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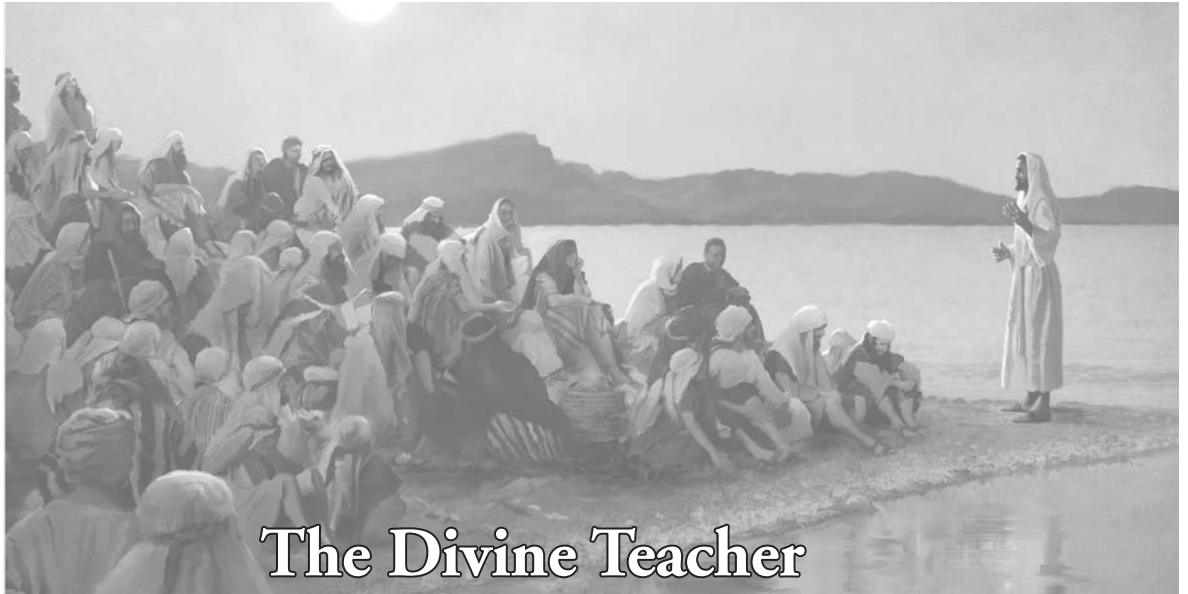
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## The Divine Teacher

**M**ost of us probably remember a great teacher, whom we admired and appreciated, who made an impact on our lives. 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. He 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.’”

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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).

*Our Savior taught many things pertaining to our spiritual and practical lives. . . . In every case, however, He taught truth about God and salvation.*

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# How to Use This Teachers Edition

## Get Motivated to Explore, Apply, and Create

We hope that this format of the teachers edition will encourage adult Sabbath School class members to do just that—explore, apply, and create. Each weekly teachers lesson takes your class through the following learning process, based on the Natural Learning Cycle:

1. Why is this lesson important to me? (Motivate);
2. What do I need to know from God’s Word? (Explore);
3. How can I practice what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Apply); and
4. What can I do with what I’ve learned from God’s Word? (Create).

And for teachers who haven’t had time to prepare during the week for class, there is a one-page outline of easy-to-digest material in “The Lesson in Brief” section.

Here’s a closer look at the four steps of the Natural Learning Cycle and suggestions for how you, the teacher, can approach each one:

**Step 1—Motivate:** Link the learners’ experiences to the central concept of the lesson to show why the lesson is relevant to their lives. Help them answer the question, Why is this week’s lesson important to me?

**Step 2—Explore:** Present learners with the biblical information they need to understand the central concept of the lesson. (Such information could include facts about the people; the setting; cultural, historical, and/or geographical details; the plot or what’s happening; and conflicts or tension of the texts you are studying.) Help learners answer the question, What do I need to know from God’s Word?

**Step 3—Apply:** Provide learners with opportunities to practice the information given in Step 2. This is a crucial step; information alone is not enough to help a person grow in Christ. Assist the learners in answering the question, How can I apply to my life what I’ve learned?

**Step 4—Create:** Finally, encourage learners to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (*James 1:22*). Invite them to make a life response to the lesson. This step provides individuals and groups with opportunities for creative self-expression and exploration. All such activities should help learners answer the question, With God’s help, what can I do with what I’ve learned from this week’s lesson?

When teachers use material from each of these four steps, they will appeal to most every student in their class: those who enjoy talking about what’s happening in their lives, those who want more information about the texts being studied, those who want to know how it all fits in with real life, and those who want to get out and apply what they’ve learned.