

Lucan: It's time to begin. Pastor, will you please offer the opening prayer?

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. We are rejoicing that we can be here in Your Presence during this hour. Thank You for providing this opportunity to receive a refreshing from Your Spirit. May all who attend receive exactly what You intend for them and we thank You for answering our prayers in YAHSHUA's holy name, AMEN.

Adriel Dean777: Amen, Amen

Zahakiel: Amen.

Gloria Bailey: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen 😊

Daphna: Amen

Ruthline: Amen.

PETER 2: Amen

Lucan: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) Among Adventists in this generation, this scripture has been used – and not incorrectly – regarding the theology of the "Godhead." It is true that this verse shows it is the knowledge of the Father and Son that is eternal life, not the Father and Son and a third being. Yet some have taken this a step further and made the doctrine of the Godhead – a trinity or lack thereof – a salvational creed, or "testing message." Tonight, we will ask whether this is true, and what is the "Testing Message."

"To know God," such say, "is to know the right doctrine about God." A major problem with this position is that it cheapens the "knowledge" involved from that of an intimate relationship to that of an intellectual theory. Theology and doctrine – even true theology and doctrine – are not, and never can be, "life eternal." Yahweh does not live primarily in the head but in the heart; it is not intellectual understanding, but spiritual healing, that brings Life and the spirit of love towards Yah and between brethren.

If a doctrinal disagreement does not lead to unrighteousness, the message and knowledge of Christ does not lead to judgment and condemnation of

those who take a different view. To “know the only true God, and Yahshua Christ” is a deeper matter than doctrines or creeds.

It is a deeper matter than knowing Christ “after the flesh,” which Judas and the Sanhedrin could claim better than we. It is a personal knowledge – a knowledge, not of the letter only, but of a living relationship with the Living God. As it is written in another passage regarding the Spirit:

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

We read from another of John’s books: “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, [even] in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” (1 John 5:20)

How do we know “we are in him that is true?” What is the “understanding” that we have been given? The context reveals the matter: “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. [And] we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, [even] in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” (1 John 5:18-20)

Here is the true testing message. We know God because we are born of God; we know Christ because Christ is formed within us. We know these things are true because “whosoever is born of God sinneth not;” but rather, “that wicked one toucheth him not.” This testimony of life is worth more than all true doctrine combined; if we make men right, but fail of making them righteous, we bring only condemnation.

We read earlier in the chapter: “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, [even] our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:2-5)

We may see, then, that to “know the Father and the Son” is a much more personal matter than a theoretical one. Correct beliefs are important because our understanding of Yahweh and His character will inevitably be revealed in our own characters. We are growing to perfection, and an imperfect pattern, perfectly followed, yields an imperfect result. Yet if a man is not perfectly following the pattern he has, what good does a better pattern do him? The change must be in the man, to follow and live according to what he knows. Unless the life is fully surrendered to Christ, unless Christ Himself is dwelling within, no amount of correct beliefs will yield the correct result. “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. 12:2) When the life is fully surrendered to Christ, He will lead us into all truth as we follow Him withersoever He goeth; the beliefs will be corrected by the Spirit that is given freely to us.

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or [whether] I speak of myself.” (John 7:17) Thus, the knowledge of the Father and Son that is eternal life is the knowledge which brings forth the life of Christ, which is a life without rebellion or known sin. We may read from the Testimonies: “In His prayer to the Father, Christ gave to the world a lesson which should be graven on mind and soul. “This is life eternal,” He said, “that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” John 17:3. This is true education. It imparts power. The experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, transforms man into the image of God. It gives to man the mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion of the lower nature under the control of the higher powers of the mind. It makes its possessor a son of God and an heir of heaven. It brings him into communion with the mind of the Infinite, and opens to him the rich treasures of the universe.” [COL 114]

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Elyna: Amen

Lucan: We may note it is “experimental knowledge,” not merely “theoretical knowledge,” that “transforms man into the image of God.” As we reach out to various individuals and movements, it is critical that we keep this in mind. It is Christ formed within, not the right view of the trinity, or non-trinity, or feasts, or health message, or even the Sabbath day, that “gives to man the

mastery of himself, bringing every impulse and passion... under the control." We know what "true education" is from this quote; we may conclude that any education that does NOT have this as its goal is "false education." A spiritual education that does not "impart power" from Christ is not an education from the school of Christ.

