John 3:36.] Every man may come in possession of this priceless blessing if he will comply with the conditions. All “who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality,” will receive eternal life. [Romans 2:7.] {GC88 533.1}

20. What type of gospel is described as being part of the Three Angels’ Messages? **Revelation 14:6**

EGW: John in the Revelation foretells the proclamation of the gospel message just before Christ's second coming. He beholds an angel flying "in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is

come." Revelation 14:6, 7. {COL 227.1}

21. Once everyone hears the gospel, then what is promised to come? **Matthew 24:14**

EGW: But there is a day that God hath appointed for the close of this world's history. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Prophecy is fast fulfilling. More, much more, should be said about these tremendously important subjects. The day is at hand when the destiny of every soul will be fixed forever. This day of the Lord hastens on apace. The false watchmen are raising the cry, "All is well"; but the day of God is rapidly approaching. Its footsteps are so muffled that it does not arouse the world from the deathlike slumber into which it has fallen. While the watchmen cry, "Peace and safety," "sudden destruction cometh upon them," "and they shall not escape"; "for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." It overtakes the pleasure-lover and the sinful man as a thief in the night. When all is apparently secure, and men retire to contented rest, then the prowling, stealthy, midnight thief steals upon his prey. When it is too late to prevent the evil, it is discovered that some door or window was not secured. "Be ye also ready: for in an such hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." People are now settling to rest, imagining themselves secure under the popular churches; but let all beware, lest there is a place left open for the enemy to gain an entrance. Great pains should be taken to keep this subject before the people. The solemn fact is to be kept not only before the people of the world, but before our own churches also, that the day of the Lord will come suddenly, unexpectedly. The fearful warning of the prophecy is addressed to every soul. Let no one feel that he is secure from the danger of being surprised. Let no one's interpretation of prophecy rob you of the conviction of the knowledge of events which show that this great event is near at hand. {FE 335.2}