

## **Christ the Model: The Knowledge That Works Transformation** **—Gleanings from EGW**

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. {MH 425.2}

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." 2 Corinthians 3:18. {MH 425.3}

Of His own life the Saviour said, "I have kept My Father's commandments." John 15:10. "The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." John 8:29. As Jesus was in human nature, so God means His followers to be. In His strength we are to live the life of purity and nobility which the Saviour lived. {MH 426.1}

"For this cause," Paul says, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:14-19. {MH 426.2}

We "do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Colossians 1:9-11. {MH 426.3}

This is the knowledge which God is inviting us to receive, and beside which all else is vanity and nothingness. {MH 426.4}

"Go your way," the angels had said to the women, "tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you." These angels had been with Christ as guardian angels throughout His life on earth. They had witnessed His trial and crucifixion. They had heard His words to His disciples. This was shown by their message to the disciples, and should have convinced them of its truth. Such words could have come only from the messengers of their risen Lord. {DA 793.1}

"Tell His disciples and Peter," the angels said. Since the death of Christ, Peter had been bowed down with remorse. His shameful denial of the Lord, and the Saviour's look of love and anguish, were ever before him. Of all the disciples he had suffered most bitterly. To him the assurance is given that his repentance is accepted and his sin forgiven. He is mentioned by name. {DA 793.2}

"Tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him." All the disciples had forsaken Jesus, and the call to meet Him again includes them all. He has not cast them off. When Mary Magdalene told them she had seen the Lord, she repeated the call to the meeting in Galilee. And a third time the message was sent to them. After He had ascended to the Father, Jesus appeared to the other women, saying, "All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshiped Him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." {DA 793.3}

Christ's first work on earth after His resurrection was to convince His disciples of His undiminished love and tender regard for them. To give them proof that He was their living Saviour, that He had broken the fetters of the tomb, and could no longer be held by the enemy death; to reveal that He had the same heart of love as when He was with them as their beloved Teacher, He appeared to them again and again. He would draw the bonds of love still closer around them. Go tell My brethren, He said, that they meet Me in Galilee. {DA 793.4}

Those who dwell upon God's great mercies, and are not unmindful of His lesser gifts, will put on the girdle of gladness and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude. What compassion, what matchless love, has God shown to us, lost sinners, in connecting us with Himself, to be to Him a peculiar treasure! What a sacrifice has been made by our Redeemer, that we may be called children of God! We should praise God for the blessed hope held out before us in the great plan of redemption, we should praise Him for the heavenly inheritance and for His rich promises; praise Him that Jesus lives to intercede for us. {PP 289.2}

"Whoso offereth praise," says the Creator, "glorifieth Me." Psalm 50:23. All the inhabitants of heaven unite in praising God. Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist, "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee." Psalms 146:2; 67:5. {PP 289.3}

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}

The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, the Beloved of God, the Majesty of heaven, He whom cherub and shining seraph delighted to adore--humbled Himself to uplift fallen man; that He bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of His Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke His heart and crushed out His life on Calvary's cross. That the Maker of all worlds, the

Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside His glory and humiliate Himself from love to man will ever excite the wonder and adoration of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in rapturous song: "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!" {GC 651.2}

After Jesus had been nailed to the cross, it was raised and with great force thrust into the place which had been prepared for it in the ground, tearing the flesh and causing the most intense suffering. To make the death of Jesus as shameful as possible, two thieves were crucified with Him, one on each side. The thieves were taken by force, and after much resistance on their part, their arms were thrust back and nailed to their crosses. But Jesus meekly submitted. He needed no one to force His arms back upon the cross. While the thieves were cursing their executioners, the Saviour in agony prayed for His enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." It was not merely agony of body which Christ endured; the sins of the whole world were upon Him. {EW 176.2}

The spirit of hatred and revenge originated with Satan, and it led him to put to death the Son of God. Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness is cherishing the same spirit, and its fruit will be unto death. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies enfolded, as the plant in the seed. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1 John 3:15. {MB 56.2}

Satan and his angels determined to make Christ's death as humiliating as possible. They filled the hearts of the Jewish leaders with feelings of bitter hatred against the Saviour. Controlled by the enemy, priests and rulers stirred the multitude to take part against the Son of God. Aside from Pilate's declaration of His innocence, no one spoke a word in His favor. And even Pilate, knowing His innocence, gave Him over to the abuse of men under the control of Satan. {9T 229.1}