Men quibble over definitions and exacting wording, yet CSDAs have never made belief in the Godhead a test of fellowship one way or another, just as early Adventists did not: "Obedience is the test of discipleship. It is the keeping of the commandments that proves the sincerity of our professions of love. When the doctrine we accept kills sin in the heart, purifies the soul from defilement, bears fruit unto holiness, we may know that it is the truth of God. When benevolence, kindness, tenderheartedness, sympathy, are manifest in our lives; when the joy of right doing is in our hearts; when we exalt Christ, and not self, we may know that our faith is of the right order. "Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." 1 John 2:3" [MB 146]

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Lucan: Of those who have experienced the doctrine that "kills sin in the heart," it is written: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Revelation 14:12) A man may believe every doctrine correctly, but if he has not been born again, renewed in heart, all he can become is a better legalist without the power to do what he believes. Such cannot be those who "keep the commandments," but merely talk about them. Such cannot be those who "keep the faith of Jesus," for the faith of Jesus unfailingly reveals the life of Jesus. This is why many who profess "true doctrines" about the Spirit of Yahweh are themselves devoid of the very fruit of that very Spirit, which softens the heart and elevates the thoughts. This is true of any doctrine, and let us take note: believing the truth about the trademark and the mark of the beast will not save a single soul. Believing and teaching the unity of the saints in a single organized body, as Christ instructed, will not save a single soul. Keeping the Sabbath will not save a single soul. Salvation is not by works, or by intellect, or by correctness; it is by faith.

In every case, the beliefs and resulting actions are to be the result of the character; and the character is a gift from Christ. Thus, "this is life eternal,

that we might know thee, the only true God, and Yahshua Christ whom thou hast sent." It is the character of Christ that reveals protest against the image of the beast in whatever form it takes, whether Protestants enforcing a Sunday law or a religious corporation enforcing a trademark on God's banner and message. It is the character of Christ that reveals refusal to surrender God-given gifts to the demands and threats of an apostate church wielding civil power. It is the character of Christ that leads His people into unity with, and submission to, one another in the Spirit. It is the character of Christ that overcomes all sin, testifying that the "prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30)

The "experimental knowledge" of the Father and Son is revealed in eternal life, and the outworking of eternal life is described in the three angel's messages. It should come as no surprise, then, that we also find written in the Testimonies the following commentary on our key passage: "The significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended. Truths vast and profound are shadowed forth in its rites and symbols. The gospel is the key that unlocks its mysteries. Through a knowledge of the plan of redemption, its truths are opened to the understanding. Far more than we do, it is our privilege to understand these wonderful themes [...] As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study. The last book of the New Testament scriptures is full of truth that we need to understand [...] This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3." [COL 133]

It is noteworthy that she begins this passage by stating that "the significance of the Jewish economy is not yet fully comprehended." Let those who would make the traditions of Adventist fathers the sum total of righteousness take note. To a great number of professed Adventists, many of whom we expect to meet shortly, the fact that CSDAs hold camp meetings during the times of the spring and fall feasts is taken as irrefutable evidence that the Bride of Christ is in fact composed of Judaizers, and to be avoided at all costs. If such had the Spirit and testimony of Life in Christ Yahshua, such division and bigotry would never find root. To those who would follow the minimal requirements as though saved by the law, the blessing of Yah's appointed times falls on equally deaf ears as Yah's appointed name. Much like the Godhead, CSDAs have never made these matters a test of fellowship, yet we meet many who regard not keeping them a test of fellowship. As the

Scripture says, "Let no one, then, judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a feast, or of a new moon, or of Sabbaths." (Col. 2:16, YLT)

Setting aside that Paul and the apostles are recorded as fellowshiping during feasts in Scripture, history, and Inspiration, it is acknowledged by all that Yahshua died on the Passover, fulfilling that symbol at the actual time. After the cross, it is acknowledged by all that He rose and was presented to the Father at the actual time of the wave sheaf. It is acknowledged by all that the Spirit was poured out on Pentecost, fulfilling the event at the actual time. And, it is acknowledged by all Adventists that the antitypical Day of Atonement began to be fulfilled on the actual Day of Atonement in 1844. We know that the Feast of Tabernacles represents the final harvest of the earth, which has yet to be fulfilled. Shall we expect that Yahshua, who changes not, will break His perfect pattern in regard to the timing of His return?

We may note that the fall feast lasts 7 days, yet is accompanied by an eighth day – called the "last great day" – the final holy day of the Biblical calendar. This "last great day" celebrates the completed harvest, and the end of the feast in which the people dwelt in booths, looking to the skies for deliverance. The symbolism here is difficult to miss for those familiar with the gospel, and yet, as we look to the "last book of the New Testament scriptures" as Mrs. White encourages, we find even further truth for our edification.

In the prophecy of the sixth seal, in which time we now live, we find written: "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." (Revelation 6:12-14)

Those who have studied Adventism are likely familiar with the events surrounding the late 18th and early 19th centuries; every aspect of this prophecy has been fulfilled, with the sole exception of the "heaven departing as a scroll," with the mountains and islands moving out of place. We now, as a people, sit at the very end of the prophetic period in which we live. We now see before us the image and mark of the beast, being imposed upon Yahweh's small remnant. We now, as a people, are being sealed and

calling others to be sealed in preparation for the final moments of probation. Yet the departing of the heavens is not the final seal: "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." (Revelation 8:1)

Why specifically a "half an hour?"

