

Our Firm Foundation

The Seventh-day Sabbath

Christ Our Righteousness

The Immutable Law of God

The Non-Immortality of the Soul

The Three Angels' Messages

The Sanctuary

Volume 15, Number 4

April 2000



Oh How He Loves Us!

Where Is My Child's Heart?

The **Venom** of the
Serpent

“Merging Our Will With His”

All thoughts and actions are done out of our nature. In fact, we cannot think and act contrary to our nature. A lamb will never act like a wolf, and a wolf will not act like a lamb. A good tree does not produce bad fruit, and a bad tree does not produce good fruit. See Matthew 7:16–18. If a man is carnally minded by nature, he will serve the desires of the flesh and the self-centered mind. See Ephesians 2:3. If he is in the Spirit, he will do the things of the Spirit. It is all a matter of nature. See Romans 8:5.

The only possibility of living a godly life is to be partakers of Christ’s divine nature all day long. See 2 Peter 1:3–4. This is possible only as we surrender our unsanctified will to Christ. Unless we surrender our will to Christ, it will by nature pamper the old nature. But when our will is merged with His will, He will empower us to live His life.

In explanation of this concept, Sister White wrote, “When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”¹

Always remember that there is a limit to our will. We can choose to do what is right, but we are power-

less to accomplish what is right apart from Christ. We cannot free ourselves from Satan’s hold, but we can in our great need cry out to God to set us free from sin; and then God will impart His strength to perform His will in us.

Expounding further, Sister White wrote, “When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work bringing a supernatural element into human nature.”²

God’s omnipotent power can work mightily in us, enabling us to live the life of Jesus, *when* self is crucified. See Galatians 2:20. “Crucify” means “to put to a violent death.” I am sure there have been days when we did not choose to crucify self at all. Then there were days when self was spanked. But the Bible teaches us that the old nature must die—it must undergo a violent death each day.

There is one singular reason we as God’s people have not ushered in the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—we have not daily crucified self. Each little sin has delayed our Lord’s return. But God is calling for each one of us to purpose in our heart, like Daniel, to live fully for God in all things.

Jesus is worthy to have such a consecrated people. God has waited

a long time for such a people. By exercising our will on the side of God, we can be such a people. Yet we must choose. God will not force anyone to follow Him.

In this issue of *Our Firm Foundation*, you will read about God’s unfathomable love for us. It is His love that draws us—or woos us—to give our all to Jesus. You will read about the importance of godly standards in our life. These standards do not save us, but they protect us against unnecessary temptations. Daniel “kept himself free from those sights and sounds which would allure him, and draw him into temptation. When his duties required that he be present at scenes of revelry, intemperance, and basest idolatry, he cultivated the habit of silent prayer, and thus he was kept by the power of God.”³

Remember, truth is but an invitation to live the truth by the power of God. It is not enough to know the truth. We must surrender all to Jesus, merge our will with His, and become that final generation He has awaited so patiently for so long. Today, let us purpose in our heart to be that special people.✝

Jeff Wehr, Associate Editor

References:

¹ *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 312.

² *The Desire of Ages*, 324.

³ *The Youth’s Instructor*, June 7, 1894.

About Hope International . . .

Hope International is a special ministry assisting in the God-given work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We believe this Remnant Church of Bible prophecy has been brought into existence by the calling of the Lord, and we look for its final triumph in purity at the second coming of Christ. That the church does not now perfectly reflect the will of our Lord is cause for sorrow, but not for discouragement. The Word of God stands pledged that all within her borders will be sifted and tried, and though the greater portion will fail the test, there will yet remain a remnant to honor the Lord by their obedience to all His commands. Therefore, Hope International urges upon all the duty of supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in every way possible, insofar as is consistent with the principles of the government of God and the leading of His Holy Spirit upon the heart.

It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days that yet remain of this world are few, and what we do we must do quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world. —Editors

Executive Editor: Ron Spear
Associate Editor: Jeff Wehr
Administrator / Editorial Committee
Chairman: Harry Hansen
Managing Editor: Harvey Steck
Layout & Design: Kevin Patterson,
Bryan Bailey

Subscription Information

Prices for the annual subscription are listed below. Although we strive to keep them as low as possible, if your finances cannot meet the requested amount, please send whatever you can. We want this material to be available to all. If you wish to give a donation to assist in providing subscriptions for those whose funds may be limited, send your gift marked "Subscription Assistance" to the address below. Your donation is tax deductible.

United States: US \$18.75
Canada and Mexico: US \$23.75
Overseas (surface mail): US \$23.75
Inquire for overseas air rates.
Large Print Edition: US \$45
Audio subscription: (2 cassettes / month) US \$60 per year. For foreign subscriptions, please inquire regarding postage.

Hope International publications may be obtained from the following source:

Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328 USA

Phone: (360) 832-6602
Monday–Thursday: 8:30–5:00
Friday: 8:30–12:00 Pacific Time
Fax: (360) 832-3720
E-Mail: editor@hopeint.org
Web: http://www.hopeint.org

Shipping Information

For all products advertised in this publication (unless otherwise noted):

- Add 10% shipping plus US \$2 handling.
- For destinations outside the USA, please add 15% shipping plus US \$2 handling.
- If actual shipping charges are greater, you will be billed the difference.

Washington residents: Please add an additional 7.7% sales tax.
All money received must in US funds drawn on US banks.

4 The Venom of the Serpent
Gwen Reeves
What is the remedy, and where is our only safety?

8 The Condition of God's People
Ellen G. White
Almost 140 years later—have we improved?

11 Oh How He Loves Us!
Jeff Wehr
The life and death of Christ—redeeming, motivating, empowering

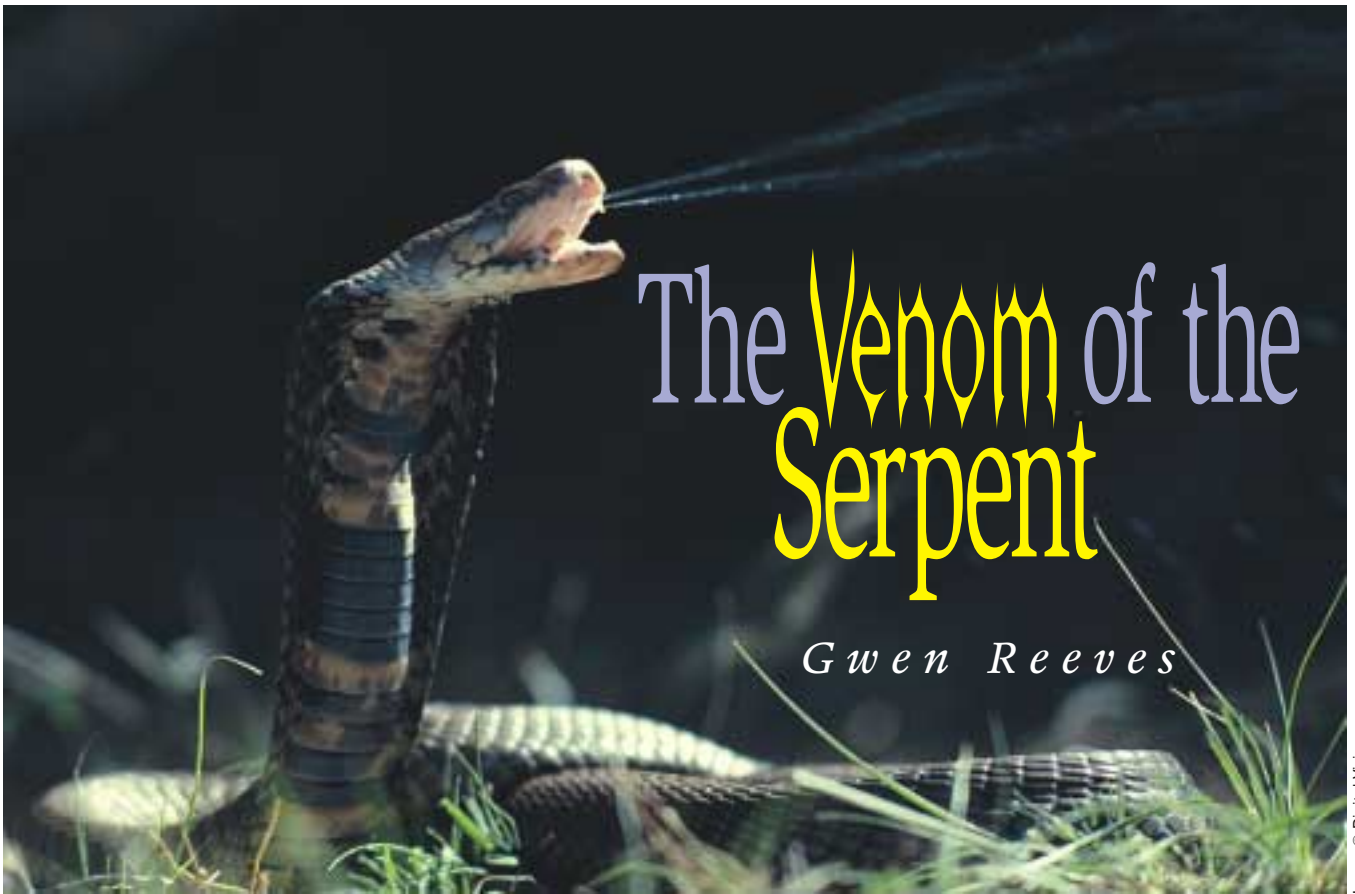
16 The Jewish Church Duplicated
Ron Spear
Have we made Christ weep over our church today as He wept over Jerusalem?

18 An Appeal to Live the Truth and Share It
Ellen G. White
How can we be secure when the church appears "as about to fall, but it does not fall"?

26 Where Is My Child's Heart?
Sally Hohnberger
A most vital question to consider as we prepare our children for heaven

departments

News Watch	14
For the Young at Heart	22
Defending the Faith	24
Letters to the Editor	31



The Venom of the Serpent

Gwen Reeves

Image © Digital Vision

“It is a pitch-dark night out on the prairie. A mouse scurries about, intent on finding seeds. In a hollow lies a rattlesnake. It cannot see the mouse, but it senses the presence of its warm body. It turns its head towards the mouse, waits until it is close, then strikes. It stabs and injects venom, then settles back to wait for its victim’s death.”¹

The rattlesnake is a pit viper. Between each eye and nostril is a large pit, which is used as a heat detector. Each pit has a membrane, which senses a heat difference of as little as 2/5° F. “The snake can line up its head on prey, even in complete darkness, by turning the head so that the same amount of warmth is detected by each pit. A rattlesnake can detect and strike a mouse nearly 3 feet away with deadly accuracy, even in total darkness.”²

Darkness is best suited for the powers of evil. In the blackness, the venomous viper lies in wait. There his maneuvers are not seen by the unwary and unsuspecting victim.

Our great adversary, “that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan,” (Revelation 12:9) is drawing the world into an ambush through an impenetrable darkness. Even among God’s people he sets up his ambush. “He seeks to draw away the soldiers of the cross from their strong fortification, while he lies in ambush *with his forces*, ready to destroy all who venture upon his ground.”³ “For among my people are found wicked men: *they lay wait*, as he that setteth snares; *they set a trap*, they catch men.” Jeremiah 5:26. (All emphasis supplied by the author unless otherwise noted.)

If we would understand how deadly poisonous is the Serpent’s venom, how quickly we would run away! If only the little mouse could see the rattlesnake, he would not come near. But he is unsuspecting until stung with deadly poison, he falls helpless into a stupor, paralysis and a speedy death.

What Is the Remedy?

We have all been stung by the Serpent’s poisonous venom. We have fallen helpless to the ground

like the little mouse. “All who have ever lived upon the earth have felt the deadly sting of ‘that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.’ Revelation 12:9.”⁴ “All have sinned,” and “the wages of sin is death.” Romans 3:23; 6:23.

But there is a remedy. Jesus became “sin for us, . . . that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. Here is One who is willing to exchange our blood—poisoned with the deadly toxin of sin—for his pure and righteous blood. He died our death that we might live His life. Our only chance of survival is a complete transfusion of His blood. What a trade! What unfathomable love! We can and must become HIS flesh and blood—because our own is poisoned and wrecked by the venom of the Serpent. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is

meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." John 6:53-56.

Only the Saviour can arouse us from the stupor of death. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Ephesians 2:1. Dear reader, Jesus came to rescue you from the clutches of the Serpent. The Lord loves you and wants to restore you to health. No one is in a situation so hopeless that our precious Jesus does not have a remedy. There is no life so polluted with sin of such a dark hue that Jesus cannot forgive and heal it.

Where Is the Serpent's Enchanted Ground?

After Christ heals us from the wounds of the Serpent, He warns us to stay off of his enchanted ground. Being on enchanted ground means you are within striking range of the Serpent. Christ bids us to walk on the safe paths, which He describes in His Word. His directions should have our constant attention if we want to stay away from the Serpent's lair. If the little mouse in the desert had only known where the rattlesnake lurked, he would surely have stayed away. But we are ever so much more fortunate than that mouse, because God has told us the places where the Serpent hides so that we can avoid them.

We have detailed descriptions of the whereabouts of the Serpent's hiding places. Therefore, if we pay attention to the Lord's warnings, we will be watching for the first signs of the Serpent's presence. "Our own future well-being and also the salvation of other souls depends upon the course which we now pursue. We need to be guided by the Spirit of truth. Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His Word, especially upon the scenes of the Judgment. We should now seek a deep and living

experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are transpiring around us; we are on Satan's enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey."⁵

Before the Serpent strikes, he tries to confuse his prey so they will not be afraid of his increasing closeness. He even changes his identity from Satan to a good angel, and his agents do the same thing. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be

did those of the heathen. *There are indeed few among them that Satan does not turn to account in destroying souls.* Through the drama he has worked for ages to excite passion and glorify vice. The opera, with its fascinating display and bewildering music, the masquerade, the dance, the card table, Satan employs to break down the barriers of principle and open the door to sensual indulgence. *In every gathering for pleasure where pride is fostered or appetite indulged, where one is led to forget God and lose sight of eternal interests, there Satan is binding his chains about the soul."*⁶

Sensational music is on the Serpent's enchanted ground. By this means he can confuse the senses so he is not easily recognized. "There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing.

Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey.

transformed as the ministers of righteousness." 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. He covers up his deceptions in a Christian camouflage so he can get close enough to aim his venomous fangs with deadly accuracy. In order to avoid having the prey run away in fright, a snake must conceal its presence, or confuse and deceive as to its identity. To help us learn to recognize Satan's presence and no longer be confused or deceived, the Lord has given us through the pen of Inspiration a description of some of his enchanted ground where he can get close enough to us to strike. Therefore, having been warned, we are without excuse if we stray onto them.

Amusements compose a large part of the Serpent's enchanted ground. "Many of the amusements popular in the world today, even with those who claim to be Christians, tend to the same end as

The senses of rational beings will become so *confused* that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. . . .

"This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods. . . . A bedlam of noise shocks the senses. . . .

"The third angel's message is to be given in straight lines. It is to be kept free from every thread of the cheap, miserable inventions of men's theories, *prepared by the father of lies, and disguised as was the brilliant serpent used by Satan as a medium of deceiving our first parents.* Thus Satan tries to put his stamp upon the work God would have stand forth in purity.

"The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such a confusion of noise and multitude of sounds as passed before me last January. Satan works amid the din and confusion of such music, which, properly conducted,

would be a praise and glory to God. He makes its effect like the *poison sting* of the serpent.”⁷

Participation in this type of music is on the increase. Thousands will be lost as a result. But not one soul need be deceived by this terrible invention of the Serpent, because based on the warnings from God, we should be separate from it. Continuing on, the servant of the Lord says: “Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. *Satan will make music a snare* by the way in which it is conducted. God calls upon His people, who have the light before them in the Word and in the Testimonies, to

the necessity of those who believe that we are having the last message of mercy, being separate from those who are daily imbibing new errors. I saw that neither young nor old should attend their meetings; for it is wrong to thus encourage them while they teach error that is a *deadly poison to the soul* and teach for doctrines the commandments of men. The influence of such gatherings is not good. If God has delivered us from such darkness and error, we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has set us free and rejoice in the truth. God is displeased with us when we go to listen to error, without being obliged to go; for unless He sends

plunge without thought into temptations from which it would require a miracle to bring them forth unsullied. Meditation and prayer would have preserved them and led them to shun the critical, dangerous position in which they placed themselves when they gave Satan the advantage over them. The promises of God are not for us rashly to claim while we rush on recklessly into danger, violating the laws of nature and disregarding prudence and the judgment with which God has endowed us. This is the most flagrant presumption.”¹²

What Is in the Serpent’s Deadly Venom?

The devil uses two fearful methods to destroy people: The first is deceit, in which he is serpentlike, and the second is force, in which he is dragonlike. Eventually he will enforce the mark of his authority on nearly all the people of this earth. Some will receive it in their hand—meaning that they are not deceived but are coerced. Most will receive it in their forehead, because they will really believe a lie. Between the two, deceit and force, deceit is the more effective agent. Deception was what the Devil used to overthrow man in the beginning. “If he should come boldly upon Adam and Eve and make complaints of God’s own Son, they would not listen to him for a moment but would be prepared for such an attack. Should he seek to intimidate them because of his power, so recently an angel in high authority, he could accomplish nothing. He decided that *cunning and deceit* would do what might, or force, could not.”¹³

“Beware lest any man spoil [ruin] *you* through philosophy and vain deceit.” Colossians 2:8. We can beware of his philosophy only if we see it. To see it we must have light. No one can see in darkness. God’s Word is the light. It shines on our path and shows us where the snake is hiding. We must obey the light. If we carelessly go ahead and use the Serpent’s philosophy—or follow those who do—we will be ruined. Even if we see sincere men using

“These various forms of amusement in the churches of our day have ruined thousands who, but for them, might have remained upright and become the followers of Christ.”

read and consider, and to take heed. *Clear and definite instruction has been given in order that all may understand.*”⁸

Drama is another enchantment which is coming into the church in the form of what may appear to be innocent skits and plays. “Death, clad in the livery of Heaven, lurks in the pathway of the young. Sin is gilded over by church sanctity. These various forms of amusement in the churches of our day have ruined thousands who, but for them, might have remained upright and become the followers of Christ. Wrecks of character have been made by these fashionable church festivals and *theatrical performances, and thousands more will be destroyed; yet people will not be aware of the danger, nor of the fearful influences exerted. Many young men and women have lost their souls through these corrupting influences.*”⁹ In what plainer language could we be warned?

Error is a deadly poison.

Gatherings where error is preached is enchanted ground. “I was shown

us to those meetings where error is forced home to the people by the power of the will, He will not keep us. The angels cease their watchful care over us, and we are left to the buffetings of the enemy, to be darkened and weakened by him and the power of his evil angels; and the light around us becomes contaminated with the darkness.”¹⁰

Love of approbation and pride are two more of Satan’s deadly snares. “I saw that God’s people are on the enchanted ground, and that some have lost nearly all sense of the shortness of time and the worth of the soul. Pride has crept in among Sabbathkeepers—pride of dress and appearance. Said the angel, ‘Sabbathkeepers will have to die to self, die to pride and love of approbation.’”¹¹

Presumption is a common temptation, and as Satan assails men with this, *he obtains the victory nine times out of ten.* Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and claim by their faith to be enlisted in the warfare against all evil in their nature, frequently

the philosophy of the Serpent, we must reject it. Here are some of the ingredients in the Serpent's venom:

Flattery is his foremost deceptive art. "Satan beguiles men now as he beguiled Eve in Eden through flattery, by kindling a desire to obtain forbidden knowledge, by exciting ambition for self-exaltation. It was cherishing these evils that caused his fall, and through them he aims to compass the ruin of men."¹⁴

"Flattery is an art by which Satan lieth in wait to deceive and to puff up the human agent with high thoughts of himself. . . . Praise, flattery, and indulgence have done more toward leading precious souls into false paths, than any other art that Satan has devised.

"Flattery is a part of the world's policy, but it is no part of Christ's policy. Through flattery poor human beings, full of frailty and infirmities, come to think that they are efficient and worthy, and become puffed up in their fleshly mind. *They become intoxicated* with the idea that they possess ability beyond what they do have, and their religious experience becomes unbalanced."¹⁵

We are not to mingle or associate with those who flatter. God has commanded us: "meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips." Proverbs 20:19. Not only individuals but whole groups, and even nations of people, have been deceived by flattery. Hitler convinced a nation that they were superior to all other races of men. His philosophy sounded good, but the finished product was terrible destruction. Being deceived by flattery is not confined to secular groups; it even happens to religious groups of people.

In the past, congregations and even whole churches have been deceived. As we know, history repeats itself, and, if we do not heed the warnings God has given us, we will repeat that history. People tend to be more confident that a deception is true if many people believe it with them. We love to be deceived about

ourselves. We love flattering words that assure us that we are good in our sins, and we love the men who speak them. Herein lies the secret behind the success of the "New Theology." The Word of God says it is because we "love to have it so." (However, the one who calls for sin to be put out of the camp is not loved—but despised.) "For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are *their houses full of deceit*: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, *they overpass the deeds of the wicked*: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

In the past, congregations and even whole churches have been deceived. As we know, history repeats itself, and, if we do not heed the warnings God has given us, we will repeat that history.

A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and *my people love to have it so*: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jeremiah 5:26-31.

"Rebuke Flattery of Women— You will sometimes be flattered by men, but more frequently by women. . . . As a servant of Christ, despise the flattery; shun it as you would a venomous serpent."¹⁶ "With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him." Proverbs 7:21.

Self-righteousness goes hand-in-hand with flattery. "Self-righteousness is a curse, a human embellishment, which Satan uses for his glory. Those who garnish the soul with self-praise and flattery

prepare the way for the seven other spirits more wicked than the first. In their very reception of the truth these souls deceive themselves. They are building upon a foundation of self-righteousness. The prayers of congregations may be offered to God with a round of ceremonies, but if they are offered in self-righteousness God is not honored by them."¹⁷

Policy is substituted in place of honesty. "Honesty and policy will not harmonize; either policy will be subdued, and truth and honesty hold the lines of control, or policy will take the lines, and honesty cease to direct. Both cannot act together; *they can never be in agreement*. When God makes up his jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be his chosen ones, his treasures."¹⁸

"Those who are controlled by policy rather than by principle *are not to be trusted*. They will pervert the truth, conceal facts, and

construe the words of others to mean that which was never intended. *They will employ flattering words, while the poison of asps is under their tongue*. He who does not earnestly seek the divine guidance will be deceived by their smooth words and their artful plans."¹⁹ Based on the unerring Word of God, there are many in this evil day who are not to be trusted.

Independence of thought and action is deceptive venom. The angel said: "'Counsel with your brethren. Your plans need the careful consideration of other minds.'"²⁰

". . . neither should you call together a certain chosen number who think as you do, and who will say Amen to all that you propose,

(continued on page 25)

The Condition of God's People



Ellen G. White

Image © 1994 Corel Corp.

When at Roosevelt, N.Y., August 3, 1861, the condition of God's people was presented before me. Many failed in coming up to the standard set up by our Saviour. They are in an alarming condition, not careful to examine the foundation of their hope, but are indifferent to their state, and self-deceived. Some, I saw, had departed from God, and were united with the spirit of the world. As different fashions are introduced, one after another have fallen back from their steadfastness, and have lost their peculiarity. It is crossing to come out from the world and be separate. As soon as individuals cease warring against the spirit of the world they are Satan's easy prey. Our efforts are too feeble to resist an influence which leads us from God, and which brings us in union with the world.

Those who separate from God and lose their spirituality, do not

fall back all at once into a state which the True Witness calls lukewarm. They conform to the world little by little. As its influence steals upon them, they fail to resist it and maintain the warfare. After the first step is taken to have friendship with the world, darkness follows and they are prepared for the next. At every step they take in the downward course, darkness gathers about them, until they are enshrouded. As they conform to the world they lose the transforming influence of the Spirit of God. They do not realize their distance from God. They think themselves in good case because they profess to believe the truth. They grow weaker and weaker, until the Spirit of God is withdrawn, and God bids His angels, *Let them alone!* Jesus spues them out of His mouth. He has borne their names to His Father; He has interceded for them, but He ceases His pleadings. Their names are dropped, and they are

left with the world. They realize no change. Their profession is the same. There has not been so glaring a departure from the appearance of right. They had become so assimilated to the world that when Heaven's light was withdrawn they did not miss it.

Truths have been committed to our trust more sacred than were ever imparted to mortals upon earth, yet we have not as a people been faithful to our trust. Unfaithful Sabbathkeepers are the worst enemies the truth can have. If those who profess the truth would live it out, then the Lord would magnify His name among them, and make them a powerful people.

The inhabitants of the earth are given to idolatry. They are filling the cup of their iniquity. Fashion is a tyrant, and nearly all are slaves to it. Travel in the [train] cars, steamboats, or where you will, and you will see the human frame covered with extravagant

decorations, and deformed with hoops. Modesty is rare; it seems to have departed from this enlightened age. Sodom and Gomorrah will rise up in the judgment and condemn this generation, for if they had been privileged with the light which now shines upon the inhabitants of the earth, they would have repented long ago.

God will have a separate and peculiar people. Their faith is peculiar. Their prospects are peculiar and glorious, and if they do not consider the heavenly inducement offered them of sufficient value to lead them to renounce the fashions of the world, when God rises up to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, they must perish with them. Please read Isaiah 26:21: "For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

James 4:4: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." 1 John 2:15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

We are called upon in these perilous times to elevate the standard. It has been left to trail in the dust. The fashions of the world hold God's people in bondage.

Those who have really chosen God and heaven as their portion will be peculiar. The sanctifying influence of the truth has separated them from the world, and they will have moral courage to carry out their faith, and by their simple plainness of dress and holy living condemn the idolatry and extravagance of this age. Professed Sabbathkeepers who would advocate the wearing of hoops and useless ornaments, no matter how high their profession, the truth has not had its sanctifying influence upon the heart. They are not dead to the world. When the tree dies the

leaves fall off. There is just as wide a difference between the follower of Jesus Christ and the worldling, as there is between a tree clothed with its green foliage and a dead and leafless tree. The truth accomplishes a work for the receivers. It causes them to die to the world, and live unto God. Such can receive no satisfaction in adorning their heads with flowers, while they have a true sense of the sufferings of their Redeemer on account of their sins. His sacred brow was encircled with cruel thorns, which bruised His holy temples. This thought should be enough to cause every true follower of Jesus to discard any useless ornaments to decorate their bodies.

Some Sabbathkeepers so earnestly desire to have friendship with the world that they mangle

prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Souls will come up to the day of God's visitation under a perfect deception. They had marked out a course for themselves. They did not let the Bible place the bounds for them. They did not heed the exhortation, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." 2 Corinthians 6:17.

I was shown that God is not slack concerning His promises, if His people will obey His requirements. He is faithful who hath promised. The condition of our being received of God is to separate

What stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes us believe we are on the right foundation, and God accepts our works, when we are not conforming to His will?

their feelings and make wretched work of following Christ. They desire the approval of God and the friendship of the world too. Such, I saw, would certainly lose heaven. They do not enjoy this world, therefore they lose both. In these hours of probation all can choose life if they will. Their fruits will show their choice. For a life of humble obedience here, God will grant the rich reward hereafter. He will accept of nothing but entire consecration. A dreadful deception is upon many minds, even of Sabbathkeepers. They have neglected to cherish and follow the light God has given them, and have been left completely deceived.

