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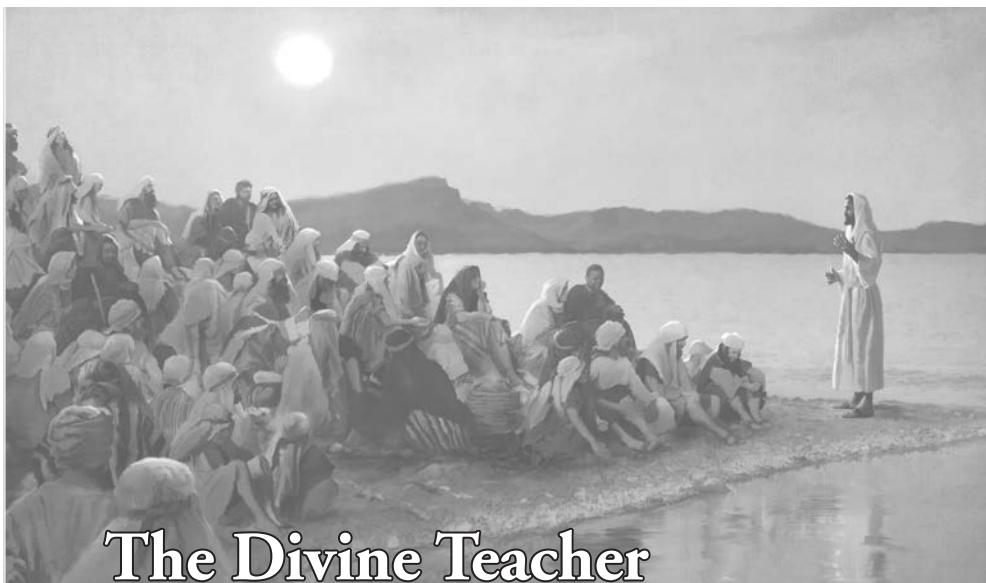
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The Divine Teacher

Most of us probably remember a great teacher who made an impact on our lives, whom we admired and appreciated. Some teachers transcend their own times and continue to influence subsequent generations. Outstanding teachers have decisively impacted life and thought and are often universally recognized. Jesus, of course, was the greatest Teacher of all.

His contemporaries acknowledged Him as a Teacher, for He exhibited the general characteristics of a first-century rabbi. As was the practice, He would sit down to teach. He often quoted the Scriptures and then commented on them. Finally, Jesus had a group of disciples who attentively listened to His words and followed and served Him. These were the basic attributes of teachers in His time and place.

Fundamental differences between Jesus and the other teachers, however, did exist. While the latter concentrated mostly on the intellectual aspects of a subject, Jesus addressed the whole being of His audience and invited them to make a decision in favor of God. Besides, those who heard Jesus “were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (*Mark 1:22, NKJV*). Christ’s authority gained credibility by the fact that He practiced what He taught. But above all, the source of His authority was His own Person. Jesus taught the truth, because He is “the Truth.” As God incarnated, He said, “Thus says the LORD,” yet would then later add, “but I say to you.”

This quarter we will study some of the main teachings of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels. Our Savior taught many things pertaining to our spiritual and practical lives. He presented His teachings to different audiences, being careful to adapt His method to each person. Sometimes He preached a sermon; other times He dialogued with individuals or with groups. Sometimes He spoke openly; other times He had to conceal the meaning of His words. In every case, however, He taught truth about God and salvation.

There could be many ways to organize and expound the teachings of Jesus. It would be possible, for example, to study His parables or to analyze His various sermons. Another approach would be to consider His dialogues with individuals or groups and His discussions with His opponents. Likewise, it would be interesting to focus on His deeds, His attitudes, and His miracles, which were ways He also used to teach important lessons. Each approach would be fruitful, but in order to grasp a comprehensive picture of Jesus' teachings, this quarter's lesson study will combine several approaches. It will come at His teachings more systematically, gathering how Jesus taught particular topics on different occasions and in different ways, which will give us a good understanding of most of His teachings.

When we open the Scriptures this quarter and read Jesus' words, let us picture ourselves among His attentive listeners at the mountainside, by the sea, or in the synagogue. Let us pray for spiritual discernment to understand His message and to grasp His unfathomable love manifested on the cross. And as we hear His tender voice calling us to follow Him, let us renew our commitment to walk daily with Him by faith and in obedience. The more we spend time at His feet, the more we will say, as did the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us . . . and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32, NKJV).

Carlos A. Steger has worked as a pastor, teacher, editor, and administrator. Currently he is the dean of the School of Theology at River Plate Adventist University. He and his wife, Ethel, have three children and three grandchildren.

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MISSION to the CITIES

Mission to the Cities is an emphasis of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on sharing Jesus' love and the hope of His soon return with people in urban settings. It envisions initiatives in more than 650 of the world's largest cities, starting with New York City in 2013 and running through 2015. Comprehensive outreach activities will be as varied as the character of each city, and will include Life Hope Centers, church planting, community events, health seminars, small groups, and reaping campaigns.

Please be praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Mission to the Cities:

- For the church members and church leaders working in these cities
- For the people yet to be reached with the Gospel
- For the world divisions and unions to develop strategies for reaching the large cities in their territories
- For the thousands of outreach activities and reaping events currently taking place
- For the strongholds of Satan to be broken, and relationships with Christ to be established

For a list of cities and to join in praying for them, go to:

www.MissiontotheCities.org and www.RevivalandReformation.org/777



READY AND WAITING



Reaching across the countries of the former Soviet Union, Adventists in the Euro-Asia Division face the challenges of postmodern secularism in some places and intolerance of religious minorities in others. But in the heart of Tatarstan, a golden opportunity awaits—to build a Seventh-day Adventist church in the city center of Kazan, where Christians and Muslims dwell peaceably side by side. In the city of Minsk, Belarus, Adventists are eager to meet the needs of their community through a Center of Influence. In

Ukraine, children long for a Christ-centered, Adventist education. We can help with this and more by supporting this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. Please give liberally to help our brothers and sisters, and to provide ways to reach those who are ready and waiting to hear the wonderful message we have to share!

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