Similar events will take place in the near future. Men will exalt and rigidly enforce laws that are in direct opposition to the law of God. Though zealous in enforcing their own commandments, they will turn away from a plain "Thus saith the Lord." Exalting a spurious rest day, they will seek to force men to dishonor the law of Jehovah, the transcript of His character. Though innocent of wrongdoing, the servants of God will be given over to suffer humiliation and abuse at the hands of those who, inspired by Satan, are filled with envy and religious bigotry. {9T 229.2}

He is making the world believe that the Bible is uninspired, no better than a storybook, while he holds out something to take its place; namely, spiritual manifestations! {EW 91.1}

Here is a channel wholly devoted to himself and under his control, and he can make the world believe what he will. The Book that is to judge him and his followers he puts back in the shade, just where he wants it. The Saviour of the world he makes to be no more

than a common man; and as the Roman guard that watched the tomb of Jesus spread the lying report that the chief priests and elders put into their mouths, so will the poor, deluded followers of these pretended spiritual manifestations repeat and try to make it appear that there is nothing miraculous about our Saviour's birth, death, and resurrection. After putting Jesus in the background, they attract the attention of the world to themselves and to their miracles and lying wonders, which, they declare, far exceed the works of Christ. Thus the world is taken in the snare and lulled into a feeling of security, not to find out their awful deception until the seven last plagues are poured out. Satan laughs as he sees his plan succeed so well and the whole world taken in the snare. {EW 91.2}

Now the guilt of Satan stood forth without excuse. He had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he ruled the children of men, who were under his power, he would have manifested had he been permitted to control the inhabitants of heaven. He had claimed that the transgression of God's law would bring liberty and exaltation; but it was seen to result in bondage and degradation. {GC 502.1}

Satan's lying charges against the divine character and government appeared in their true light. He had accused God of seeking merely the exaltation of Himself in requiring submission and obedience from His creatures, and had declared that, while the Creator exacted self-denial from all others, He Himself practiced no self-denial and made no sacrifice. Now it was seen that for the salvation of a fallen and sinful race, the Ruler of the universe had made the greatest sacrifice which love could make; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. It was seen, also, that while Lucifer had opened the door for the entrance of sin by his desire for honor and supremacy, Christ had, in order to destroy sin, humbled Himself and become obedient unto death. {GC 502.2}

In dying, Christ secured eternal life for all who believe in Him. In dying, He condemned the originator of sin and disloyalty to suffer the penalty of sin--eternal death. {6T 230.3}

Never before in His earthly life had Jesus permitted such a demonstration. He clearly foresaw the result. It would bring Him to the cross. But it was His purpose thus publicly to present Himself as the Redeemer. He desired to call attention to the sacrifice that was to crown His mission to a fallen world. While the people were assembling at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, He, the antitypical Lamb, by a voluntary act set Himself apart as an oblation. It would be needful for His church in all succeeding ages to make His death for the sins of the world a subject of deep thought and study. Every fact connected with it should be verified beyond a doubt. It was necessary, then, that the eyes of all people should now be directed to Him; the events which preceded His great sacrifice must be such as to call attention to the sacrifice itself. After such a demonstration as that attending His entry into Jerusalem, all eyes would follow His rapid progress to the final scene. {DA 571.2}

*Note: All of His life Christ had purposely shunned any kind of attention drawn towards Himself for the purpose of being noticed. This was the one time in His life that Christ wanted all eyes to see him. But His motive was not selfish. The only reason He sought recognition was so that people would later reflect on who He was and why He came to earth. Thus, the crucifixion of Christ would be remembered down through all the ages. Satan would not be able to diminish its worth.*

He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will. This was humility. The whole treasure of heaven was poured out in one gift to save fallen man. He brought into His human nature all the life-giving energies that human beings will need and must receive. {5BC 1127.1}

Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undercaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. He did this that the Scripture might be fulfilled; and the plan was entered into by the Son of God, knowing all the steps in His humiliation, that He must descend to make an expiation for the sins of a condemned, groaning world. What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility. {5BC 1127.2}

But He stepped still lower; the man must humble Himself as a man to bear insult, reproach, shameful accusations, and abuse. There seemed to be no safe place for Him in His own territory. He had to flee from place to place for His life. He was betrayed by one of His disciples; He was denied by one of His most zealous followers. He was mocked. He was crowned with a crown of thorns. He was scourged. He was forced to bear the burden of the cross. He was not insensible to this contempt and ignominy. He submitted, but, oh! He felt the bitterness as no other being could feel it. He was pure, holy, and undefiled, yet arraigned as a criminal! The adorable Redeemer stepped down from the highest exaltation. Step by step He humbled Himself to die--but what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He did not die as a hero in the eyes of the world, loaded with honors, as men in battle. He died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth--died a lingering death of shame, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased, crime-loaded, profligate multitude! "All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head." Ps. 22:7. He was numbered with the transgressors, He expired amid derision, and His kinsmen according to the flesh disowned Him. His mother beheld His humiliation, and He was forced to see the sword pierce her heart. He endured the cross, despised the shame. He made it of small account in consideration of the results that He was working out in behalf of, not only the inhabitants of this speck of a world, but the whole universe, every world which God had created. {5BC 1127.3}