Please read Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not

ourselves from the world. The followers of Jesus and the world cannot unite. Please read John 17:14: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world." John 15:18-19: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

There is a disposition among some Sabbathkeepers to rejoice that they have truths that can be sustained by the Word of God, and that the unbeliever cannot gainsay, and they rest satisfied. They make no advancement in the divine life; their faith is not made perfect by works; they do not feel their lack of spirituality, but boast that they have the truth, and they sometimes advocate it in an unbecoming

manner. They feel rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. What stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes us believe we are on the right foundation, and God accepts our works, when we are not conforming to His will, and when we mistake the form of godliness

self is opposed to the victory. Can we take up the cross and bear it after Jesus, and consent to be like Him who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin? When the pleasures of the world come before us, we must renounce them instantly, and prefer before these the favor of God and the cross of Christ. And in this self-denying course we shall obtain victories, and in the end win eternal glory. The

among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."

God's people will be tested and proved. The plain and pointed testimony must act a prominent part in this work. In these days of darkness and peril, who is able to stand and speak the whole truth? Multitudes of teachers prophesy smooth things. They see no special cause of alarm in the present condition of the professed people of God. The people are asleep, and the teachers are asleep. They cry, Peace, peace, and the multitude that hear believe their report and are at ease. This makes the necessity greater for faithful teachers to bear the pointed, faithful testimony. The present is a time of scouring and purifying, a time of warfare and trial. The house of Israel is being sifted, even as corn is sifted in a sieve. The chaff must be removed, and it will require close work to separate the chaff from the kernels of grain. God's discerning eye will detect the smallest particle of chaff, and yet He will not cause to fall upon the ground the least kernel of grain. ✨

God's discerning eye will detect the smallest particle of chaff, and yet He will not cause to fall upon the ground the least kernel of grain.

for the spirit and power thereof, supposing we need nothing when we need all things? Please read James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

What a work is before us! Self-denial and the cross were shown me as standing all along in the way of life. Can we persevere in such a warfare as this? Grace is against nature, and the whole strength of

unbelieving world were shown me, unwilling to submit to the claims and order of God's government. They refuse obedience to His will; they are at variance with their Maker, and their words and works are opposed to the principles and laws of His government. Therefore we cannot enjoy, and be in harmony with, the friendship of the world, and not become estranged from God.

Amos 9:9-10 was presented before me: "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel

Review and Herald, November 26, 1861.

Rome's Arraignment of Sabbath-Breakers

by J.O'Keefe

This small booklet contains a reprint of a sermon published in the July 3, 1897, *Catholic Mirror*. J. O'Keefe, a prominent Catholic priest of his day, refutes the hypocrisy of Protestant Sunday-worship, forcefully demonstrating the unquestionable constancy of the Bible Sabbath. Also included is "Authoritative Quotations on the Sabbath and Sunday," a compilation of quotations on the Bible Sabbath from various denominations as well as from historical and non-Christian sources. A great witnessing tool!

Prices:	Small quantities: (1-10)	65¢ Each
	Larger quantities: (11-299)	55¢ Each
	1 or more cases: (300 per case)	45¢ Each



Free Shipping on case quantities.

see page 3 for additional shipping and tax information.

Oh How He Loves Us!



Image: Bob Bresnahan

Jeff Wehr

We cannot understand how Christ, the Son of God, the Creator of heaven and earth, became a helpless Babe in Bethlehem's manger. Yet we believe, for the Bible says, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Luke 2:11-12. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matthew 1:23.

Such love! That will be our science for eternity—to study the love of Jesus, the Son of God, who came to earth to become the Son of man. He came to take man's place, to pledge Himself in man's behalf—to pay the debt that sinners owe.

The whole plan of salvation focuses on one Man—Jesus Christ. From Adam to Abraham to John

the Baptist, they all waited patiently for the "promised seed" who loved man with such love as to be willing to die in man's stead. After Adam's fall, God said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Genesis 3:15. The precious "seed" of the woman—Jesus Christ—would bring a fatal blow to the serpent's head by completely destroying the works of Satan. However, it would cost Jesus something, for His heel would be bruised. Yet, His love for us was so great that He would pay whatever the cost might be to Himself.

To Abraham it was promised, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee [in thy seed] shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:3. Abraham rejoiced to see the day when God would bless all nations—when He would put on

human flesh. See John 8:56. Sister White, commenting on this verse, wrote, "God gave him light in regard to the future. He looked forward to the time when the Saviour should come to this earth, His divinity veiled by humanity. By faith he saw the world's Redeemer coming as God in the flesh. He saw the weight of guilt lifted from the human race, and borne by the Divine Substitute."¹

Then that most blessed day came when God became a Babe lying in Bethlehem's manger. In recording this most remarkable event, the New Testament begins with its first seventeen verses proving that Jesus was "the son of David, the son of Abraham." Matthew 1:1. Then it records that "she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21.

But one might logically ask, How could this miraculously born

son save His people from sinning? No other human being could deliver man from his sinful nature. What makes Him so different? The Bible says, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matthew 1:23.

Sister White wrote, "Leaving the royal courts of heaven Christ came to our world to represent the character of His Father, and thus help humanity to return to their loyalty. The image of Satan was upon men, and Christ came that He might bring to them moral power and efficiency. He came as a helpless Babe, bearing the humanity we bear. 'As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.' Hebrews 2:14. He could not come in the form of an angel; for unless He met man as man, and testified by His connection with God that divine power was *not* given to Him in a different way to what it will be given to us, He could not be a perfect example for us. He came in humility, in order that the humblest being upon the face of the earth could have no excuse because of his poverty, or ignorance, and say, Because of these things, I cannot obey the law of Jehovah. Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that humanity might touch humanity; that He might live with humanity, and bear all the trials and afflictions of man. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. In His humanity He understood all the temptations that will come to man."²

Because Jesus had emptied Himself in becoming a man, we have received all the rich benefits of (1) knowing His personal presence among us, (2) being comforted that He is acquainted with all of our trials and griefs, and (3) being encouraged that we can be changed into His image. But there is more! Christ took humanity into Himself.

Regarding this, Sister White wrote, "By His obedience to all the commandments of God, Christ

wrought out a redemption for man. This was not done by going out of Himself to another, but by taking humanity into Himself. Thus Christ gave to humanity an existence out of Himself. To bring humanity into Christ, to bring the fallen race into oneness with Divinity, is the work of redemption. Christ took human nature that men might be one with Him as He is one with the Father, that God may love man as He loves His only-begotten Son, that men may be partakers of the divine nature, and be complete in Him."³

As Jesus prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." John 17:20-21, 23. The oneness that exists between the Father and the Son does not destroy the personality of either. But they are one in mind, in purpose, in character. They are one, but not in person. In the same way we may be one with Christ.

Share in His Glory

Continuing in prayer, Jesus said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." John 17:24.

Here Jesus shows His longing to have His church with Him. He wants them to partake of His glory and to have us near Him forever. "I will that they also, whom thou hadst given me, be with me where I am."

Furthermore, Sister White wrote, "Jesus immediately ascended to heaven and presented Himself before the throne of God, showing the marks of shame and cruelty upon His brow, His hands and feet. But He refused to receive the coronet of glory, and the royal robe, and He also refused the adoration of the angels as He had refused the homage of Mary, until the Father signified that His offering was accepted.

"He also had a request to prefer concerning His chosen ones upon

earth. He wished to have the relation clearly defined that His redeemed should hereafter sustain to Heaven, and to His Father. His church must be justified and accepted before He could accept heavenly honor. He declared it to be His will that where He was, there His church should be; if He was to have glory, His people must share it with Him. They who suffer with Him on earth must finally reign with Him in His kingdom. In the most explicit manner Christ pleaded for His church, identifying His interest with theirs, and advocating, with a love and constancy stronger than death, their rights and titles gained through Him."⁴

Amazing grace! Jesus refused all honors until He knew that we would be with Him forever. No words can describe the scene when the angels desired to fall prostrate to worship Jesus, but He refused until He knew that His offering was accepted before the Father. His desire goes even beyond our justification, but also that we may share in His glory.

Describing this amazing scene, Sister White wrote, " 'Father,' " He says, " 'I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am.' Hebrews 1:6. And then the Father declares, 'Let all the angels of God worship him.' Hebrews 1:6. The heavenly host prostrate themselves before Him, and raise their song of triumph and joy. Glory encircles the King of Heaven, and is beheld by all the heavenly intelligences. No words can describe the scene which took place as the Son of God was publicly reinstated in the place of honor and glory which He voluntarily left when He became a man."⁵

What love that Jesus would come as a man to show us the Father! But He did even more—He paid the price for our iniquities as if He were the guilty one. This alone is already more than I can comprehend. But then He even went so far as to refuse the honors of heaven until He knew that we were to be His forever to share in His glory and to reign with Him in His

kingdom. We are so unworthy – yet so loved!

Let Us All Draw Near

Because the Son became a man, we may draw ever closer unto the Father. He who became a man in our fallen human nature can now live in the very heart of fallen men. But we must desire Him and take Him in. Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” John 6:53–54, 56.

Jesus uses the figure of eating and drinking to show just how near we can come to Him. The words “who eateth,” a present participle in the Greek language, implies continual eating. It is not enough to partake of the Son of God once in awhile – but rather continually. Daily we need to partake of the

Bread of Life. In so doing, we shall be transformed into His altogether beautiful character.

Jesus also said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” John 15:7. We may receive Him by receiving His Words. If we hunger to know Him – His life and His teachings – we will be receiving Him. But we are not seeking knowledge alone, but to be guided, inspired, molded, refreshed, and empowered.

Paul wrote, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13. The word “worketh” [*energeo* in the Greek] means “to put forth power.” It is God who puts forth power in us to will and to do His perfect will. Not that we are passive, but it is God who provides the motivation and the power to perform His good pleasure.

In motivating us, we see Jesus, who being the Son of God, emptied Himself, took upon Himself our fallen nature, lived a sinless life,

endured the cross, and refused honor and glory unless we were His forever. What a Saviour!

In empowering us, He is God Almighty, who raised Lazarus from the dead, stayed the sun in the sky, parted the Red Sea and the Jordan River, rebuked the raging sea, healed the lame and the blind, and created all things with the breath of His mouth.

Our all-loving and all-powerful Saviour calls us to love one another as He loves us. See John 15:12. He commands us to go and teach all nations all things that we have freely received from Him. See Matthew 28:18–20. What shall we do? Let us give Him our whole heart as our first work each morning thereby choosing to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him. ✠

References:

- ¹ *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, 1092.
- ² *Manuscript 21*, 1895; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 925.
- ³ *Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.
- ⁴ *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 3, 202–203.
- ⁵ *Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1899.

The Study Bible

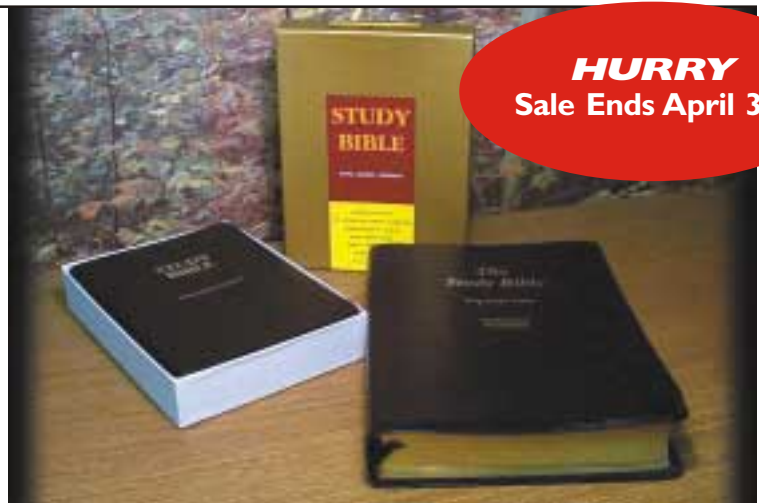


Both large and small editions of the Study Bible include:

- Insightful comments from the Spirit of Prophecy throughout
- Standard marginal references
- Spirit of Prophecy Scripture Index
- Bible concordance
- Subject index to Bible commentary

The small edition also includes the following additional features:

- The Fourfold Gospel narrative
- Words of Christ in red
- Chronological tables and over 65 maps
- Bible studies and book introductions
- Full-color illustrations in Daniel and Revelation



Selected commentary from the Spirit of Prophecy throughout!

Large Edition (Reg. \$69.95)
Available in Black only

now only \$49⁹⁵

Small Edition (Reg. \$64.95)
Specify Black or Burgundy

now only \$49⁹⁵

See page 3 for shipping and tax information.

Legislating Holy Days

Italian Cities Plan Car-Free Sundays

News Item: Rome—“Fourteen Italian cities—including Rome, Milan and Florence—will ban cars on Sundays to combat smog, which officials say kills thousands and destroys monuments. Beginning in February, traffic guards will stop cars and urge people to use transport.” *UPI*, January 13, 2000.

Religious Holiday Stays in Court Ruling

News Item: “Schools can be closed on Good Friday, says the Supreme Court in the United States, rejecting claims that a compulsory holiday was an endorsement of religion.

“In the latest in a series of disputes about the place of religion in schools, the Supreme Court has upheld the right of Maryland to close all its state schools on Good Friday.” *BBC News*, January 19, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: When we see the ban of cars on Sunday, we cannot help but think of the statement in *The Great Controversy*, 587, where it says that those in the Temperance movement thought they were “laboring to promote the highest interest of society,” by uniting Sunday legislation with that of Temperance. Today we are seeing similar efforts to subtly honor Sunday by a call for legislation to protect society from car smog.

As for the Supreme Court’s decision on Good Friday, we might ask, What does this have to do with the restriction of our liberties, or How could this have any affect on God’s people? Let it be remembered that the controversy over Easter in the early centuries was the catalyst that led to the supposed change of the Sabbath to Sunday. We will here quote from a little-known source that illuminates this subject:

“The bishops of Rome began, very early, to demand obedience from all the churches. Of this the dispute between the eastern and the western churches respecting Easter is a striking illustration. This dispute

arose in the second century. Says Mosheim: ‘The Christians of this century celebrated anniversary festivals in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Christ. . . .