Uriah Smith offers a valuable commentary on this verse: "When the Lord appears, He comes with all the holy angels with Him. (Matthew 25: 31.) When all the heavenly harpers leave the courts above to come to this earth with their divine Lord as He descends to gather the fruit of His redeeming work, will there not be silence in heaven? The length of this period of silence, if we consider it prophetic time, would be about seven days." (Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, p.474 (476 online version)

"About seven days" is the designation in prophetic time, reasoning that a prophetic year is 360 days, and there are 24 hours, or 48 half-hours, in a day. We may note that 360 divided by 48 is 7.5; A half of an hour, then, would be about 7 days. Now where else do we find a period of about 7 days, followed by an eighth "great day," in association with Yahshua harvesting the earth? We note from the Testimonies that it takes Yahshua "a number of days" [DS, March 14, 1846] from the Holiest to "the east," where He appears to gather His people. The "number of days" would appear to be seven from the Scriptures; shall we conclude it mere coincidence that before the "last great day" of the Jewish year, there are seven days of the feast of tabernacles to be fulfilled, during which the faithful look to the skies for their deliverance?

We similarly read of the return to the city: "We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads." [1T 60.3]

Shall we conclude it mere coincidence that, after returning to heaven for another 7 days, we would arrive on a New Moon – the very day Yahweh has revealed to His people as the appointed time for communion, and foreshadowing of the marriage supper of the lamb?

We know from the writings of Mrs. White that the 144,000 are told in advance the day and hour of Yahshua's return. We are called to be among the 144,000 and are being gathered even now into the "perfect unity" that is required of and promised to them, under the name of "Creation 7th Day Adventists." It is here that Yahweh gathers those who can "wash one another's feet, and salute the brethren with a holy kiss." [1T 59]

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Lucan: CSDAs cannot be rightly called "feast-keepers" as commonly understood, and we would do well to make this distinction; yet we find great blessing in fellowshiping during the times Yahweh has set out for daily, weekly, monthly, and annual worship. We find also great value in following the counsels of Mrs. White, examining end time prophecies in light of the times Yahweh has given to foreshadow their fulfillment. As we prepare to gather for fellowship and heart cleansing at our camp meetings and other times of worship, let us work to the utmost that the next "last great day" may indeed be the last, preparing our houses and hearts accordingly.

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Lucan: More than this, let us plead with Yahweh, working actively for those of our brethren who still wait for a future test, not knowing that the day is far later than they have ever imagined. The image of the beast is the great test by which the destiny of God's people is decided; those waiting for a future fulfillment do not recognize that this test is over 30 years underway.

Yet this test, like all tests, can only be passed through the indwelling Spirit of Christ. This is why the first angel's message is "first," and not last. It is here and here alone that anything regarding the Godhead may be considered "salvational," for what does salvation consist of? "To whom God would make known what [is] the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." (Col. 1:27, 28)

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Lucan: "Christ in you" is the "hope of glory;" "Christ in you" is how "we may present every man perfect in Christ Yahshua."

We have recently been blessed with a call to the altar, and have committed to call others to the same altar of decision. That decision is the same in every age: Yahweh or Ba'al? Christ or Self? Do you have the experience of being kept from all known sin through Christ's power, and if not, would you like to today? This is the heart of the matter, and the first step of any "testing message," for without the testimony and life of Christ there is no life to test regardless of profession or belief. Those who follow Him do so "withersoever He goeth," and know where He goes because they know Him and His Father. We know Him because we have His life within us, and He is in us, to the healing of all sin and the manifestation of His perfect righteousness in the life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

Adriel Dean777: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Lucan: May this knowledge be effective through us as we prepare for the soon return of our Savior, preparing a people to stand in the day of Yahweh through the only possible means of doing so – "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Lucan: Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Elyna: AlleluYah!

Adriel Dean777: Amen!

PETER 2: Amen.

Lucan: If not, I'll ask David to offer the closing prayer.

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We are grateful to you for these hours of divine rest, and because we draw near to you in them, these hours also of divine, spiritual education. We thank you for the doors that you are opening, to take your Gospel among those who have had a form of it, and many teachings correct, and yet do not have the testimony of Yahshua, or the faith by which this testimony is obtained. We thank you that you and your Son dwell within the hearts of all who invite you in, and that we bear you with us

when we encounter the lost and dying. May this light that you have given to us shine before men, so that you alone will be glorified, and that the hearts of wayward children will be turned back toward you, in fulfillment of our prophetic calling. Bless us all for the remainder of the Sabbath hours, and on into the week ahead, for we ask it, and thank you that it will be so, in the name of your Son, Yahshua. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Adriel Dean777: Amen, Amen

Barb: Amen

PETER 2: Amen.

Elyna: Amen

Peterson: Amen.

Ruthline: Amen.

Gloria Bailey: Amen.