Christ was to die as man's substitute. Man was a criminal under the sentence of death for transgression of the law of God, as a traitor, a rebel; hence a substitute for man must die as a malefactor, because He stood in the place of the traitors, with all their treasured sins upon His divine soul. It was not enough that Jesus should die in order to fully meet the demands of the broken law, but He died a shameful death. The prophet gives to the world His words, "I hid not my face from shame and spitting. {5BC 1127.4}

In consideration of this, can men have one particle of exaltation? As they trace down the life and sufferings and humiliation of Christ, can they lift their proud heads as if they were to bear no trials, no shame, no humiliation? I say to the followers of Christ, Look to Calvary, and blush for shame at your self-important ideas. All this humiliation of the Majesty of heaven was for guilty, condemned man. He went lower and lower in His humiliation, until there were no lower depths that He could reach, in order to lift man up from his moral defilement. All this was for you who are striving for the supremacy--striving for human praise, for human exaltation; you who are afraid you will not receive all that deference, that respect from human minds, that you think is your due. Is this Christlike? {5BC 1127.5}

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." He died to make an atonement, and to become a pattern for every one who would be His disciple. {5BC 1127}

Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but He did not part with His divinity. A divine-human Saviour, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood (RH June 15, 1905). {5BC 1128.2}

Christ had not exchanged His divinity for humanity; but He had clothed His divinity in humanity (RH Oct. 29, 1895). {5BC 1128.3}

(Ch. 14:30; Luke 1:31-35; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45; Heb. 4:15.) Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin. He is the second Adam. The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him; he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. He took upon Himself human nature, and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity. He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden. {5BC 1128.4}

In every possible way Satan sought to prevent Jesus from developing a perfect childhood, a faultless manhood, a holy ministry, and an unblemished sacrifice. But he was defeated. He could not lead Jesus into sin. He could not discourage Him, or drive Him from the work He had come to this earth to do. From the desert to Calvary the storm of Satan's wrath beat upon Him, but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God

cling to the hand of His Father, and press on in the blood-stained path (MS 140, 1903). {5BC 1130.1}

When Jesus took human nature, and became in fashion as a man, He possessed all the human organism. His necessities were the necessities of a man. He had bodily wants to be supplied, bodily weariness to be relieved. By prayer to the Father He was braced for duty and for trial (Letter 32, 1899). {5BC 1130.2}

For the flattery of men they will turn from the approval of the Lord, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and will forfeit all right to the honor which cometh from above. How few know what is for their best interest! You do not appreciate this. Jesus, through a life of unexampled suffering and an ignominious death, has opened a way whereby man may follow in His footsteps, and finally be exalted to His throne, and receive the reward of immortality and eternal life. For a life of obedience he will receive an immortal inheritance, a treasure undefiled that fadeth not away. {2T 494.1}

How did Christ manifest His love for poor mortals? By the sacrifice of His own glory, His own riches, and even His most precious life. Christ consented to a life of humiliation and great suffering. He submitted to the cruel mockings of an infuriated, murderous multitude, and to the most agonizing death upon the cross. Said Christ: "This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." We give evidence of being the friends of Christ when we manifest implicit obedience to His will. {1T 690}

Paul was deeply anxious that the humiliation of Christ should be seen and realized. He was convinced that if the minds of men could be brought to comprehend the amazing sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven, all selfishness would be banished from their hearts. He directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven, in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying off His glory, voluntarily subjecting Himself to all the humbling conditions of man's nature, assuming the responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that death the most ignominious and revolting, the most shameful, the most agonizing--the death of the cross. Can Christians contemplate this wonderful exhibition of the love of God to man without emotions of love and a realizing sense of the fact that we are not our own? Such a Master should not be served from grudging, covetous, selfish motives. {4T 458.1}

The human nature of Christ was like unto ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin. Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. How intense was the desire of the humanity of Christ to escape the displeasure of an offended God, how His soul longed for relief, is revealed in the words, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." {5BC 1103.8}

Yet Christ had not been forced to take this step. He had contemplated this struggle. To His disciples He had said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness." He had volunteered to lay down His life to save the world (ST Dec. 9, 1897). {5BC 1104.1}