The day which was observed as the anniversary of Christ’s death was called the *Paschal* day, or *Passover*.’ Like the Jews, Christians celebrated ‘a sacred feast, at which they distributed a paschal lamb in memory of the holy supper.’ The Christians of Asia Minor kept this feast on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, when the Jews celebrated their Passover, and when Christ is said to have eaten the paschal lamb with His disciples. Three days thereafter, a festival was observed in honor of the resurrection. The western churches, on the other hand, celebrated the resurrection of Christ on the Sunday following the Jewish Passover, and observed the paschal feast on the night preceding Sunday, thus connecting the commemoration of Christ’s death with that of His resurrection.

“Toward the conclusion of this [the second] century, Victor, Bishop of Rome, endeavored to force the Asiatic Christians, by the pretended authority of his laws and decrees, to follow the rule which was observed by the western churches in this point. Accordingly . . . he wrote an imperious letter to the Asiatic prelates, commanding them to imitate the example of the western Christians with respect to the time of celebrating the festival of Easter. The Asiatics answered this lordly requisition . . . with great spirit and resolution, that they would by no means depart, in this manner, from the custom handed down to them by their ancestors. Upon this the thunder of excommunication began to roar. Victor, exasperated by this resolute answer of the Asiatic bishops, broke communion with them, pronounced them unworthy of the name of his brethren, and excluded them from all fellowship with the Church of Rome.’ This, says Bower, was ‘the first essay of papal usurpation.’

“For a time, however, Victor’s efforts availed little. No regard was

paid to his letters, and the Asiatics continued to follow their ancient practice. But by enlisting the support of the imperial power, which the church for so many centuries controlled to serve her purposes, Rome finally conquered. The council of Nice, ‘out of complaisance to Constantine the Great, ordered the solemnity of Easter to be kept everywhere on the same day, after the custom of Rome.’ This decree, ‘backed by the authority of so great an emperor,’ was decisive; ‘none but some scattered schismatics, now and then appearing, that durst oppose the resolution of that famous synod.’” *The Great Controversy*, 1888 edition, Appendix, 685–686.

We should remember that history repeats itself. Therefore, we must vigilantly watch as events around us show that the end is very near.

Visions of the Virgin

Thousands of Believers Throng to Hear the Mother of Jesus Speak—Through a Man Who Lives in Boston

News Item: “Ivan Dragicevic is getting mobbed. At the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic church in a suburb of Boston, people are lunging, straining to get their hands on him. . . .

“Navigating crowds is part of life when you’re one of the Medjugorje visionaries—the six Croatian children who reported in 1981 that they began receiving daily visits from the Virgin Mary in what was then Yugoslavia. Since they were first reported, the visions have sparked a worldwide phenomenon, drawing more than 20 million tourists to Medjugorje. . . .

“Dragicevic says his first encounter with the Virgin Mary occurred on a hot day 18 years ago when he was out for a walk with a friend during half time of a Croatian basketball game. Some girls he knew called him over, and that’s when he says he saw her for the first time, floating on a cloud. He says she appears to him largely the same as on that day: black hair, blue eyes, rosy cheeks, a white veil and a crown of stars. It usually



Have a news item of interest?

contact newswatch@hopeint.org

To mail or fax us a copy, see page 3

happens at 6:40 p.m. What makes him so sure it's really the Virgin Mary? Says Dragicevic: 'Hey, I'm certain because I see her as I see you.' " *Newsweek*, January 17, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:19-20.

"The doctrine of consciousness after death, of the spirits of the dead being in communion with the living, has no foundation in the Scriptures, and yet these theories are affirmed as truth. Through this false doctrine the way has been opened for the spirits of devils to deceive the people in representing themselves as the dead. Satanic agencies personate the dead and thus bring souls into captivity. Satan has a religion, he has a synagogue and devout worshipers. To swell the ranks of his devotees, he uses all manner of deception." *Evangelism*, 603.

Rome and Ecumenism

Vatican Hosts Super Summit

News Item: Rome—"The Vatican is hosting a major gathering of different Christian religions, which it says will be the most important ecumenical event during its year long celebrations to mark Christianity's third millennium.

"More than 20 non-Catholic representatives will attend the ceremony including the head of the Anglican Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey." *BBC News*, January 18, 2000.

CBS Opting for Papal Input

News Item: Hollywood—"The battle of the dueling Jesus projects has now reached papal proportions. NBC put its religious-themed TV

movie 'Mary, Mother of Jesus' on the air first, but CBS has the Pope on its side.

"CBS Television CEO Leslie Moonves will have an audience with Pope John Paul II on Thursday to deliver a copy of his network's upcoming miniseries 'Jesus.'

"Moonves, along with actors Jeremy Sisto (who plays Jesus) and Jacqueline Bisset (Mary) and singer LeAnn Rimes (who contributed a song to the mini-series) will travel to the Vatican and meet with His Holiness at a midday reception.

"The four-hour miniseries, set to air during May sweeps, was filmed in Morocco and Malta this summer. No word on whether the pope plans to pitch any possible projects ('Touched by a Pontiff?') to CBS." *Reuters*, November 28, 1999.

Concern Raised Over Vatican Influence on United Nations' Affairs

News Item: "More than 400 groups have joined See Change, an organization seeking to reduce the Vatican's influence, Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute said. The Vatican has Permanent Observer status and enjoys some influence, though less than member states." *Religion Today*, January 24, 2000.

Adventists Join Other Denominations at Jordan River for Ecumenical Service

News Item: "As part of celebrations in Jordan to mark this year's Christian Jubilee, Seventh-day Adventists joined other Christian denominations for a ceremony at the presumed site of Jesus' baptism.

"Pastor Kamel Haddad, minister for the Adventist Church in Amman, Jordan, was among the 15,000 visitors to the site on January 7. Also there at Wadi Kharrar, the site of the ancient settlement of 'Bethany beyond the Jordan,' were representatives of the Greek Orthodox, Coptic, Evangelical, Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic

Churches in what the Jordan Times called 'a rare and brave example of unity.' " *Adventist News Network*, January 18, 2000.

Lent Fast to Cause United Worldwide Revival

News Item: "The world is getting smaller for evangelical Christians as they pray together and share information and resources.

"Evangelicals from every part of the world will fast and pray with a common purpose for 40 days this Lent. That's the goal of an ambitious worldwide movement called PrayWorld! 2000.

"The idea is to 'unite churches in every country,' [said] Ben Jennings, international coordinator of PrayWorld! 2000." *Religion Today*, January 26, 2000.

Prophetic Perspective: "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me." Isaiah 54:15. These words of Isaiah clearly reveal the end-time ecumenical confederacy. As Nebuchadnezzar the king gathered together various groups and classes of people to worship the golden image, so in our day there is a great gathering together to worship the beast and his image. See Daniel 3:1-2; Revelation 13:15-17.

The Almighty Sovereign of the universe has a warning for all those who unite with this end-time confederacy: "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces." Isaiah 8:9.

Sadly, our Saviour predicted that His people in our day would be enamored with this false unity. "Say ye not, A confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." Verse 12. This warning comes ringing down through the centuries to us today, lest we repeat the fateful history of the Jewish Church. Remember, they not only joined with Egypt in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah, but in the days of Christ they joined with Rome to crucify their Messiah.✿



The Jewish Church

Duplicated

Ron Spear

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:4-7.

The new millennium is now upon us. For 6,000 years God has attempted to show to the world His love in His plan to save those who are willing to obey His commandments. God’s plan to put an end to the great sin problem demanded the life and death of our Creator, Jesus Christ. See John 3:16; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16, 25-27. Tragically, only a very few have responded to His love in the great sacrifice that Heaven has made.

“Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. ‘With his stripes we are healed.’ Isaiah 53:5.”¹

How are we, God’s remnant church—leaders, pastors, and lay members—relating to God’s orders? How does God evaluate the structure and people of His beloved church in this final generation?

We are told that we have far more to fear from within than from without. Our worst enemies will be backslidden, Laodicean Seventh-day Adventists.

“We have far more to fear from within than from without. The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world.”²

“Do not forget that the most dangerous snares which Satan has prepared for the church will come through its own members who do not love God supremely or their neighbor as themselves.”³

“The worst enemies we have are those who are trying to destroy the influence of the watchmen upon the walls of Zion.”⁴

“As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel’s message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. . . . When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most

efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them.”⁵

We are a duplication of the ancient Jewish church, because we have followed after the world—rather than following God’s directions—in almost everything that He has asked this church to do.

“The sin of ancient Israel was in disregarding the expressed will of God and following their own way according to the leadings of unsanctified hearts. Modern Israel are fast following in their footsteps, and the displeasure of the Lord is as surely resting upon them.”⁶

“I have been shown that the spirit of the world is fast leavening the church. You are following the same path as did ancient Israel. There is the same falling away from your holy calling as God’s peculiar people. You are having fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Your concord with unbelievers has provoked the Lord’s displeasure. You know not the things that belong to your peace, and they are fast being hid from your eyes. Your neglect to follow the light will place you in a more unfavorable position than the Jews upon whom Christ pronounced a woe.”⁷

"Satan's snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people."⁸

"I am filled with sadness when I think of our condition as a people. The Lord has not closed heaven to us, but our own course of continual backsliding has separated us from God. . . . And yet the general opinion is that the church is flourishing and that peace and spiritual prosperity are in all her borders. The church has turned back from following Christ her Leader and is steadily retreating toward Egypt."⁹

"The world must not be introduced into the church, and married to the church, forming a bond of unity. Through this means the church will become indeed corrupt, and as stated in Revelation, 'a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'

"Through association with the world our institutions will become unsubstantial, unreliable; because these worldly elements, introduced and placed in positions of trust, are looked up to as teachers to be respected in their educating, directing, and official position, and they are sure to be worked upon by the spirit and power of darkness; so that the demarcation becomes not distinguished between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."¹⁰

"The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the first centuries. 'In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be *lovers of their own selves*, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, *despisers of those that are good*, traitors, heady, high-minded, *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof' (2 Timothy 3:1-5) When this state of ungodliness shall

be reached, the same results will follow as in the first centuries."¹¹

As Jesus stood on Olivet and wept over the Jewish church, did He also see the church in this end time?

"When the Saviour saw in the Jewish people a nation divorced from God, He saw also a professed Christian Church united to the world and the Papacy. And as He stood upon Olivet, weeping over Jerusalem till the sun sank behind the western hills, so He is weeping over and pleading with sinners in these last moments of time. Soon He will say to the angels who are holding the four winds, 'Let the plagues loose; let darkness, destruction, and death come upon the transgressors of my law.' Will

this remnant of time?—He will purge the church. There will be only a small remnant left, a very few who will "weep between the porch and the altar" for the sins that are in the church. Joel 2:17.

"The leaven of godliness has not entirely lost its power. At the time when the danger and depression of the church are greatest, the little company who are standing in the light will be sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. But more especially will their prayers arise in behalf of the church because its members are doing after the manner of the world.

"The earnest prayers of this faithful few will not be in vain.

As Jesus stood on Olivet and wept over the Jewish church, did He also see the church in this end time?

He be obliged to say to those who have had great light and knowledge, as He said to the Jews, 'If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes' Luke 19:42?"¹²

"The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time."¹³

"There is great similarity between our history and that of the children of Israel."¹⁴

God destroyed the Jewish church because of her corruption and apostasy from the truth. How will God deal with Seventh-day Adventists who are in apostasy in

When the Lord comes forth as an avenger, He will also come as a protector of all those who have preserved the faith in its purity and kept themselves unspotted from the world. It is at this time that God has promised to avenge His own elect which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them.

"The command is: 'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.' Ezekiel 9:4. These sighing, crying ones had been holding forth the words of life; they had reproved, counseled, and entreated. Some who had been dishonoring God repented and humbled their hearts before Him. But the glory of the Lord had departed from Israel; although many still continued the forms of religion, His power and presence were lacking."¹⁵

(continued on page 30)

An *Appeal*
to *Live*
the *Truth*
and *Share* It



Ellen G. White

Composition: Bryan Bailey (Images: Bob Brenathan, ©1994 Corel Corp.)

For weeks I have not been able to sleep after half past three o'clock. My mind is deeply exercised in regard to our condition as a people. We ought to be far in advance of any other people on the earth because we have greater light and greater knowledge of the truth, which lays us under increased accountability to advance that light and not only profess to believe the truth but to practice it. When we do practice the truth we are then following Jesus, who is the Light of the world; and if we as a people are not constantly elevating, becoming more and more spiritually minded, we are becoming like the Pharisees—self-righteous—while we do not the will of God.

We must have a greater nearness to God. Much less of self and much more of Jesus Christ and His grace must be brought into our everyday life. We are living in an important period of this world's history. The end of all things is at hand; the sands of time are fast running out; soon in heaven it will be said: "It is done. . . . He that is holy, let him be holy still . . . he which is filthy, let him be filthy still." Revelation 21:6; 22:11.

Let our testimonies be sharpened up; let us have a firmer hold on God. I cannot refrain from prayer at one, two, and three o'clock in the morning for the Lord to work upon the hearts of the people. I think of all heaven being interested in the work that is going on upon the earth. Ministering angels are waiting about the throne to instantly obey the mandate of Jesus Christ to answer every prayer offered in earnest living faith. I think of how many who profess the truth are keeping it apart from their lives. They do not bring its sanctifying, refining, spiritualizing power into their hearts. I think how this grieves Jesus.

I think of His great sorrow as He wept over Jerusalem, exclaiming, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Luke 13:34. God forbid that these words shall apply to those who have great light and blessings. In the rejecting of Jerusalem it was because great privileges were abused, which brought the denunciation upon all

who lightly regarded the great opportunities and precious light that were entrusted to their keeping. Privileges do not commend us to God, but they commend God to us. No people are saved because they have great light and special advantages, for these high and heavenly favors only increase their responsibility.

The more and increased light God has given makes the receiver more responsible. It does not place the receiver in any safer position unless the privileges are wisely improved, prized, and used to advance God's glory. Christ said, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Matthew 11:21.

When Jerusalem was divorced from God it was because of her sins. She fell from an exalted height that Tyre and Sidon had never reached. And when an angel falls he becomes a fiend. The depth of our ruin is measured by the exalted light to which God has raised us in His great goodness and unspeakable mercy. Oh, what

privileges are granted to us as a people! And if God spared not His people that He loved, because they refused to walk in the light, how can He spare the people whom He has blessed with the light of Heaven in having opened to them the most exalted truth ever entrusted to mortal man to give to the world?

We are far from being the people God would have us to be, because we do not elevate the soul and refine the character in harmony with the wonderful unfolding of God's truth and His purposes. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs 14:34. Sin is a disorganizer. Wherever it is cherished—in the individual heart, in the household, in the church—there is disorder, strife, variance, enmity, envy, jealousy, because the enemy of man and of God has the controlling power over the mind. But let the truth be loved and brought into the life, as well as advocated, and that man or woman will hate sin and will be a living representative of Jesus Christ to the world.

The people claiming to believe the truth will not be condemned because they had not the light, but because they had great light and did not bring their hearts to the test of God's great moral standard of righteousness. The people who claim to believe the truth must be elevated by living it out. Real Bible religion must leaven the life, refine and ennoble the character, making it more and more like the Divine Model. Then will the home be vocal with prayer, with thanksgiving and praise to God. Angels will minister in the home and accompany the worshiper to the house of prayer.

Let the churches who claim to believe the truth, who are advocating the law of God, keep that law and depart from all iniquity. Let the individual members of the church resist the temptations to practice evils and indulge in sin. Let the church commence the work of purification before God by repentance, humiliation, deep heart searching, for

we are in the antitypical day of atonement—solemn hour fraught with eternal results.

Let those who teach the truth present it as it is in Jesus. Under the subduing, sanctifying, refining, influence of the truth of God they are as clean vessels. Let them be leavened with Bible religion, and what an influence would go forth from them to the world! Let the individual members of the church be pure, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the love of Jesus, and they will then be a light to the world. Let the men standing as watchmen and as shepherds of the flock proclaim the solemn truth, sound the notes of warning to all people, nations and tongues. Let them be living representatives of the truth they advocate, and honor

the old world, upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon ancient Jerusalem, do not become our crime.

The least transgression of God's law brings guilt upon the transgressor, and without earnest repentance and forsaking of sin he will surely become an apostate. You inquire in regard to the course which should be pursued to secure the rights of our people to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. This has been a burden on my soul for some time, whether it would be a denial of our faith and an evidence that our trust was not fully in God. But I call to mind many things God has shown me in the past in regard to things of a similar character, as the draft and other things. I can speak in the fear of God, it is right we should use every power

Let the church commence the work of purification before God by repentance, humiliation, deep heart searching, for we are in the antitypical day of atonement.

God's law by strict and holy compliance with its requirements, walking before the Lord in purity, in holiness, and a power will attend the proclamation of the truth that will reflect light everywhere.

God never forsakes people or individuals until they forsake Him. Outward opposition will not cause the faith of God's people, who are keeping His commandments, to become dim. The neglect to bring purity and truth into practice will grieve the Spirit of God and weaken them because God is not in their midst to bless. Internal corruption will bring the denunciations of God upon this people as it did upon Jerusalem. Oh, let pleading voices, let earnest prayer be heard, that those who preach to others shall not themselves be castaways. My brethren, we know not what is before us, and our only safety is in following the Light of the world. God will work with us and for us if the sins which brought His wrath upon

we can to avert the pressure that is being brought to bear upon our people. I know that were our people spiritualized by the truth the greatest love would be maintained.

[We are] not to provoke those who have accepted this spurious sabbath, an institution of the Papacy, in the place of God's holy Sabbath. Their not having the Bible arguments in their favor makes them all the more angry and determined to supply the place of arguments that are wanting in the Word of God, by the power of their might. The force of persecution follows the steps of the dragon. Therefore great care should be exercised to give no provocation. And again let us as a people, as far as possible, cleanse the camp of moral defilement and aggravating sins. When sin is making its march upon the people who claim to be elevating the moral standard of righteousness, how can we expect God to turn His power in our behalf and save us as a people that did righteousness?

All the policy in the world cannot save us from a terrible sifting, and all the efforts made with high authorities will not lift from us the scourging of God, just because sin is cherished. If as a people we do not keep ourselves in the faith and not only advocate with pen and voice the commandments of God, but keep them every one, not violating a single precept knowingly, then weakness and ruin will come upon us. It is a work that we must attend to in every one of our churches. Each man must be a Christian.

Let the sin of pride be put away, let all superfluities of dress be overcome, and repentance toward God be exercised for the high-handed robbery toward Him, which has withheld money that should flow into the treasury to sustain the work

man in swimming against the current of Niagara, but we shall fail unless the Lord pleads in our behalf. God will be honored among His people. They must be pure, they must be divested of self, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. The Lord will elevate the humblest soul that trusts in Him. He will unite His power with human effort if that man will honor Him as did Daniel. But as a people we need the beauty of righteousness, holiness, and truth. The most harmonious theory will not save us. The God that ruled in Babylon is the same God that rules now.

There are many doctrines current in our world. There is many a religion current that numbers its thousands and tens of thousands, but there is but one that bears the superscription and the stamp of

supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ.

The remnant that purify their souls by obeying the truth gather strength from the trying process, exhibiting the beauty of holiness amid the surrounding apostasy. All these, He says, “I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” Isaiah 49:16. They are held in everlasting, imperishable remembrance. We want faith now, living faith. We want to have a living testimony that shall cut to the heart of the sinner. There is too much sermonizing and too little ministering. We want the holy unction. We need the spirit and fervor of the truth. Many of the ministers are half paralyzed by their own defects of character. They need the converting power of God.

That which God required of Adam before his fall was perfect obedience to His law. God requires now what He required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires. We cannot do this without that faith that brings Christ’s righteousness into daily practice.

Dear brethren, the Lord is coming. Lift up your thoughts and heads and rejoice. Oh, we would think that those who hear the joyful news, who claim to love Jesus, would be filled with joy unutterable and full of glory. This is the good, the joyful news which should electrify every soul, which should be repeated in our homes, and told to those whom we meet on the street. What more joyful news can be communicated! Caviling and contention with believers or

The Lord will elevate the humblest soul that trusts in Him. He will unite His power with human effort if that man will honor Him as did Daniel.

of God in its mission fields. Let the work of reformation, of true conversion, be set before and urged upon the people. Let our works, our deportment, correspond with the work for this time, that we may say, “Follow me as I follow Christ.” Let us humble our souls before God by humiliation, fasting and prayer, repentance of sin, and putting it away.

The voice of the true watchman needs now to be heard all along the line, “The morning cometh, and also the night.” Isaiah 21:12. The trumpet must give a certain sound, for we are in the great day of the Lord’s preparation. All the struggles to carry our appeals to the highest authorities in our land, however earnest and strong and eloquent may be the pleas in our favor, will not bring about that which we desire unless the Lord works by His Holy Spirit in the heart of those who claim to believe the truth. We may struggle as a mighty

God. There is a religion of man and a religion of God. We must have our souls riveted to the eternal Rock. Everything in God’s world, both men and doctrines and nature itself, is fulfilling God’s sure word of prophecy and accomplishing His grand and closing work in this world’s history.

We are to be ready and waiting for the orders of God. Nations will be stirred to their very center. Support will be withdrawn from those who proclaim God’s only standard of righteousness, the only sure test of character. And all who will not bow to the decrees of the national councils and obey the national laws to exalt the sabbath instituted by the man of sin to the disregard of God’s holy day, will feel, not the oppressive power of popery alone, but of the Protestant world, the image of the beast.

Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as

unbelievers is not the work God has given us to do.

If Christ is my Saviour, my Sacrifice, my Atonement, then I shall never perish. Believing on Him, I have life forevermore. Oh, that all who believe the truth would believe in Jesus as their own Saviour. I do not mean that cheap faith unsupported by works, but that earnest, living, constant, abiding faith, that eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God. I want not only to be pardoned for the transgression of God's holy law, but I want to be lifted into the sunshine of God's countenance. Not simply to be admitted to heaven, but to have an abundant entrance.

Are we so insensible as a peculiar people, a holy nation, to the inexpressible love that God has manifested for us? Salvation is not to be baptized, not to have our names upon the church books, not to preach the truth. But it is a living union with Jesus Christ, to be renewed in heart, doing the works of Christ in faith and labor of love, in patience, meekness, and hope. Every soul united to Christ will be a living missionary to all around him. He will labor for those near and those afar off. He will have no sectional feeling, no interest merely to build up one branch of the work over which he presides and there let his zeal end. All will work with interest to make every branch strong. There will be no self-love, no selfish interest. The cause is one, the truth a great whole.

Well may the question be asked with earnest, anxious heart, "Is envy cherished, is jealousy permitted to find a place in my heart?" If so, Christ is not there. "Do I love the law of God, is the love of Jesus Christ in my heart?" If we love one another as Christ has loved us, then we are getting ready for the blessed heaven of peace and rest. There is no struggling there to be first, to have the supremacy; all will love their neighbor as themselves. Oh, that God would open the understanding and speak to the hearts of our churches by arousing the individual members.

The Lord appoints and sends forth ministers not only to preach, for

this is a small part of His work, but to minister, to educate the people not to be fighters but to be examples of piety. There are workers in every department appointed to do their work. When Jesus ascended on high He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. See Ephesians 4:11. Some have entered the work with a human commission rather than the divine. They have educated themselves as debaters, and the churches under their care show the character of their work. They were not ready, they were not fitted for the work. Their hearts are not right with God. In short, they have a theory, but not true conversion and

burdens. There are wanted those who will not have merely a nominal interest but a Christlike interest, unselfish—an intense ardor that will not flag under difficulties or cool because iniquity abounds.

I want to speak to the ears of our people in America in every church. Awake from the dead, and Christ will give you life. Souls are perishing for the light of truth as it is in Jesus. We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world. Fair-weather Christians will not be wanted for this work. The sentimental and tasteful religion is not needed for this time. There must be intensity brought into our faith and in the proclamation of truth. I tell

Oh, that all who believe the truth would believe in Jesus as their own Saviour. I do not mean that cheap faith unsupported by works, but that earnest, living, constant, abiding faith, that eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of God.

sanctification through the truth. The great issue so near at hand will weed out those whom God has not appointed, and He will have a pure, true, sanctified ministry prepared for the latter rain.

Our prayer should ascend to the throne of grace with fervor for the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His vineyard. My heart aches as I look around upon the mission fields and see so feeble efforts to get the truth before the people. No censure can be attached to our leading men. I believe, brethren, you are one with me in heart, in sentiment, in regard to our great need, and in the earnest desire and earnest efforts to meet the mind of the Spirit of God in these things.

Those who are at ease in Zion need to be aroused. Great is their accountability who bear the truth and yet feel no weight or burden for souls. Oh, for men and women professing the truth to arouse, to take on the yoke of Christ, to lift His

you, a new life is proceeding from satanic agencies to work with a power we have not hitherto realized. And shall not a new power from above take possession of God's people? The truth, sanctifying in its influence, must be urged upon the people. There must be earnest supplications offered to God, agonizing prayer to Him, that our hopes as a people may not be founded on suppositions, but on eternal realities. We must know for ourselves, by the evidence of God's Word, whether we are in the faith, going to heaven or not. The moral standard of character is God's law. Do we meet its requirements? Are the Lord's people bringing their property, their time, their talents, and all their influence into the work for this time? Let us arouse. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Colossians 3:1. ✠

Letter 55, 1886; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 12, 318-328.



Image: Bob Bresnahan

Christ, the Example of Children and Youth

Ellen G. White

Jesus came to this world as its Light. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." John 1:4. He says of Himself, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.

The example of Jesus is a Light to the young, as well as to those of mature years; for His was a representative childhood and youth. From His earliest years His example was perfect. In both His physical and His spiritual nature He followed the divine order of growth illustrated by the plant, as He wishes all youth to do. Although He was the Majesty of Heaven, the King of Glory, He became a Babe in Bethlehem, and for a time represented the helpless infant in its mother's care. In childhood He did the works of an obedient child. He spoke and acted with the wisdom of a child, and not of a man, honoring His parents, and carrying out their wishes in helpful ways, according to the ability of a child. But at each stage of His development He was perfect, with the simple, natural grace of a sinless life. The sacred record says of His childhood, "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." Luke 2:40. And of

His youth it is recorded, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Verse 52.

The life of Christ, from His earliest years, was a life of earnest activity. He lived not to please Himself. He was the Son of the infinite God, yet He worked at the carpenter's trade with His father Joseph. His trade was significant. He had come into the world as the Character Builder, and as such all His work was perfect. Into all His secular labor He brought the same perfection as into the characters He was transforming by His divine power.

He is our Pattern. By many children and youth, time is wasted that might be spent in carrying home burdens, and thus showing a loving interest in father and mother. The youth might take upon their strong young shoulders many responsibilities which someone must bear.

Jesus did not, like many youth, devote His time to amusement. He applied Himself diligently to a study of the Scriptures; for He knew them to be full of precious instruction to all who will make them the man of their counsel. He was faithful in the discharge of His home duties; and the early morning hours, instead of being wasted in bed, often found Him in a retired

place, meditating and searching the Scriptures, and in prayer. Every prophecy concerning His work and mediation was familiar to Him, especially those having reference to His humiliation, atonement, and intercession. In childhood and youth the object of His life was ever before Him, an inducement for His undertaking the work in behalf of fallen man. He would sow seed which would prolong their days, and the gracious purpose of the Lord should prosper in His hands.

Jesus studied the Word until He became familiar with its sayings. Even in His childhood, He was skillful in their use. When His parents lost Him in Jerusalem, He was found sitting among the wise men of the nation, both hearing them and asking them questions. He inquired as One who wished to learn; but in His questions there were gems of light that not only pleased His hearers, but flashed into the Scriptures concerning the Messiah a meaning which these teachers of the law had never before seen. "All that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." Verse 47.

When His mother said to Him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," He answered, "How is it that ye sought

me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Verse 48-49. And when they understood not His words, He pointed upward. Although a Child, He was engaged in the work that He came to do. He was revealing God, showing the meaning of His Word to those leaders in Israel, giving a new significance to their sacrifices and services.

There is here a lesson for all children and youth on the duty of honor and obedience to parents; for the record continues, "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." Verse 51. From Jerusalem He returned home with them, and aided them in their life of toil. He hid in His own heart the mystery of His mission, waiting submissively for the appointed time for Him to enter upon His work. For eighteen years after He had recognized that He was the Son of God, He acknowledged the tie that bound Him to the home at Nazareth, and performed the duties of a son, a brother, a friend, and a citizen.

Jesus carried into His labor cheerfulness and tact. It requires much patience and spirituality to bring Bible religion into the home life and into the workshop, to bear the strain of worldly business, and yet keep the eye single to the glory of God. This is where Christ was a Helper. He was never so full of worldly care as to have no time or thought for heavenly things. Often He expressed the gladness of His heart by singing psalms and heavenly songs. Often the dwellers in Nazareth heard His voice raised in praise and thanksgiving to God. He held communion with Heaven in song; and as His companions complained of weariness from labor, they were cheered by the sweet melody from His lips. His praise seemed to banish the evil angels, and like incense, filled the place with fragrance. The minds of His hearers were carried away from their earthly exile, to the heavenly home.

Jesus was the Fountain of Healing Mercy for the world; and

through all those secluded years at Nazareth, His life flowed out in currents of sympathy and tenderness. The aged, the sorrowing, and the sin-burdened, the children at play in their innocent joy, the little creatures of the groves, the patient beasts of burden—all were happier for His presence. He whose word of power upheld the worlds, would stoop to relieve a wounded bird. There was nothing beneath His notice, nothing to which He disdained to minister.

Thus as He grew in wisdom and stature, Jesus increased in favor with God and man. He drew the sympathy of all hearts by showing Himself capable of sympathizing with all. The atmosphere of hope and courage that surrounded Him made Him a blessing in every home. And often in the synagogue on the Sabbath day He was called upon to read the lesson from the prophets, and the hearts of the hearers thrilled as a new light shone out from the familiar words of the sacred text.

Jesus is our Example. There are many who dwell with interest upon the period of His public ministry, while they pass unnoticed the teachings of His early years. But it is in His home life that He is the Pattern for all children and youth. The Saviour condescended to poverty, that He might teach how closely we in a humble lot may walk with God. He lived to please, honor, and glorify His Father in the common things of life. His work began in consecrating the lowly trade of the craftsmen who toil for their daily bread. He was doing God's service just as much when laboring at the carpenter's bench as when working miracles for the multitude. And every youth who follows Christ's example of faithfulness and obedience in His lowly home, may claim those words spoken of Him by the Father through the Holy Spirit, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." Isaiah 42:1.✠

The Youth's Instructor, May 25, 1909.

YOU'VE GOT PRESENT TRUTH

why not

SHARE IT?

Our Firm Foundation

Present truth needs to be shared!

Here are 3 easy ways to do it:

- 1 email subscriptions@hopeint.org
- 2 call 1-800-468-7884 (USA)
1-360-832-6602 (Foreign)
- 3 use the convenient envelope in the center of this issue.

**1 Year / 12 Issues
Current Pricing**

U.S. Subscription	\$18.75
Foreign Subscription	\$23.75

How to Keep the Sabbath

How to mark your Bible and know God's Word better

We present this study with the desire that it will encourage you, our readers, to pursue a deeper examination of God's Word. The warning has been given us that "none but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict." *The Great Controversy*, 593–594. It is our suggestion that you use this study personally, in group settings, or with your family. We also encourage you to add other Scriptural references to this study as you proceed in your own personal, attentive scrutiny of God's Word.

The Editors

Bible Marking Directions

1. In this month's study our Bible marking key letters are KS, which represent "How to Keep the Sabbath."
2. On the blank flyleaf at either the beginning or the end of your Bible, write in the key letters followed by the first Scriptural text. This month's beginning entry should appear as follows: "1KS: Exodus 20:8."
3. Turn to the first reference and, in the margin near it, write the second reference. Then turn to the second reference and, in the margin near it, write the third reference, and so on to the end of the lesson. When you come to the last reference write "End KS."

1KS: Exodus 20:8.

The essential thing about keeping the Sabbath is to remember to keep it holy. The only way we can keep the Sabbath holy is to be holy ourselves in Christ's strength. No matter how strictly anyone may try to keep holy the first day of the week—Sunday—he cannot really keep it holy, because God has never hallowed or made holy the first day of the week. The seventh day is the only day of the week which God has ever made holy (see Genesis 2:1–3); so the seventh day is really the only day of the week anyone can ever keep holy. When God makes anything holy—a day, a place, or an object—He expects us to be particular about how we treat it, and to make a proper distinction in our actions between the holy and the common.

2KS: Genesis 1:23, 31.

God measures the day of twenty-four hours from evening to evening—that is, from sunset to sunset. This means that God's holy day is from sunset Friday evening to sunset Saturday evening. Proper observance of the Lord's day means that we recognize and treat this portion of each week as God's holy time, and that we devote that time to Him.

3KS: Leviticus 23:32.

The "even" which is mentioned here means sunset. See Mark 1:32. This rule which the Lord laid down

in reference to the special Sabbath of the day of Atonement also applies to His weekly Sabbath of Creation. The Sabbath is to be observed from even—that is, from sunset to sunset. We should follow the practice of having special prayer to the Lord at sunset Friday evening and at sunset Saturday evening, so as to mark off the Sabbath in our lives as the Lord's day.

4KS: Mark 15:42.

The day before the Sabbath—Friday—is the preparation day when we are to prepare for the Sabbath. See Exodus 16:22–23. Throughout the week we should be preparing for the Sabbath. All of the weekly cleaning, sewing, washing, ironing, cooking, and so forth, should be done so that by Friday, the preparation day, we can take care of cooking for the Sabbath meals, preparing our Sabbath clothes, and examining the condition of our hearts and our relationship with God and our fellow men. Then when the Sabbath begins at sunset Friday night, we are prepared to keep it holy. A safe rule is not to leave anything to do on the Sabbath that we can take care of during the six working days.

5KS: Nehemiah 13:15–22.

Scripture points out the fact that there is to be no buying or selling on the Sabbath. Nehemiah faithfully reproved both Jews and Gentiles for buying and selling on God's sacred time.

6KS: Isaiah 58:13.

It is good to get out in nature on the Sabbath day and glorify the Lord for His magnificent works of Creation. This is consistent with true Sabbathkeeping, for the Sabbath is a memorial of Creation. Let us praise the Lord as we appreciate so very much His wondrous works in nature!

However, on the Sabbath we are not to pursue our own business, and we are not to find our own selfish pleasure. This text also says that on the Sabbath we are not to speak our own words, that we should not use the Sabbath for worldly conversation or business discussion, secular reading, worldly writing or business mail.

7KS: Exodus 34:21.

No matter how busy we are with our work or business, we are to devote God's holy time to Him. God gives us six days for our business and pleasure. Each seventh day is to be devoted especially to the Lord's service.

8KS: Luke 4:16.

Jesus Christ, when He was here on earth, went to the house of God to worship the Lord on the Sabbath day. An essential part of keeping the Sabbath is to fellowship with God's people on the Sabbath day.

9KS: Matthew 12:10-12.

Acts of mercy are lawful to perform on the Sabbath day.

10KS: Ezekiel 20:12, 20.

If we are really holy, we will keep the Sabbath holy, and it will be a sign between us and our Heavenly Father that He is our God and that we are His people. See Exodus 31:13.

11KS: Isaiah 66:22-23.

Let us make the Sabbaths, as they come and go each week, lights along the way which lead to the glorious eternal home, where all the redeemed will come to worship the Lord face to face each Sabbath day throughout eternity.✠

The Venom of the Serpent

(continued from page 7)

while others are excluded who you think will not be in harmony. I was shown that *there was great danger of doing this.*"²¹

Our Only Safety

"Our only safety is in dying to self, and depending wholly on Christ."²²

"Our only safety is to stand as God's peculiar people."²³

"Our only safety will be found in departing from all sin and iniquity."²⁴

"Obedience to the Word of God is our only safety."²⁵

"Our only safety is to reject firmly the first insinuation to presumption. God has given us grace through the merits of Christ sufficient to withstand Satan, and be more than conquerors. Resistance is success."²⁶

"The baleful influence of sin poisons the life of the soul. Our only safety is in separation from those who live in its darkness."²⁷

"Union with Christ and with one another is our only safety."²⁸

A fearful time is right upon us. If we are to be saved we must not be ensnared by the deceptions of the Serpent. "Now is our time of peril. Our only safety is in walking in the footsteps of Christ, and wearing His yoke. Troublous times are before us. In many instances, friends will become alienated. Without cause, men will become our enemies. The motives of the people of God will be misinterpreted, not only by the world, but by their own brethren. The Lord's servants will be put in hard places. A mountain will be made out of a molehill to justify men in pursuing a selfish, unrighteous course."²⁹ In these chaotic times we are not safe to trust implicitly in anyone, for who knows which one will be our friend tomorrow? Furthermore, we definitely cannot trust ourselves. "Self is our greatest enemy."³⁰

"Our only safety is to lie low at the foot of the cross, be little in our own eyes, and trust in God; for He alone has power to make us great."³¹

It is a pitch-dark night out in the wilderness of sin. A hungry traveler stumbles about intent on finding bread to satisfy his hunger. Close by, hidden in a hollow, lies the old Serpent. It senses that someone is near and turns its head toward the traveler, waiting until he draws near enough to strike a deadly blow. Will someone warn the traveler of his impending fate, or will he be left unaware until the Serpent strikes? Can some kind messenger quickly light a lantern to warn him of his danger? Or will he fall, another victim of the poisonous Serpent? Dear brother, dear sister, we are accountable for the light we have that could be used to save others from a terrible end. There are many weary travelers whom Jesus died to save groping out in the darkness. The deceptions of the Serpent have created darkness around them, and they cannot see their danger.

Eternal Light,
grant us Thy light,
that the serpent's dangers
will be in sight. ✠

References:

- ¹ *Children's Encyclopedia of the Animal Kingdom*, 38.
- ² *Ibid.*, 39.
- ³ *Great Controversy*, 530.
- ⁴ *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 431.
- ⁵ *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, 419.
- ⁶ *Patriarchs and Prophets* 459-460.
- ⁷ *Selected Messages*, book 2, 36-37.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.
- ⁹ *Review and Herald*, November 21, 1878.
- ¹⁰ *Early Writings*, 124-125.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 120.
- ¹² *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 44-45.
- ¹³ *Story of Redemption*, 29.
- ¹⁴ *Great Controversy*, 554.
- ¹⁵ *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 304.
- ¹⁶ *Evangelism*, 679.
- ¹⁷ *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 1093.
- ¹⁸ *Review and Herald*, December 29, 1896.
- ¹⁹ *Signs of the Times*, August 4, 1881.
- ²⁰ *Testimonies to Ministers*, 313.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 462-463.
- ²² *Signs of the Times*, January 25, 1899.
- ²³ *Child Guidance*, 449.
- ²⁴ *Faith and Works*, 117.
- ²⁵ *Our High Calling*, 277.
- ²⁶ *Our High Calling*, 95.
- ²⁷ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 109.
- ²⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 7, 239.
- ²⁹ *The Upward Look*, 177.
- ³⁰ *Signs of the Times*, August 26, 1897.
- ³¹ *Maranatha*, 228.

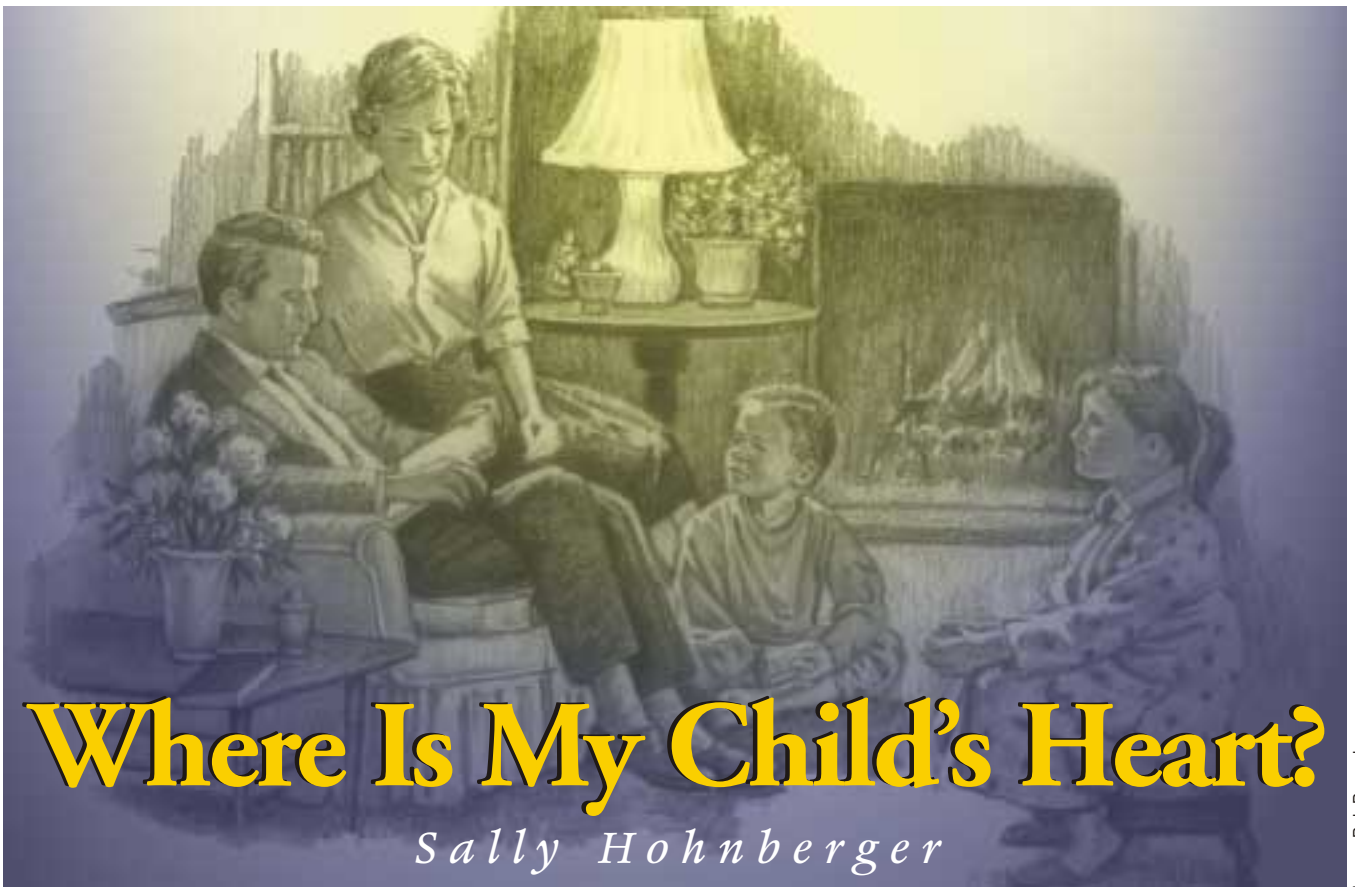


Image: Bob Bresnahan

Where Is My Child's Heart?

Sally Hohnberger

Where is your child's heart? We will look at two areas of concern in this article—*Who* has his heart and *what* has his heart. As we study these two vital questions we can see more clearly how we can cooperate with Heaven to regain the lost hearts—regain those rebellious, disobedient hearts in our homes. Bringing our children to a surrender of all selfishness is our most important work on this earth. This heart work must be done not only *with* Christ but more importantly *in* Christ; there is a difference.

Who has your child's heart right now? Is it toward the world, or is it toward God? By looking at our children's behavior, attitude, and countenance we parents can evaluate accurately "by his doings" (Proverbs 20:11) *who* has their hearts. "Ye shall know them [my people] by their fruits." Matthew 7:16; see also verses 17–20. Does Christ and right doing possess your child's heart, or do you see Satan's selfishness possessing his words, disposition and deeds? Galatians 5:16–25 lists the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit to guide your fruit inspecting to know which Spirit is leading your child.

Satan has been the prince of this world since the fall of Adam and Eve. He possesses the heart of your child by nature *unless you redirect* your little ones and your youth to give their hearts to Christ and follow His laws instead. Satan takes control of every mind (heart) that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God. If we are not actively directing our children to Jesus, they are automatically under Satan's control! Unaided by the Divine, neither child nor parent can do anything other than serve sin and selfishness. How important it is for a parent to bring his own "Disrespectful Danny" to Jesus that He can redeem him from Satan's service. Christ longs to empower and direct parent and child alike in the ways of righteousness. Who will decidedly take up this work?

My heart ached as I heard my two boys, then ages ten and twelve, on our back porch one Sabbath afternoon with other Sabbath believers' children, entering into foolish, inappropriate talk and laughter. My heart ached, not because they were laughing, for we know that Sabbath should be a

happy, pleasant day, but because they were laughing about someone not present, inappropriately making fun of someone else. Although my boys knew that it was not right, yet they listened to and followed the older children who were leading this conversation, and they appeared to be enjoying it! That hurt me as I wondered, Where are their hearts?—Quite evidently not under God's control. I thought that *they knew better!* Why aren't they doing what they know is right?

I realized that although I was *teaching* (telling) them what was right, I was not really *training* them. Training deals with the will—the heart—and sees to it that they do what they know is right, as it is in Jesus. It is very important to bring our children to a firm decision to do that which is right. We must let Jesus direct us in the way to take them so that He can change their hearts.

The heart represents the thoughts, feelings and behavior. The words and deeds of our children tell us their thoughts. The character of their thoughts tell us *who* is on the throne of their hearts,

influencing their doings—either for Christ or for Satan. There is no middle ground! “He that is not [actively] with me is against me.” Matthew 12:30.

My fruit inspecting told me that Satan had my children’s hearts! Satan’s voice (the flesh) was heard, and they responded and cooperated with these thoughts, thus producing this behavior. The problem was that my boys *did not understand God’s voice* at that time in their lives, so they did not respond to Him—thus they followed another master. I wanted Jesus to have their hearts! “What must I do, Lord?”

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye.” Psalm 32:8.

Christ must become a *personal friend and companion* to you, the parent, like He was with Enoch. Become sensitive to *recognize the voice of God* to your conscience and then you must teach this relationship to your child by example, instructions and disciplines. Christ must be on the throne of your heart—that means by a willing surrender you will filter all your thoughts and plans through God and then do His will—not yours. He needs to be your personal Lord and Saviour.

If Jesus has your thoughts and feelings, then He has the root fibers of your heart and can transform everything else to serve righteousness—your reactions, your desires, your disposition, your habits, your conduct, and even your affections can serve right in this way. *Christ must* have access through the voice of your conscience to *lead you*, and *you must learn to follow*—by actively choosing to serve God, by actively surrendering the fleshly way, and by actively cooperating to do right. Only in this way can Christ possess your heart and make His abode with you. When Christ is abiding in this way, He can recreate you into His own image. Only by

acquaintance and association with Christ can you become like Him. As you learn this life of surrender in Jesus, teach it to your children. See Deuteronomy, chapter 6; John, chapter 15.

After moving to our present home, I experienced God redeeming my heart (thoughts and feelings) from fearing the bears in our area to trusting Him to control the bears. I had learned the power and joy of being delivered down to the level of my thoughts and feelings.

So then I took my son (I’ll call him *Angry Aaron*) to Jesus and instructed him on how to surrender his heart to the Lord in prayer. I had to discipline him, led of God, before he would cooperate to pray. The flesh does not like to be restrained. Next, I told him he would have to trust that Jesus would change his feelings in time, but for now, even while wrong thoughts and feelings were still there, he could still choose to speak loving words in place of hateful words because Jesus would make it possible. When he chose to obey (surrender) and speak the opposite of his current thoughts and feelings, Christ took away his anger and put love in his heart in its place. Jesus put love down to the level of his thoughts and feelings. Jesus did this little miracle every time my son listened to me and to his own conscience, and he cooperated. By repetition he began to recognize the voice of God to his conscience. Jesus took possession of my son’s heart in place of Satan. He was redeemed from Satan’s servitude and was so much happier! You see, it was necessary to spend time with each of my sons in this way. Thereafter, I knew that by their continuing heart communication with Jesus, the back-porch incident need not be repeated, for Jesus would direct my sons aright. Again I ask, Who has your child’s heart?

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:21. “In him was life. . . . As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” John 1:4, 12.

What character trait has your child’s heart? “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” Proverbs 20:11.

Many toddlers, children, and youth have joined Satan’s rank because they do not experientially know Jesus to be their Saviour from self. Many professed Christian’s children are in open rebellion against law and order in the home. They walk contrary to the ways of God because Satan leads their thoughts and feelings and they are following him. There is *Rebellious Rufus, Temper Tantrum Tommy, My Way Willy, Sassy Suzy, Interruptive Ivy* and *Selfish Sarah*. They walk in the broad path, with Satan as their companion, because they know no other way. Although their parents commonly try to excuse their behavior, for this or that reason, there is really no excuse for sin and selfishness. God hates selfishness and tells us to uproot all of it. Our children are this way because we are too busy to tell them about Jesus and take them to Him and train them on how to walk the narrow path in Jesus. How sad! They will grow *into* these traits with repetition—not *out* of them—as Satan has suggested to the world.

Do not allow Satan to come into our home ranks and take our children into disobedience and wrath without a fight! Ephesians 6:12 says, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” We must get Jesus in first, and then with a firm hand in His, deny ungodliness in our homes. We must cultivate and train our children to live valiantly for God and to be servants of righteousness as it is in Jesus. In due time they will love and respect us for that.

As I committed myself to personal, *daily study time and prayer*, God spoke to me through both His Word and His impressions to my heart of my need to pull out the weeds of unrighteousness which

were growing in my character and my sons' characters. He convicted me about allowing the weeds of disrespect, slothful work habits, lazy-brain study habits, anger, and "poor-me" attitudes to grow in my home by allowing them to be expressed and acted out. God said that He would be with me as I changed myself and as I trained my children, but that I must pull out these weeds; deny them firmly, give consequences for uncooperativeness, without harshness and anger of the flesh, but *in* Christ. I could be a barrier against allowing these evils in my home, and Jesus would fight the flesh for me. See Exodus 14:14. With trepidation, timidity and fear of failure, I followed Christ and He did fight for me. In time my boys each gave their hearts to Jesus and were delivered from all these ways. God led me to the replacement principle that was leading them to think and act out the opposite traits of character. Success is found when the child is led to be in Jesus. Instead of allowing them to just "come up," God taught me how to "train them up" in Him. *What weeds of character have your child's heart?*

Parents, you too must *study God's Word and ways for yourself. No one else can learn this for you* because it must become an experience—not just an intellectual knowledge. It was by reading and talking with God that I saw the error of my ways in letting my children just "come up." I questioned, *What comes up in a garden?* In an unattended garden, weeds, thorns and thistles come up without any care from the gardener. These undesirable fruits steal the nourishment and choke out goodly plants by crowding.

Wrong character traits, such as disrespect, "poor-me" thoughts, and so forth, that we find in our children, are the bitter fruits of letting our children just "come up." These things come up without any care on our part. However, it takes time, effort and planning to cultivate for goodly plants of

righteousness—to provide time with God, to feed, to nourish and to challenge them to upright thinking, speaking and acting. Will you let Satan crowd out God in this way? Or will you redirect their ways and see to it that they get time with God and "train them up" to do the right?

If you do this, you will *need much time with them* to become their companion and confidant, and to regain the respect you need in order to exercise authority over them. You must win them by love and much prayer, but never let down the standard of righteousness. Rather, uphold firmly what is right in and with Jesus—ever pointing your children to Jesus who is able to change them in heart and life. They will fall in love with Jesus once they come to know Him as their Saviour from selfishness. A neat and orderly home does not come up without *a work plan* to get it in order, and then exercising daily disciplines to keep it that way, does it? It is the same with our children's character traits. The plan is, there is a need to daily come to Jesus to soften their hearts, to water the goodly plants, to nourish the right and to keep it all clean.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 teaches us that discipline and denying self are important. "Because sentence against an evil [selfish] work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Any wrong permitted to be done will grow and strengthen with exercise and repetition. Therefore, parents need to be diligent to pull out the weeds when they are little and more easily removed. Proverbs 13:24 says, "He that spareth his rod *hateth* his son." (All emphasis supplied unless otherwise noted.) When conflicts arise and discipline is necessary, you need Jesus to direct you aright in this warfare!

My studies showed me that *evil* is anything that is against the will of God—it is any and all selfishness. Then in prayer I called out to Him, "Lord, help me with this great heart work! Behavior modification is not what is needed

for my children. They need 'new hearts.' Please direct me in this warfare!"

I experimented to apply what I was reading on *union and communion with God*. I took God with me in my homeschooling endeavors. He would be the Principal and I would be the under-teacher. It was an excellent method! Christ put thoughts in my mind on how to direct my boys to a true heart surrender. It takes time and effort. Without Christ I gained only outward conformity in the obedience of my sons. But with Jesus leading, He obtained both their hearts and their obedience. This obedience came from the heart—the inner man. How sweet it was! When Christ possessed the heart, all unrighteous thoughts had to leave. All of the "I can't's," and the "I don't want tos," all fears of failure and all tears were cleansed away. With Christ on the throne of their hearts, righteous thoughts came in: "I can do my math; I enjoy English; I'll get this done as quickly and as well as I can; let's see how well I can do on my timed math tests; I need not fear it." It is wonderful to have Jesus possess my heart and gain the hearts of my sons in our day-to-day life! It is time well spent! Communication with Christ is as vital as breathing is to sustain our life.

What has their affections? Is it heavenly or earthly? Look at what is on their bedroom wall. Is it a picture of a weird sports hero? Is it some ugly, musical group? Are there muscle men or fashion queens? Actually, it should be you! Their affections are on these people instead of on you! With whom do they spend their time? With associates who also have the mindset that you see on the wall? Why are they attracted to these associates and to these ugly things of earth? It is often because they feel accepted by these associates and therefore they want to please them by liking what they seem to like. They have a need to belong, to feel a part of something, and, since you were not around to be interested in them, or to direct them, they found that the world had more time for them. As a result, they gave

their time and affections (heart) to them. Evidently, as with many children in our society today, they felt that they did not have a family, so they joined these worldly mortals and learned to like what they like.

This is so sad because it need not be so. Their walls ought to have pictures of the family or some pleasant, nature scenes that remind them of their special outing with you or the family. There should be some beautiful animals, or some meaningful scriptural verses on the wall. Their affections should be in the family and with Christ. They need to belong and to be loved. It should be in heavenly ways in their own home by their parents. Parents, it is up to you to bind their hearts to yours! Regain their hearts. Let Jesus change your story.

If you gain their hearts, then their affections will be toward you. They will love to talk with you, spend time with you, work with you and play with you. Their greatest joy should be to be by your side, and to please you because they feel loved and appreciated. They should feel able to freely discuss anything and everything with you – with nothing being a secret from you. When they find that you have now become so trustworthy, they will know that, if you disagree on some matter, you will have their best interest in heart and will work through the situation with a heart seeking for what is right. This is the fruit of spending much time with your children. They will know that they are a priority in your life.

On the other hand, a disrespectful, disobedient child gives evidence that the parent does not have their heart. *Where did you lose your child's heart?* Children want their parent's love, approval, and support. Often the father is too busy elsewhere, having time for others, but not for his children. The children get the unsaid message that they are not important or loved. Then the host of negative attributes comes from the influence of that substitute associate that took your place. Do you want your son's

or your daughter's heart back? Our girls as well as our boys need both their father and their mother. Give them You, your time – not things! I believe all youth can be won back. Do not let the Devil make you think that your children cannot be successfully reclaimed.

We have a war to fight. However, only with Christ can we win it. Remember, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness in this world. Satan wants the heart, the affections, the tastes and the thoughts of our children. Are you going to let him have them without a fight?

In order to possess the heart you must *spend time with your children* so you can regain their affections. True love will cooperate with God and lead your children out of this "Egypt of selfishness." No matter how much time and effort it takes, having your children's hearts with your heart in Jesus, is worth all the effort. If you want them to know Christ, to know the joy of obedience, it is really up to you – no one else.

If not you, who?

If not now, when?

Start by making your children a *priority* in your life. Spend quantity and quality time with your children every day. Ten minutes is not enough! If you don't, I will guarantee you that Satan will provide someone to take your place, and that someone will take your children away from both you and God.

Father, work is not your life. Your children are, and they need you to work with them – their hearts and their habits. Teach them the thoughts they should think. Teach them how to come to Jesus and be changed. Listen to their hurts. Come to know their interests, their thoughts. They deserve a goodly place in your time schedule *today* – not tomorrow. Sacrifice all to have their hearts in yours and together in Christ's. Sell all to regain the lost and straying heart!

Many fathers today are deceived and distracted. They are thinking

that their work is everything. However, it is nothing if you don't have your children! Just ask businessmen who have lost their youth to the world. Your children are weary of waiting for their father to have time for them. *If you do not take heed*, soon they will not have time for you. Many premature marriages are the result of youth striving to find the love they don't get at home. Strangers are not to be given time and attention in preference to your children's needs. Stop! Listen! If you have been deceived with this misconception, correct it today! God's grace is sufficient for you to change your thinking and direction and His grace is sufficient for mending the hearts of your little ones and even of your youth to you today.

Admit your wrong course and correct it. Show your children by your actions now that they are the priority in your life. Yes, father, you have to work to support the home, but in the evening hours come home and give yourself to them regularly. Keep your promise to be there: to go camping, to go for a bike ride, and so forth, and you will regain their hearts. If you fail to gain their hearts first, they will not be interested in your Jesus or your rules of life. If you have wounded their hearts, only your actions can speak louder than your words and reverse your course. John 17:19 says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." You must change first, father, for the sake of your sons and daughters!

Mother, what keeps you from your children? The telephone, neighborly chit chats, overwork or slow work habits? Do you make many trips to town due to a lack of organization, or do you struggle with an inability to say No to others? Even evangelism is to be secondary to raising your child to follow Christ. Turn square about and change! Call out to God! Sort it out and follow as He leads you to correct your life today! Now! Make your children your business – your top priority!

Train up their thoughts and feelings in righteous ways. This is a good work that no one else can or will do for you. Telling them what is right is only half of this work. Training—seeing to it they do what they know is right—is the greater work we have. Training requires your calling out to God for instructions in how to deny the wrong thoughts and feelings, and for instructions in how to cultivate the opposite traits of character in divine power—not just human methods alone. Cultivation requires working up the soil of the heart and implanting goodly ways in place of the wrong. Training takes the child to Jesus for goodly thoughts to replace the wrong ones. On their knees they must surrender; then they must get up to act out the right. Through obedience their hearts and thoughts are changed by the grace of Jesus. He never intended that you and I try to do this heart work without Him—in fact, we cannot! The best humanity can produce in behavior modification is outward conformity. Without Christ, the heart is not made new. So let Christ direct you in this warfare for your children’s hearts.

By giving corrections and reproof, and even by giving consequences for disobedience, you are saying to your child, “I love you too much to let you disobey. I will not let Satan have you. Come, let’s go to Jesus to lay down the wrong and pick up the right.” Home needs to be an oasis, a fortress against the evil trends of this world. It needs to be a loving place that firmly upholds God’s ways over selfish ways. God in us—leading us—can cleanse the music, dress, diet, hairstyles, and so forth, in our homes, and redeem these tastes and affections unto Himself and us. If you do not give consequences and motivations led of God for disobedience, you will lose your children’s hearts to Satan and unrighteousness. Instead, give consequences in Jesus and gain their hearts.

Resolve today to gain the hearts of your children and bind them to yours in Christ! ❀

The Jewish Church Duplicated

(continued from page 17)

“Our compassionate Redeemer, foreseeing the perils that would surround His followers at this time, has given them special warning: ‘Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.’ *If the church pursue a course similar to that of the world, they will share the same fate.* Nay, rather, as they have received greater light, their punishment will be greater than that of the impenitent.”¹⁶

The sealing message—the Elijah message, the straight testimony to Laodicea—is the urgent, startling message to His people for this tragic hour. God is calling for those who are willing to be made willing, to come into line and render uncompromising obedience to all known truth. Soon Satan will personate Christ. Soon Sunday laws will put God’s faithful, remnant people to the test.¹⁷ The mark of the beast will be placed on all the disobedient, but the seal of God will be placed on the obedient who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the world and in the church. See Ezekiel, chapters 8 and 9.

The church will go through—shaken and purified—but we will not go through with it unless we respect and obey all of God’s counsels. He sorrows over those who refuse to heed His warnings and who despise His entreaties. He is walking in our midst today to see if there are any who will heed His voice and come to Him.

“The Saviour has oft visited you in Battle Creek. Just as verily as He walked in the streets of Jerusalem, longing to breathe the breath of spiritual life into the hearts of those discouraged and ready to die, has He come to you. The cities that

were so greatly blessed by His presence, His pardon, His gifts of healing, rejected Him; and just as great, yea, greater, evidence of unrequited love has been given in Battle Creek. Has Christ not loaded down His church with benefits and blessings? Has He not sent His servants with messages of pardon and righteousness, to be freely given to all who will receive them?

“Jerusalem is a representation of what the church will be if it refuses to walk in the light that God has given. Jerusalem was favored of God as the depository of sacred trusts. But her people perverted the truth, and despised all entreaties and warnings. They would not respect His counsels. The temple courts were polluted with merchandise and robbery. Selfishness and love of mammon, envy and strife, were cherished. Everyone sought for gain from his quarter. Christ turned from them, saying: ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!’ Matthew 23:37.

“So Christ sorrows and weeps over our churches, over our institutions of learning, that have failed to meet the demand of God.”¹⁸

Let us heed God’s warnings. Let us repent of our sins and return to our God with our whole heart, while there is still time. ❀

References:

- ¹ *Desire of Ages*, 25.
- ² *Selected Messages*, book 1, 122.
- ³ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 477.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 294.
- ⁵ *The Great Controversy*, 608.
- ⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 94.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 75–76.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 160.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.
- ¹⁰ *Testimonies to Ministers*, 265–266.
- ¹¹ *The Great Controversy*, 444. (Emphasis in the original.)
- ¹² *Review and Herald*, October 8, 1901.
- ¹³ *The Great Controversy*, 343.
- ¹⁴ *Testimonies*, vol. 4, 27.
- ¹⁵ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 209–210; see also *ibid.*, 50, 157, 475; *ibid.*, vol. 2, 441–442; *ibid.*, vol. 3, 267.
- ¹⁶ *Testimonies*, vol. 5, 100. (Emphasis supplied by author.)
- ¹⁷ See *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, 976.
- ¹⁸ *Testimonies*, vol. 8, 67.

letters to the editor



I really enjoy *Our Firm Foundation* and don't want to miss any issues, especially since we are so near to Christ's return. Being in prison makes it very difficult to afford a subscription, so could you please continue my subscription as "Subscription Assistance"? Thank you very much. I pray that God will continue to bless your ministry.

CA, Florida

May the Lord continue to be with all that you do for Him. I truly love *Our Firm Foundation*. In the 30 years since I became an Adventist, this is the best! Thank you so much. I do not know who put me on your mailing list a few years ago.

We have our little Social [Security], but maybe this small donation will help, and the Lord will multiply it.

ET, New York

I believe I've never expressed my appreciation for your publication and how it has helped my faith during the past few years. Virtually everyone I have spoken to in my church expressed a certain level of apprehension regarding your publication, but I could not shake the feeling that your position on various topics are really the ones that I find to be the genuine Adventist belief. I am infinitely grateful for your work!

Enclosed is my contribution for Remnant 2000, and I also would like to inform you that I plan to support your work regularly with funds as much as possible.

JK, New York

God bless you in this important work. I have sent all I can. You and your work are in my prayers daily! Enclosed is a money order for Remnant 2000.

PM, Virginia

As we approach the end of 1999, I now write that which should have already been written, that is; a note of appreciation for the many fine articles printed in *Our Firm Foundation*. Two categories are of special interest, as well as being needed by our Church: 1) Reprints of articles by Mrs. White and, 2) Articles relative to our Sanctuary Doctrine.

It seems to me that all major attacks on our Church have been, and still are, directed at the Sanctuary. The New Theology is no exception.

CB, Tennessee

From Overseas:

I am a lay preacher, being responsible for about fifty towns and villages. Fortunately for me I came across a booklet entitled *Immortality of the Soul and Spiritualism*, by Jacob Teske, which I find to be very useful. In fact, the book is wonderful!

In our culture, which centers around superstitions and strange beliefs, I find the book to be a Godsend!

I would be very grateful if you could send me copies of this booklet and other useful books that will speed up the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I hope to hear from you soon. May the good Lord Jesus be with you all in your great task of reaching the world with the message of the Master.

PA, Ghana

Dear Hope International, You have really brought hope to our hopelessness. Your donation of Bibles and other inspirational books mean a lot to this school. We have already started a reading library to help the school and the local church youth with those books.

I am a teacher as I told you. An approximate cost of you donation is

nearly 2 months salary of a Zimbabwe teacher.

The headmaster of the school is also sending his gratitude for your contribution to our spiritual activities.

May God bless you and keep you forevermore.

AM, Zimbabwe

I always thank God for answering all my prayers. I would like to let you know that you are doing a great work in winning souls for Christ through these books you are sending. Especially to me they are doing a great job, the more I read the more I enjoy reading. Keep it coming. I once borrowed from one girl whose denomination was Anglican, this book *National Sunday Law*. After reading it she told me that she doesn't want anyone to preach to her about Sabbath and Sunday, for the book preached to her the truth. As I am talking now she is an Adventist member and is waiting for baptism. After that I have her *Earth's Final Warning*. Now she told me that she enjoys reading. Pray for me as a youth.

MM, Zimbabwe

I am so glad to have this opportunity to write to you. I am so grateful about the gift of the Bibles and other spiritually healthy books. I am enjoying reading these books! I have good news to tell you. I am now a fully baptized member of the Seventh-day Adventist church. I was baptized on March 20, 1999.

I will try and keep in contact with you always for you have helped me in raising my spiritual life. I ask you to keep praying for me so that the Holy Spirit may keep me looking to the cross. I will also pray for you so that God may guide you always.

MC, Zimbabwe

Have a letter to share?

contact editor@hopeint.org or see page 3 for our mailing address.

Sale!
\$5.00 ea.
Ends May 30

Priceless Sermon Treasures On Video

Reg. \$10-\$20 ea.

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Eatonville, WA
Permit No. 8

Abdulla Ahomed

- AA101- "Cry My Beloved Conference"

Phil Collins

- CP101- "The Physiology of Dress Reform"
- CP102- "When God Turns the Lights Out"
- CP103- "What Is a Health Reformer?"
- CP104- "Consequences of Fatigue"

Ray DeCarlo

- DR101- "What Is in a Name?"
- DR102- "Give Glory to Him"
- DR103- "A Witness to All Nations"
- DR104- "Revelation 17"

Stephen Dickie

- DS101- "God's Farm"
- DS102- "The Third Angel's Message"

Alan Esselbach

- EA101- "Canon, Covenant, and the Cross"
- EA102- "Preparing for a Crisis Greater Than Y2K"

Clark Floyd

- FC101- "God in Control"
- FC102- "Forewarned Is Not Always Fore Prepared"
- FC103- "The Cross"
- FC104- "Christ the Center"
- FC105- "The Holy Spirit Deception"

Philip Garber

- GP201- "Protestantism and the Third Angel's Message"
- GP202- "Biblical Way Marks of the Advent Movement"

Ron Goss

- GR101- "When the Thrill Is Gone"
- GR102- "A Famine in the Land"
- GR103- "God's Plan for Victory"
- GR104- "A Command and a Privilege"
- GR105- "Perilous Times"
- GR106- "Come Out Says Who?"

Peter Gregory

- GP101- "Peter and the Fire"

Dane Griffin

- GD101- "Health and Sundaes Law"
- GD102- "The Lab, Then Law, and the Laodiceans"

Gwen Hawkins

- HG101- "A Fixed Point of Reference"

Sally Hohnberger

- HS101- "Open Discussion on Home Schooling"
- HS102- "Habits"

Doug Hurley

- HD101- "Keep Thyself Pure"

Bob Jorgensen

- JB101- "Present Need and Present Truth"

David Kang

- KD101- "Why Were You Born?"
- KD102- "What Are You Driven By?"
- KD103- "The Sanctuary"

Hal Mayer

- MH101- "The Tub Mysteries"

Ron Reeves

- RR101- "Where Do We Go to Church?"

John Skeete

- SJ101- "The Kingdom of Stone"

Vernon Sparks

- SV101- "The Three Angels' Messages in Their Fullness"
- SV102- "This Gospel of the Kingdom"

Ron Spear

- SR101- Our Greatest Need
- SR102- Preparing for Eternity
- SR103- Five Misunderstandings in Adventism
- SR104- The Remedy for Laodicea
- SR105- 1888 Re-Examined
- SR106- Three Angel's Message
- SR107- The Final Crisis, The Close of Probation
- SR108- Teach me to Pray
- SR109- The Latter Rain

Colin Standish

- SC101- Liberty in the Balance
- SC102- Deception, Deceit, Lies and Guile
- SC103- Christ Our Righteousness
- SC104- The Certainty of the Adventist Faith
- SC105- The Fearful Consequences of Ecumenism
- SC106- Be Not Deceived
- SC107- Liberty, Who Cares Anymore?
- SC108- Why Grace Is Not Enough
- SC109- The Perils of Time Setting
- SC110- Great Camp Meeting Sermons

Please see page 3 for
shipping and tax information.



Hope International
P.O. Box 940
Eatonville, WA 98328

Change Service Requested